



Pathway to Potential

County Council Update

December 6th, 2023



Overview of Pathway to Potential

- In 2008, the City of Windsor and County of Essex launched the 'Pathway to Potential' (P2P) regional poverty reduction strategy.
- This initiative aimed to address the concerns about poverty levels in the Windsor-Essex region.
- In 2017, P2P underwent a comprehensive renewal and introduced a nine-point plan to enhance residents' assets through social investments.
- Around \$2.1M has been invested annually by the City of Windsor (1.5M) and County of Essex (0.7M) since then.
- Currently, P2P supports 14 programs that assist vulnerable youth and families, address accessibility and financial barriers, and collaborate with community leaders.

The 9-point Social Investment Plan builds on existing community capacities and resources to:

CITY OF WINDSOR
+
COUNTY OF ESSEX
INVESTMENT
\$2.1M
EACH YEAR SINCE 2017



1 Promote foundational services or programs that support those who require assistance with basic needs



2 Work with lead community organizations on key projects aimed at improving the quality of life for residents



3 Champion opportunities toward betterment for residents at senior levels of government



4 Enhance or collaborate on equity and social inclusion frameworks to existing municipal programming



5 Remove transportation barriers for individuals living on a low-income



6 Create inclusive opportunities for children in low-income families through recreation and culture



7 Invest in neighbourhoods impacted by poverty and other complex community challenges



8 Communicate the strengths and community achievements through strategic promotion



9 Utilize best practices in data collection, analysis and reporting to enhance social investments

Project & Stakeholder Consultation Overview

Council Report Back April 2023	Stakeholder Consultations and Social Policy Report July – October 2023	Developing the Framework November 2023 – January 2024	Council Report Back Spring 2024
Pathway to Potential reported back to Council seeking approval for funding and strategy renewal.	Conducted stakeholder engagement and social policy research.	Develop and finalize the new Strategy including the implementation plan.	Report back to Council with the final Strategy.

Stakeholder engagement gathered input from a variety of sources:



Consulted **11** City and County Staff Members



Interviewed **20** City and County Councillors



Facilitated **7** focus groups and **7** interviews with community organizations and P2P partners and involving **72** participants



Engaged with **71** City and County residents with lived experiences



Conducted **2** digital surveys with a total of **269** responses



Held **2** community feedback sessions

Representatives from across the Region that worked together to develop the framework:

- P2P Staff
- Children Services
- Housing Services
- Social Policy and Planning
- Employment and Social Services
- Public Health
- County of Essex

Key Findings from Engagement and Research

Below is a high-level overview of the key themes we heard throughout our engagement and found in our research.



Current Strategy is too broad: The current strategy is too broad and lacks clear direction and focus in addressing poverty. The current funding approach does not address critical poverty issues in the region such as housing, food insecurity, and mental health and addictions.



Poverty is a complex issue: The landscape and efforts addressing poverty are large and complex. To effectively address poverty, there needs to be a strategic, aligned, and comprehensive approach.



Scarcity in critical services and resources: People living in poverty are facing various challenges and barriers in accessing services to address their needs, due to limited resources and accessibility.



Service providers are at capacity: Many organizations and municipalities are at capacity with their ability to address issues related to poverty, but the needs for their services and resources continue to increase.



There is a need for coordinated efforts: Strategic partnerships and coordination across the sector are critical to effectively address and improve poverty and its related impacts.

Windsor-Essex Poverty Reduction Efforts

Governments set policy direction, provide funding, and provide certain services.

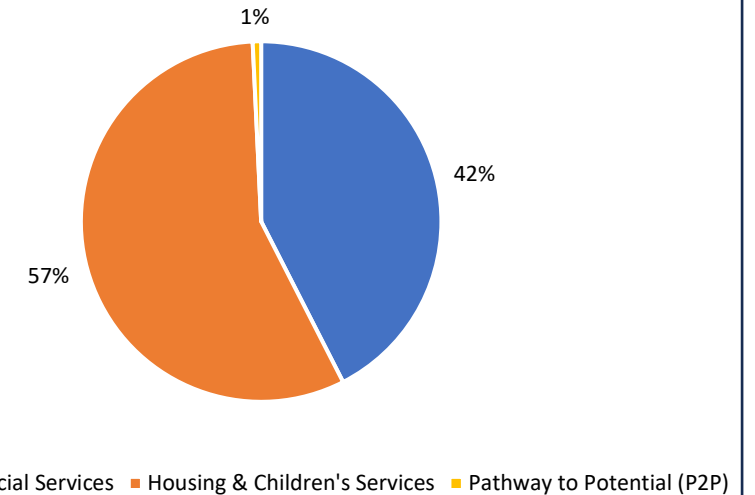


Municipalities and community agencies deliver frontline services shaped by government.



Human & Health Services 2023 Budget Breakdown by Department

There are different efforts taking place throughout the Municipality to address issues related to poverty. P2P's aim is to prioritize in the most effective way while at the same time complimenting the other efforts.



P2P's new strategy will seek to build on poverty reduction efforts that exist today: increasing coordination, integration and alignment to address gaps and increase access and effectiveness.

P2P's new approach builds on the current plan, but focuses efforts through a neighbourhood lens

P2P's Current 9-Point Social Investment Plan

1. Promote foundational services or programs that support those who require assistance with basic needs.
2. Work with lead community organizations on key projects aimed at improving the quality of life for residents.
3. Champion opportunities toward betterment for residents at senior levels of government.
4. Enhance or collaborate on equity and social inclusion frameworks to existing municipal programming.
5. Remove transportation barriers for individuals living on a low-income.
6. Create inclusive opportunities for children in low-income families through recreation and culture.
7. Invest in neighbourhoods impacted by poverty and other complex community challenges.
8. Communicate the strengths and community achievements through strategic promotion.
9. Utilize best practices in data collection, analysis and reporting to enhance social investments.



Three New Strategic Pillars

Neighbourhood-First Integration and Innovation

P2P will develop neighbourhood strategies to coordinate access to and delivery of services, and fund lead agencies to execute them.

Regional Policy and Program Development

P2P will advance regional programs and policies to address gaps identified through neighbourhood strategies (including current transit and recreation supports).

Enhance Regional Capabilities

P2P will gather and share data and insights from neighbourhood strategies, coordinating with other service providers to build capabilities.

The Proposed Strategic Framework

Pathway to Potential

Pillar 1: Neighbourhood-First Integration and Innovation

P2P will use a community-based approach that will combine local governments and community services and find new ways to deliver them to ensure maximum accessibility.

Neighbourhood Strategies: P2P will work with regional agencies and stakeholders to choose and implement strategies for key neighborhoods to streamline and coordinate services.

Lead Agency Startup and Oversight: P2P will finance and manage lead agencies in chosen neighbourhoods to coordinate efforts, serve as the main contact, and liaise with local governments.

Pillar 2: Regional Policy and Program Development

P2P will work with other departments and decision-makers to create, finance and drive policies and programs that address barriers, gaps, and find solutions.

Transit Subsidies & Recreation Program: P2P will continue to work with the local and regional transit systems and municipalities to provide subsidies and discounts for individuals and families who are low-income.

Identify and Advance Policy and Programs: P2P will focus on finding and solving gaps with new policies and programs.

Pillar 3: Enhance Regional Capabilities

P2P will develop and share information and data and facilitate collaboration between municipal service providers and community agencies to enhance their service abilities.






Measurement, Evaluation & Research: Effectively measure and report impacts to monitor neighborhood plans, funded programs, and gather research data.

Exchanging Ideas with Each Other: P2P will work with the community to share knowledge and raise awareness about poverty issues, P2P's and other related efforts.

Partnerships: P2P will partner with local groups to boost resources and opportunities region-wide.

Why this Approach?

The proposed approach aims to **complement current regional efforts, not duplicate**. Every aspect of the proposed approach has been designed to address the key gaps and issues identified in slide 5.

-  **Current Strategy is too broad** → Pillar 1 uses **neighbourhoods as a lens to focus efforts** and builds on progress made in target neighbourhoods to identify scalable regional solutions. The aim is to have a tailored approach for each identified neighbourhood.
-  **Poverty is a complex issue** → Pillars 2 & 3 ensure P2P is constantly engaging with key stakeholders and exchanging knowledge across the sector to **evolve the Strategy in line with regional needs and gaps**. Recreation and transit initiatives will continue, as they are demonstrated strengths of P2P and embody best practices to promote affordability and accessibility.
-  **Scarcity in critical services and resources,**
-  **service providers are at capacity**
-  **& there is a need for coordinated efforts** → The three pillars focus on **enhancing coordination and collaboration among municipal and community partners**, aiming to improve awareness and accessibility of current efforts. This strategy will foster better communication and partnerships among organizations, optimizing the use of resources and capacities.

The three Strategic Pillars reinforce one another to create regional impact

Pillar 1: Neighbourhood-First Integration and Innovation

Key Activities: Fund, Coordinate, Consult, Collaborate, Prioritize

Aim:

- P2P to fund lead agencies and ensure the coordination and effective outreach of support and services from municipal and community service providers.
- Lead agency to develop and coordinate a neighbourhood action plan / approach.
- Increase awareness and accessibility of resources and services available to residents.
- Gather data and information to improve decision-making and prioritization of focus.
- Build and strengthen relationship between residents and municipalities through lead agencies.



Pillar 2: Regional Policy and Program Development

Key Activities: Consult, Collaborate, Prioritize

Aim:

- Enhance the recreational and transit programs.
- Continuously seek new solutions through new/current policy and programs.
- Ensure that P2P priorities are evolving with the needs of the Region.



Pillar 3: Enhance Regional Capabilities

Key Activities: Inform, Educate, Collaborate

Aim:

- Increase awareness of poverty related issues and P2P.
- Implement a consistent data collection approach among P2P's Partners and across the Region to provide more comprehensive data, drive research and inform decision-making for policymakers throughout the Region.
- Strengthen the sector's network and collaboration.



- ✓ Each pillar **promotes** the development of tailored approaches and solutions.
- ✓ The information and actions from each pillar will directly and indirectly **inform each other's** direction, fostering **continuous improvement** in the approach.
- ✓ This approach represents a **collaborative and informative** strategy for all stakeholders including City/County staff and council members, service Providers, residents, service recipients and residents.

Next Steps

We will be taking your feedback into consideration and updating the framework.



Once the framework is established, we will begin implementation planning that will have clear action items and key performance measures.



A final framework and report will go to Council in Spring 2024.

We're happy to answer any questions.



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