



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: David Sundin, BA (Hons), LL.B., Director, Legislative and Legal Services/County Solicitor

Date: Wednesday, June 18, 2025

Subject: Progress Report: Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan

Report #: 2025-0618-LLS-R32-DMS

Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Report (the "**Report**") is to provide County Council with the Progress Report (the "**Progress Report**") of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being ("**CSWB**") Plan (the "**Plan**") and to update County Council on the status of the updates to the Plan that must be completed by November of 2025.

A copy of the current Plan is appended to this Report as **Appendix A**. A copy of the Progress Report is appended to this Report as **Appendix B**.

Background

In 2019 through amendments to the *Police Services Act* the Province mandated that every municipality had to prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. In order to comply with the new requirement both City Council and County Council authorized a project team from both the City and the County, along with partner organizations, to develop the Plan for the whole region.

The Plan was ultimately approved by City Council in October of 2021 and by County Council in November of 2021.

Initially it was intended that the current Plan would be in place through the end of 2026. However, following the Plan's submission and approval to the Province, the Province legislated that all CSWB Plans be reviewed and updated every 4 years.

It is intended that County Council will receive a presentation from Michelle Oake, Project Lead, Human & Health Services from the City of Windsor (the "**Project Lead**"). Michelle as the Project Lead has been the member of

Administration who has taken the lead on the oversight of the current Plan and the renewal of that Plan. However, she has received input through regular meetings of the Regional Systems Leadership Table ("**RSLT**") which is co-chaired by the City and the County and comprised of representatives from the City, County, LaSalle Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police, Windsor Police, Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare, Pozitive Pathways, South Essex Community Council, Family Service Windsor-Essex, the Enhanced Sector Network (which is described in more detail below), and Persons with Lived Experience populations (which is described in more detail below).

Discussion

The Plan covers 4 Regional Priorities, with the Progress Report highlighting some of the accomplishments made in those priorities, and what future steps are being considered as part of the revised Plan.

The following information was provided by the Project Lead to City Council at its meeting held on May 26, 2025 with respect to the Plan and the Progress Report:

Priority 1: Good Governance and Data

The Good Governance and Data Priority was borne from the understanding that all the identified risks and opportunities from the first three categories could be addressed using a multi-sectoral collaborative approach. The priority was developed to institutionalize the governance structures of the RSLT and temporary data tables to implement the Plan and identify and address community safety and well-being issues in the future. This priority has focused on strengthening relationships, increased committee representation and membership.

Mandated by the province, the RSLT is comprised of key partner organizations that institutionalize cross-sectoral collaboration to address systemic and specific service delivery opportunities. The RSLT is chaired by the City of Windsor's Human and Health Services Commissioner and the Director, Legislative & Legal Services for the County of Essex and includes partners from various sectors, including health and mental health, education, community and social services, community and custodial services for youth, municipalities, police and public safety, and business.

To better leverage existing strategies and inform CSWB governance on community risks and protective factors, dedicated representation from the Enhanced Sector Network (ESN) was included as part of the RSLT. The ESN was established during the Plan's public engagement process to collaborate

with committees and organizations that support individuals from eight historically underrepresented communities: Indigenous Peoples, Racialized Persons, Youth, Newcomers, Seniors, 2SLGBTQ+ communities, persons with disabilities (Accessibility communities), and broader community groups. The goal of the ESN was to ensure that diverse voices and priorities were meaningfully reflected throughout the planning process.

In addition, the RCSWB Plan was successful in connecting and leveraging existing strategies (e.g. Windsor-Essex Community Opioid and Substance Strategy) and establishing Action Tables (e.g., Regional Crime Prevention Council) as needed, for key goals and initiatives in the RCSWB plan, that include RSLT members, municipal representation, community service providers, and representation from priority and Persons with Lived Experience (PLE) populations.

Priority 2: Engaged and Safe Communities

The Engaged and Safe Communities priority focused on promoting safe, healthy, and connected neighbourhoods and communities. Key initiatives included the implementation of evidence-based strategies to reduce locally-identified priority risks to community safety and well-being, emphasizing the involvement of all community members.

Under this initiative, community-led projects and partnerships were promoted, expanded and enhanced, including neighbourhood building initiatives to help increase feelings of safety, strengthen social capital with neighbours and promote ongoing, sustainable engagement within communities. Several opportunities were identified for collaboration with community leaders across the region to showcase and support local community initiatives (e.g. Festival of Guest Nations & Public Safety Information Day, Crime Prevention Week, and facilitation of trainings, workshops, symposiums and community engagement events). Additionally, a gap analysis was conducted in collaboration with the County of Essex and Housing Services. As a result, housing and homelessness resource materials were developed and distributed to individuals experiencing homelessness. These efforts were carried out in partnership with community organizations promoting services at the Homelessness and Housing Help Hub (H4) and the Essex County Homelessness Hub (ECH2).

A pilot CSWB Walks Program in collaboration with local Police Services based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles was deemed successful by partners and the community. Neighbourhood Safety and Crime Prevention Walks were facilitated in Windsor and all seven municipalities in the County of Essex. In addition, a Toolkit was created in partnership with St. Clair College with funding from WE Spark Health

Institute, Windsor Police Services, LaSalle Police and Ontario Provincial Police for its sustainability. Using this toolkit as a guide, any local practitioner or community resident can host a Neighbourhood Safety and Crime Prevention Walk.

Another successful implementation activity under this Priority was the development of a Regional Crime Prevention Council (RCPC) focusing on youth gun and gang prevention in the region. The RCPC members are reflective of the Windsor-Essex Region and include sectors serving at-risk youth of gun and gangs. Annual actions completed by the RCPC include participation in Crime Prevention Week activities and hosting symposiums and trainings related to youth crime prevention.

Work is underway within the plan to leverage existing resources and focus funding on targeted interventions. The ability to implement community driven solutions has been made possible by leveraging funding (approximately \$2.9 million) from a three-year grant from federal Public Safety Canada's Building Safer Communities Grant Fund (CR328/2022). The grant program provides funding to regional community organizations to launch new and expanded initiatives focusing on prevention and risk-intervention in response to youth gun and gang violence in Windsor-Essex.

An innovative example of how the RCSWB Plan enhanced community partnerships is through the creation of a youth-supporting housing complex. With funding from three levels of government, a partnership between the City of Windsor, Public Safety Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation (CHC), New Beginnings and the Windsor Essex Children's Aid Society (WECAS) has led to the creation of a youth supportive housing complex with dedicated life skills programming. The housing complex created by the CHC supports up to 15 individuals between the ages of 18 and 23 transitioning out of the child welfare system and into adulthood. The BSCF funding contributed critical on-site staffing to ensure successful youth tenancies.

Finally, collaborative efforts were successful with local partnerships with post-secondary institutions related to increasing access to safe community spaces by working with students to identify communities with limited or no access to community spaces or unsafe community spaces, including the identification of cost investments for each municipal/regional community space (e.g., lighting, landscaping, paving, and target hardening).

Priority 3: Mental Health and Substance Use Supports

The Mental Health and Substance Use Supports Priority focussed on promoting de-stigmatization of mental health and addiction issues and

raising awareness of existing supports to promote early intervention, prevention of substance use, and overall wellbeing.

Closely working partnerships between the Windsor Police Service, the Windsor Essex County Health Unit and the City of Windsor resulted in shared objectives of strengthening community safety and well-being through the opportunity to expand the existing work of the Windsor-Essex Community Opioid & Substance Strategy (WECOSS). Together, and with substantial funding (approximately \$1.4 million) over 3 years from the Community Safety and Policing grant, this partnership created the Substance Supports in Neighbourhoods Accessed through Police Partnerships (SSNAPP) which was a great success and achieved the following:

- Creation of individualized "community safety plans" for four high-priority areas disseminated and translated to over 1300 individuals;*
- Distribution of a SSNAPP education campaign promoting existing mental health and substance use services, Windsor Police services, the Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act, and the de-stigmatization of substance use;*
- Over 820 representatives from police services and local service providers across the region benefitted from relevant education and training opportunities about trauma informed care, CPTED, de-escalation, addition support and more.*

Our region saw the successful continuation and reprioritization of safe and effective emergency response to those in crisis with the continuation of crisis response teams through the Community Safety & Policing grants that include police and specialized teams (e.g. mental health/nurses). Collaborative local outreach events in partnership with Windsor Police Services, LaSalle Police Services and Ontario Provincial Police led to improving visibility and building community trust in emergency services with at-risk youth and residents.

Priority 4: Financial Security and Economic Equity

The Financial Security and Economic Equity Priority focussed largely on promoting local employment and increasing participation in local education and training as a proactive approach to prevention. A social policy review of support services was completed which identified the need to increase the awareness, understanding and implementation of trauma informed principles in services and related supports for those facing income insecurity and poverty.

In consultation with the Windsor Regional Employment Network (WREN), acting as the Service System Manager for Employment Ontario's Integrated Employment Service system, this Priority is being actioned effectively and with efficient use of resources. It is important to note that the WREN was

not established or funded at the time the CSWB Plan was established. Since that time, the WREN and its 11 Service Providers operating out of approximately 30 locations across Windsor Essex are working directly with clients to find the most appropriate employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities. Other related successes include:

1. Better Jobs Ontario (BJO) Program. Provides eligible unemployed individuals with up to \$28,000 in financial support for short-term training—52 weeks or less—in in-demand fields, helping them re-enter the workforce quickly.

2. Development and publication of a quarterly Labour Market Insights Report, which helps to understand the demographic shifts, labour market trends, and workforce development strategies within our region. Development of several publications including the Apprenticeship Guide, Better Jobs Ontario guide and Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) guide.

3. Development and launch of a comprehensive training program for Employment Ontario staff including access to training for Cultural Awareness, Motivational Interviewing, Job Development for people with disabilities and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

After receiving the information above, City Council resolved on May 26, 2025 to, among other things, approved the Progress Report and to submit same to the Ministry of the Solicitor General, and for City Administration to revise the Plan and bring it back before City Council for approval.

As pointed out by the Project Lead to City Council, the revision process has "followed a multi-phased approach to ensure the updated Plan is evidence based, inclusive and responsive to the unique needs of the Windsor-Essex community. A mixed methods data collection strategy will be used to reaffirm or identify new local priorities as well as realistic goals and implementation activities that can be achieved within a four-year timeline. As part of this process, a community engagement strategy will be implemented to gather input from a range of stakeholders. This will include an environmental scan, a survey of municipal and sectoral leaders, as well as focus groups and a public survey.

The revised Plan needs to be presented to and approved by both City Council and County Council, and the published online and provided to the Ministry of the Solicitor General by December 2025.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this Report, with the County's commitment to updating the Plan being covered through funds

approved as part of the 2025 Budget process at a budgeted amount of \$100,000.

Consultations

The content of this Report is based on consultations held with the RSLT and is based on the Plan and related Progress Report.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focusing “Team Essex County” for Results <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County’s Fair Share	<input type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That County Council receive Administrative Report Number 2025-0618-LLS-R32-DMS, Progress Report: Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan, as information; and,

That County Council approve the Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan and its submission to the Ministry of the Attorney General; and,

That County Council direct Administration to develop a revised Community Safety & Well-Being Plan in cooperation with the City of Windsor and the Regional Systems Leadership Table and to bring the said revised Community Safety & Well-Being Plan back before County Council for approval.

Approvals

Respectfully Submitted,

David M. Sundin

David Sundin, BA (Hons), LL.B., Director, Legislative and Legal Services/County Solicitor

Concurred With,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
A	Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan
B	Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan