

WINDSOR ESSEX COMMUNITY SAFETY & WELL-BEING PLAN

2026 – 2029



Funding provided by



WINDSOR ESSEX
**COMMUNITY SAFETY
& WELL-BEING PLAN**



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MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

On behalf of the Windsor Essex Community Safety & Well-Being Plan Advisory Committee, we are pleased to present the second iteration of the Windsor Essex Community Safety & Well-Being Plan (2026–2029).

The first iteration (2022–2026) of the Plan was a collaborative, community-driven effort that leveraged local strengths, resources, and best practices to proactively address safety and well-being risks. It established a strong foundation for cross-sector collaboration and inspired initiatives that extended well beyond its original scope.

The process to update the Plan, referred to as the “Refresh”, has been guided by a shared commitment to reflection, learning, and growth. This refreshed version builds upon past successes, incorporates lessons learned, and adapts to the evolving needs of our community.

Recognizing that community safety and well-being is the shared responsibility of governments, organizations, and residents, the refreshed Plan

has been shaped by data and informed by a broad range of dedicated stakeholders across multiple sectors and lived experiences.

The refreshed Plan is designed to be a living document that is responsive, flexible, and forward-looking. It emphasizes both immediate and preventative actions, going beyond legislative requirements to establish an adaptive framework that identifies regional and local priority risks, while fostering inclusive collaboration and collective impact.

We extend our sincere thanks to all municipal and sector leaders, community organizations, and residents who contributed their time, insights, and expertise throughout this refresh planning process. Your ongoing engagement and partnership are vital as we continue working together toward our shared vision of a safe, healthy, and thriving Windsor Essex region.



Dana Paladino
Commissioner, Human & Health Services

City of Windsor
Co-Chair CSWB Plan Advisory Committee



David Sundin
Director, Legislative & Legal Services

County of Essex
Co-Chair CSWB Plan Advisory Committee



We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which the City of Windsor is located is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, which includes the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomie. The City of Windsor honours all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and their valuable past and present contributions to this land.



We acknowledge the land on which the County of Essex is located is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomie Peoples. We specifically recognize Caldwell First Nation and other First Nations which have provided significant historical and contemporary contributions to this region. We also value the contributions of all Original Peoples of Turtle Island, who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial.

Our Vision

“A community where everyone feels safe, has a sense of belonging, equitable access to services and opportunities, and can have their needs met across Windsor and Essex County.”

This document presents the second iteration of the Windsor Essex Community Safety & Well-Being Plan. The regional Plan has been developed in accordance with provincial legislation and with guidance from area municipalities and community stakeholders to re-imagine how to address local crime and complex social issues through preventative and collective action. To achieve this goal, the Plan brings together municipal governments, sector leaders, local service providers, and local community groups and individuals to identify, contextualize and prioritize local and regional risks.



Building on a foundation of regional collaboration and recognizing that safety and well-being are shared responsibilities of all members of a community, the municipal leadership in the City of Windsor and County of Essex have come together to create a regionally focused plan that respects the unique identities and contextual needs of each area municipality. The City of Windsor and County of Essex will ensure the success of this multi-sectoral, community-based project. As champions of the Plan, area municipalities will assist in resourcing elements of its implementation, develop partnerships to leverage community-funding opportunities, and advocate to senior levels of government, when required.

Community members identified three key Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) priorities during consultations: Engaged Communities, Safer

Public Spaces, and Coordinated Systems.

Building upon the first iteration of the Plan as a collaborative, community-driven effort that leveraged existing strengths, resources and best practices to proactively address community risks, and laying the groundwork for strong cross-sector collaboration that supported initiatives extending beyond the original goals, the second iteration of the Plan will continue to build on strengths and partnerships, applying lessons learned and adapting to our community's evolving needs.

Ultimately, the Plan acknowledges that an ongoing process of issue identification and contextualization is necessary. The Plan is intended to act as a living document informed by continued collaboration and engagement with municipal, sector and community stakeholders as we work towards our vision of a safe and healthy region.

We are pleased to present the second iteration (2026–2029) “refresh” of the Windsor Essex Community Safety & Well-Being Plan (the “Plan”). This Plan builds on the successes and lessons learned from the implementation of the previous (2022–2026) Plan, and presents a refreshed approach that:

- **Is grounded in local data and community voice;**
- **Offers impactful and measurable directions;**
- **Is aligned with, supportive of, and complementary to other regional plans and initiatives, without duplicating efforts; and**
- **Extends available resources for maximal impact while remaining scaled to capacity**

2022–2026 Plan Review

The first Plan was approved by City and County Council in October and November 2021¹, respectively, and was submitted to the Ministry of the Solicitor General for approval in December 2021. The Plan’s four regional priorities were Good Governance and Data, Engaged and Safe Communities, Mental Health and Substance Use Supports, and Financial Security and Economic Equity. The Plan’s original timeline was five years ending in December 2026; however, following its approval and submission, the province revised its legislation requiring municipalities to update their plans every four years.

Much has changed since the development of the initial Plan in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic had profound social and economic impacts, inflationary increases in the costs of goods and services have increased financial strains, and significant housing shortages and rising housing costs have exacerbated vulnerability for many, all of which are correlated with increased use of substances and increased risks of adverse mental health. Despite these challenges, much was achieved in the initial Plan, as the highlights in Table 1 illustrate:

Table 1: Past Plan Highlights

Priority 1: Good Governance and Data

- Instituted a cross-sectoral CSWB Advisory Committee (Regional Systems Leadership Table) to inform implementation and provide guidance on emerging safety and well-being issues.
- Championed diverse governance by including government representatives, partners from health and mental health, education, community and social services, community and custodial services for youth, municipalities, police and public safety, and business, and voices of underrepresented communities drawn from the Enhanced Sector Network.
- Connected to and leveraged existing strategies (e.g., Windsor-Essex Community Opioid and Substance Strategy) and established Action Tables (e.g., Regional Crime Prevention Council) as needed to inform key goals and initiatives.

¹ City of Windsor. (2021). CR522/2021 in *City Council Meeting Minutes, November 15, 2021*. Windsor, ON: City of Windsor.; County of Essex. (2021). 229–2021 in *Essex County Council Meeting Minutes, November 17, 2021*. Essex, ON: County of Essex.

Priority 2: Engaged and Safe Communities

- Supported community initiatives and facilitated trainings, workshops, symposiums and community engagement events in collaboration with community leaders.
- Conducted a gap analysis and developed and distributed resource materials for individuals experiencing homelessness in with the County of Essex / Essex County Homelessness Hub and the City of Windsor's Housing Services / Housing Help Hub.
- Facilitated Neighbourhood Safety and Crime Prevention Walks in Windsor and all seven municipalities in the County of Essex with Police Service partners.
- Created a toolkit with St. Clair College, WE Spark and Police Service partners enabling local practitioners or residents to host Neighbourhood Safety and Crime Prevention Walks.
- Launched new and expanded initiatives with a three-year, \$2.9 million grant from Public Safety Canada, including an expansion of life skills programming to a youth supportive housing complex through a partnership with local, provincial and federal funding initiatives.
- Increased access to safe community spaces by identifying communities with limited or no access along with identifying cost investments for each space.

Priority 3: Mental Health and Substance Use Supports

- Worked closely with Windsor Police Service, the Windsor Essex County Health Unit and the City of Windsor to identify shared objectives and expand the existing work of the Windsor-Essex Community Opioid & Substance Strategy (WECOSS).
- Assisted in securing a \$1.4 million Community Safety and Policing grant to create Substance Supports in Neighbourhoods Accessed through Police Partnerships (SSNAPP) which was responsible for creating and disseminating "neighbourhood safety plans" for four high-priority areas reaching over 1300 individuals, educational campaigns promoting existing mental health and substance use services, Windsor Police services, the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act*, and destigmatization 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, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), de-escalation, addiction support and more.
- Helped continue and reprioritize safe and effective emergency mental health crisis response through Community Safety & Policing grants using policed teamed with mental health professionals.
- Supported collaborative local outreach events in partnership with Windsor Police Services, LaSalle Police Services and Ontario Provincial Police that led to improving visibility and community trust in emergency services with at-risk youth and residents.

Priority 4: Financial Security and Economic Equity

- Conducted a social policy review of support services and identified the need to increase awareness, understanding and implementation of trauma informed principles in services and supports for those facing income insecurity and poverty.
- Consulted with the Windsor Regional Employment Network (WREN), as the Service System Manager for Employment Ontario's Integrated Employment Service System to effectively and efficiently use resources. The WREN and its 19 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:
 - Support of the Better Jobs Ontario Program, which provides eligible unemployed individuals with up to \$35,000 in financial support for short-term training—2 years or less—in in-demand fields, helping them re-enter the workforce quickly.
 - 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.
 - 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.

Refresh Rationale

The development of the first iteration of the Plan was a large, resource-intensive and highly detailed undertaking with extensive engagement and comprehensive data collection throughout the region. In alignment with legislation, and in order to maximize existing resources, conducting a refresh was a fiscally responsible and efficient solution, by using the initial Plan's comprehensive engagement and data collection as a strong foundation for the refreshed Plan.



In the early 2000s, calls for new approaches to understanding and addressing safety and well-being were heard across the province. Through consultations and data analysis completed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, it became clear that crime and social disorder trends were changing as first responder calls for service were increasingly related to non-criminal activity.^{2,3} Recognizing that no single sector or skillset can address the complex and interconnected social challenges faced by Ontario communities (e.g., poverty, low educational attainment, access to affordable housing, substance use, etc.), the province developed the CSWB model.

The CSWB model rethinks traditional crime-centric safety interventions by moving towards collaborative multi-disciplinary approaches emphasizing prevention and social development.

In 2018, the provincial government made amendments to the *Police Services Act*. These amendments mandated that every municipality in Ontario prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan to comply with the *Police Services Act, 1990*; the *Safer Ontario Act, 2018*; and

the *Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA), 2019*. Under the legislation, municipalities and First Nations exercised their discretion and flexibility to develop individual or joint plans with neighbouring municipalities.

In partnership with agencies and organizations from many sectors, the City of Windsor and the municipalities of the County of Essex chose to come together to create a regionally focused plan that leverages existing strengths, resources and best practices to establish proactive approaches to counter identified local risks.

The team developed the first iteration of the CSWB Plan in accordance with provincial requirements, using the CSWB Planning Framework created by the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

In April 2024, the province updated the legislative framework governing CSWB plans in Ontario. The updated legislation requires municipalities to revise their plans within four years of adoption, and every four years thereafter.



² Russell, H.C & Taylor, N.E. (2014). New directions in community safety: Consolidating lessons learned about risk and collaboration. Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, Ontario Working Group on Collaborative, Risk Driven Community Safety. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Electronic Library, 2016.

³ Ministry of the Solicitor General. (2016). Community safety and well-being planning framework: A shared commitment in Ontario. [online] Retrieved from: <https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/Publications/MCSCSSOPanningFramework.html>

Evolution of CSWB Planning in Ontario



Ontario 

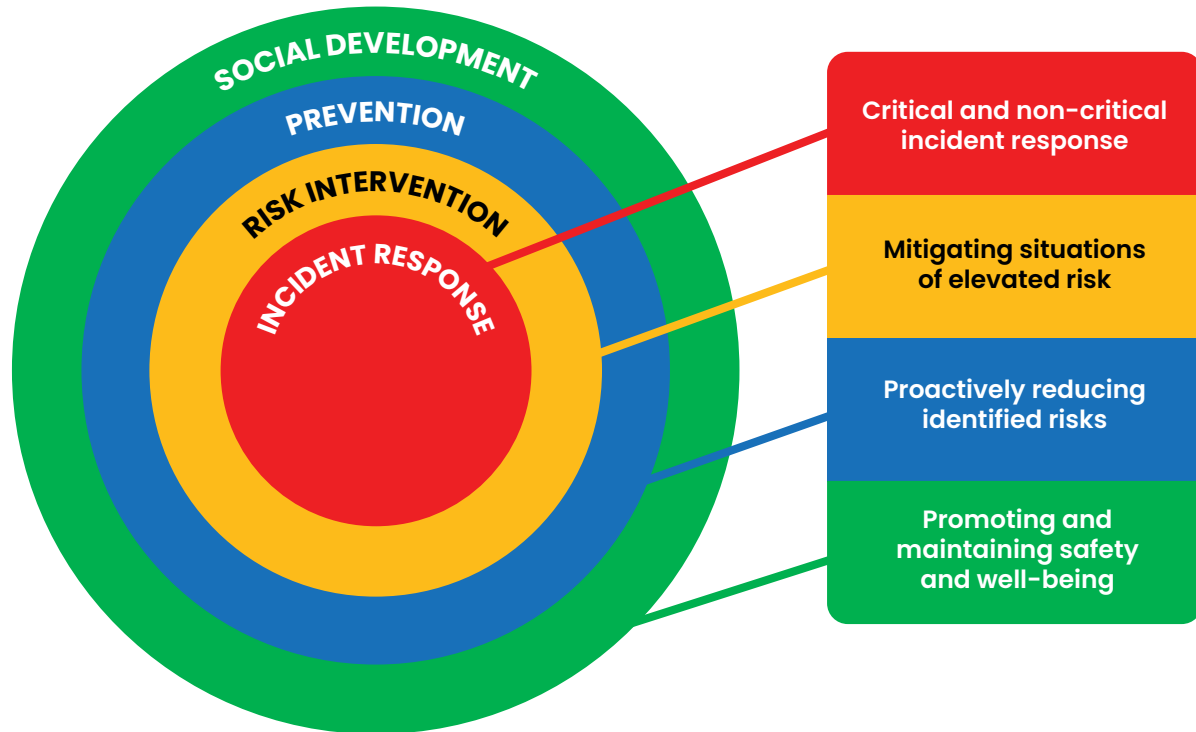
CSWB Legislation

The CSPA legislates that municipalities consult their advisory committee, members of the public, and community organizations to create and renew CSWB plans. In addition, the CSPA instructs municipalities to use data related to crime, victimization, addiction, drug overdose, suicide, and other risk factors to identify needs and prioritize solutions. Risk factors may include systemic discrimination and other social factors. Municipalities then set local priorities related to risk factors, identify strategies, and measure progress toward outcomes.



CSWB Planning Framework

The CSWB Planning Framework⁴, which forms the foundation of the previous and current Plan, promotes an integrated approach to service delivery through cross-sectoral collaboration to identify local risks to safety and well-being. Rather than focussing on incident response, the CSWB Planning Framework is proactive and preventative in nature, with an emphasis on social development, prevention and risk intervention.



Social Development: Social development requires long-term, multi-disciplinary efforts and investments to improve the social determinants of health and address longstanding systemic challenges. Planning in this area involves collaboration from a wide range of sectors and agencies and requires integrated and collective responses to address complex social issues.

Prevention: Prevention involves proactively implementing evidence-based strategies to reduce locally identified priority risks to community safety and well-being before they result in crime, victimization or harm. Prevention necessitates the involvement of all community members regardless of their expertise, as they can provide key information on their community experience (e.g., feelings of safety, fear, and sense of belonging).

Risk Intervention: Planning in this area involves addressing and responding to situations of acutely elevated risk of harm, or situations where immediate action is needed to prevent an emergency or crisis. Risk intervention requires multi-sectoral partnerships that commonly involve the provision of wrap-around supports.

Incident Response: Critical or non-critical incident response is what is traditionally thought of when referring to crime. Planning in this area commonly involves immediate and reactive responses and primarily involves emergency response services like police, fire, and emergency medical services.

⁴ Ministry of the Solicitor General. (2024). Community safety and well-being planning framework: A shared commitment in Ontario. [online] Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/community-safety-and-well-being-planning-framework-booklet-3-shared-commitment-ontario/section-2-community-safety-and-well-being-planning>

Impacts and CSWB Planning Benefits

The Plan is designed to work across sectors to learn about and respond to local risks before they escalate into crime. The Ministry of the Solicitor General has identified several key benefits related to CSWB planning efforts, including:

- **Enhanced communication and collaboration among sectors;**
- **Increased understanding of and focus on priority risks, populations and/or neighbourhoods;**
- **Increased awareness and access to services; and**
- **New opportunities to share multi-sectoral data and evidence to identify community trends, gaps, priorities and successes.**

In addition to improving collaboration, research has shown that allocating resources to implementing strategies and programs that are proactive and focused on community-based prevention initiatives targeted at the root-causes of crime, not only reduces the financial burden of crime on society, but is also cost-effective and results in significant return on investments.^{5,6}

Through an upstream approach, the collaboratively agreed-upon purpose of this Plan is to reduce the number of incidents that require enforcement by shifting to more proactive, preventative efforts that focus on social development, prevention, and risk intervention. Developing strategies that are preventative as opposed to reactive will ensure efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of safety and well-being service delivery across Windsor Essex.

The Ministry of the Solicitor General is currently developing a CSWB Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) which will help to inform future planning, support evaluation of local CSWB plans, and provide an overview of planning at a provincial level. The PMF will focus on outcomes in the immediate term, intermediate term, and longer term. The PMF is targeted for completion in early 2026 and will support action planning at the local level.



⁵ Public Safety Canada (2016). Tyler's Troubled Life: The story of one young man's path towards a life of crime. [Ottawa: ON]

⁶ Russell, H.C & Taylor, N.E. (2014). New directions in community safety: Consolidating lessons learned about risk and collaboration. Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, Ontario Working Group on Collaborative, Risk Driven Community Safety. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Electronic Library, 2016.

The process of refreshing the first iteration of the Plan was scoped to available resourcing but remained thorough. A comprehensive needs assessment and the facilitation of a community engagement strategy formed the foundation for the refresh process. The results of this process were detailed in an environmental scan report and supported the development of the refreshed Plan.

Data

Data used to inform the first iteration of the Plan were updated where available as context for the current Plan refresh. Figure 1 offers broad regional highlights on changes since the last Plan.

Figure 1: Highlights from Data Review



Demographics

Essex County is growing in population as well as changing in composition, with more seniors, newcomers, visibly diverse and Indigenous residents.



Education

Education achievements have remained consistent in general. However, more 25–64-year-olds have secondary school diplomas and more students in grade 6 and 9 at or above EQAO provincial standards.



Housing

More people are living in unsuitable housing, and rates of homelessness and chronically homeless continue to rise. More people are spending 30% or more of their income on housing.



Mental Health and Substance Use

Demand for mental health supports remains high. There are more deaths from self-harm reported and Emergency Department (ED) visits for self-harm and opioid poisonings have increased. Opioid-related hospitalizations have also risen.



Crime and Victimization

While overall there has been a reduction in crime severity and a reduction in drug, property and traffic crimes, rates of assaults, sexual assaults and violent crime have risen.



Financial Security

More people are struggling to meet basic needs and levels of unemployment are high. Rates of low-income post COVID have risen. As the population ages, more residents will be leaving the labour market.



Environment

With changes to climate, Windsor-Essex is seeing more air quality, cold and heat-related Emergency Department visits and more smog advisories.



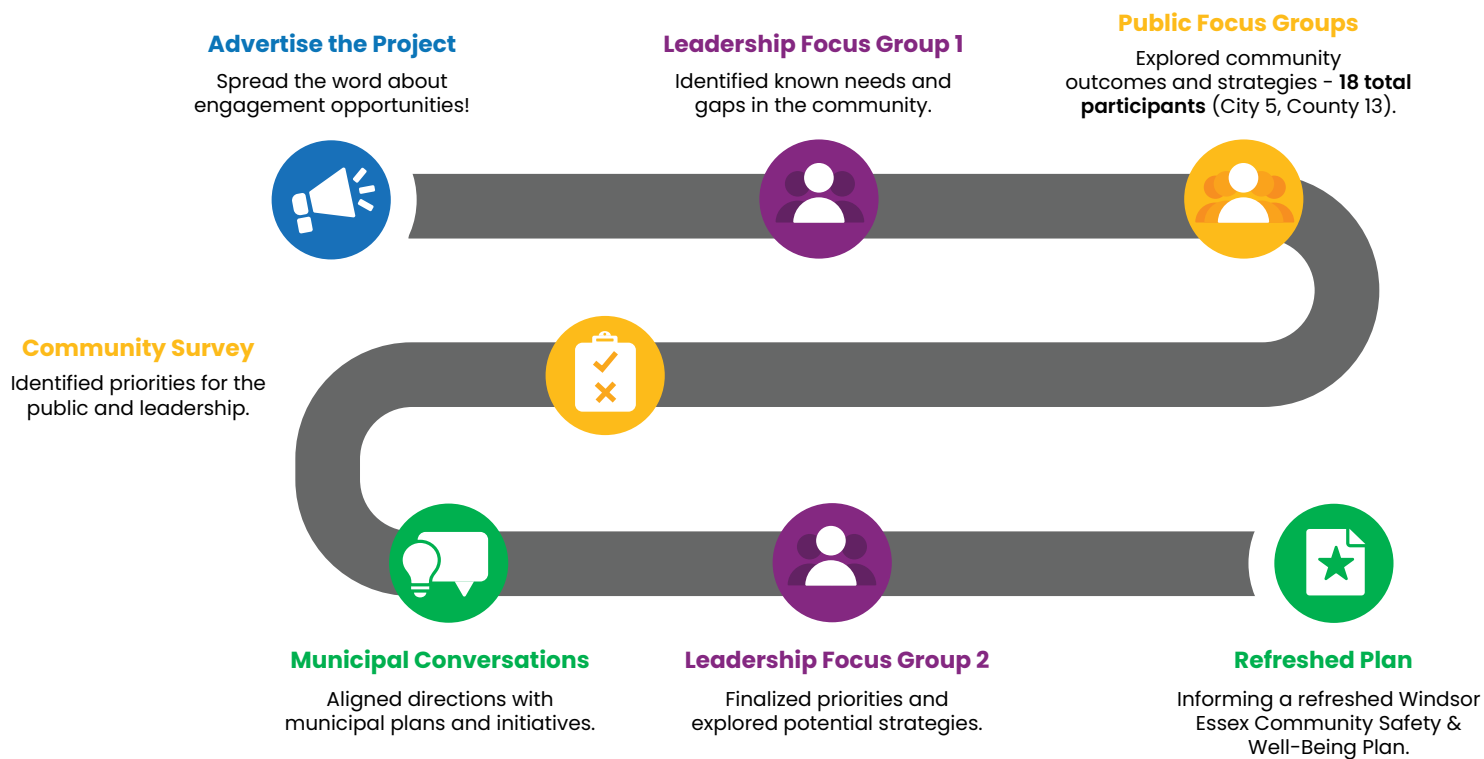
Physical Health

More residents report being overweight or obese, not consuming enough fruits and vegetables, and not engaging in enough regular physical activity. Fewer households are food secure, and the cost of nutritious food has gone up.

Engagement

Figure 2 illustrates the six-month refresh engagement strategy. This process included public consultation activities (focus groups and survey) that engaged 746 individuals across the city and county, as well as meetings with CSWB leadership members inclusive of community partners, members of the Regional Crime Prevention Council, and municipal representatives to help identify needs, priorities, and strategies, and to align with existing regional plans and initiatives. Engagements also captured voices of priority groups including youth, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit and racialized community members, and community organizations, including those representing mental health or addictions services.

Figure 2: Engagement Supporting Plan Refresh



Throughout the engagement with community members five broad goals emerged as most important to stakeholders.



1

THE GOAL:

Create safer public spaces and improve responses to community concerns

What this means to people:

Timely responses to safety concerns (e.g., Sandpoint Beach)

Addressing homelessness, drug use and crime

Making specific locations safer (downtown Windsor, county, etc.)

Opportunities for residents to share concerns and result in actions

"What role can the strategy play in identifying how our community feels about itself? How does the CSWB plan foster local pride? How do we talk about our challenges (i.e. high rates of child poverty, in a strategic way."

"Address mental health, substance use and create affordable housing. Please speak to the front line staff that work with these populations to get ideas on how to help."

"Improve public safety. Listen to the community and what is being asked for. Prioritize spending on programs/solutions that enhance public safety."

"We want to hear kids laughing and playing outside again."



2

THE GOAL:

Make it easier for people to know about services and get the help they need when and where they need it

What this means to people:

Raising awareness of services

Improving service navigation

Ensuring equitable access to services

Recognizing the consequences of lack of services

Encouraging formal and informal resource sharing

Leadership taking action

"Even though we have community resources... those needing them find it difficult to navigate the system."

"People... fall through the cracks and end up in precarious housing, health or economic circumstances."

"It is important that the region works together to meet these goals. Without complete cooperation, these goals will not be achieved."

"Service delivery is one of the jobs of the municipality... if we are not aware of the services... the job is being done improperly."



3

THE GOAL:

Encourage families, neighbours, and local groups to help build community safety

What this means to people:

Residents are part of the solution but need education

Authorities alone are not enough

Helps build belonging as well as addressing crime concerns

Safety as foundational to community building

"We need a police presence and also strong community groups that advocate for our safety needs."

"Neighbours need to help each other feel safe in their communities, including emergency management."

"Many people in our community don't know enough about safety; it is important to encourage them to."

"Building safe and strong communities must come from the people who live in the community."



4

THE GOAL:

Promote opportunities for positive youth development

What this means to people:

Youth are the future and can contribute positively so need prevention and holistic supports

Youth need safe, accessible, inclusive community spaces

Some youth face greater challenges than others

Family supports can benefit communities

"If youth are central to our planning, many future problems will be reduced."

"Kids don't have anywhere to go or things to do, no 'third spaces' for them to hang out."

"A broad range of activities and services are needed to address this issue.... from youth clubs to a complete overhaul of mental health services."

"We need more opportunities for youth to engage in positive experiences and opportunities. There is not enough low barrier activities in our community for children and youth to engage in."



5

THE GOAL: Support neighbourhood events and programs that bring people together

What this means to people:

Builds social connection, belonging, community pride, and enhances neighbourhood safety, livability and vibrancy

Opportunities for accessible, inclusive fun, achieved through grassroots collaboration

Creating hyper-local opportunities that don't require travel

"Supporting neighborhood events... fosters community connections, boosts local businesses, and enhances a sense of belonging and civic pride."

"Neighbours would watch out for each other more if they knew each other." "I think bringing people together creates a sense of community and belonging."

"Grassroots neighbourhood change is a dramatically impactful change."

"The more community events that are accessible to everyone the more the community comes together and creates a safe environment for all."

These broad goals, combined with feedback provided, were weighed with a number of other considerations to inform the creation of the refreshed Plan's pillars and activities.

Considerations

Lessons Learned

In revisiting the implementation of the initial Plan and strategizing for the refreshed Plan, consideration was given to building on successful strategies. Key takeaways in terms of optimizing what worked well and what was limiting included:

Successful Strategies	Things to Avoid
1. Building on trust-based partnerships and relationships. 2. Leveraging existing strengths and commitments to drive inclusive planning. 3. Aligning with broader community goals and plans. 4. Empowering community engagement and visibility. 5. Strengthening front-line collaboration to improve communications and build public trust. 6. Investing in specialized expertise.	1. Underestimating time and capacity demands. Overestimating available resources. 2. Having unclear authority and overlapping mandates. 3. Overly broad or complex goals. 4. Misalignment with prevention scope of the plan. 5. Ongoing engagement that cannot be sustained.

Legislative Changes

In addition to being guided by lessons learned, the refreshed Plan has also been informed by ongoing changes at the provincial level.

Governance Structure

The advisory committee for the initial Plan, formerly known as the Regional Systems Leadership Table (RSLT) was comprised of local leaders from multiple sectors who were responsible for guiding the Plan's implementation. The City of Windsor's Commissioner of Human and Health Services, and the Director of Legislative and Legal Services from the County of Essex have acted and will continue to act as the Plan's Co-Chairs.

Capacity

Capacity was another consideration in creating the refreshed Plan. The province has not provided direct funding to municipalities to implement

Community Safety & Well-Being Plans. At present, City and County Council equally contribute towards the Plan's implementation. In turn, this shared funding approach has provided the foundation for the millions of dollars of additional funding secured to support activities and required to maintain momentum and sustainability.

Administration successfully partnered with organizations and secured funding for our region in multiple CSWB priority areas. Since 2022, a total of \$4.4 million has been directly tied to primary activities for the Plan, including the City of Windsor receiving \$2.9 million over three years for the Building Safer Communities Fund, ending in 2026.

However, grants are not assured and can only support so many needed initiatives. As a result, the initial Plan was also actioned with the intention to expand reach and impact on existing budget through alignment with other plans and leveraging, repurposing and reimagining existing resources.





Our Vision

“A community where everyone feels safe, has a sense of belonging, equitable access to services and opportunities, and can have their needs met across Windsor and Essex County.”

The Plan (2026–2029) is built on the following three key pillars.

Engaged **COMMUNITIES**

Safer public **SPACES**

Coordinated **SYSTEMS**

Table 2 provides a one-page summary of the pillars, goals, and activities in the 2026–2029 Plan, as they align with the Provincial CSWB Planning Framework.

Table 2: Plan Summary in Alignment with the CSWB Planning Framework

Engaged Communities	
GOAL: Empower residents of all ages and backgrounds to build meaningful connections, foster shared responsibility, and encourage community safety and well-being.	
CSWB Framework Alignment	
Develop Framework for Good Neighbour Program	Social Development
Lead a Youth-Crime Prevention Working Group and Advisory Committee	Prevention
Create a Community Safety Small Events Fund	Social Development
Create, Support and Advertise a Community Safety Resource Hub	Social Development
Safer Public Spaces	
GOAL: Enhance the safety, accessibility, and inclusivity of public spaces by identifying local risks, implementing practical safety solutions, and fostering shared responsibility.	
Support Expansion of Neighbourhood Watch Programming	Social Development
Pilot Regional Community Safety Audits	Prevention
Support Safe Needle Disposal and Wellness-Related Initiatives	Prevention
Support Community Safety Considerations in Planning	Prevention
Support Early Interventions to Reduce Overall Service Need and Crisis Intervention	Risk Intervention
Support Safe and Effective Emergency Response to Those in Crisis	Incident Response
Coordinated Systems	
GOAL: Strengthen community safety and well-being through coordinated, system-wide approaches that embed equity and collaborative planning into municipal services, community engagement, and frontline response.	
Expand Regional Crime Prevention Council	Social Development
Increase Awareness, Training and Capacity Building Related to Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)	Prevention
Leverage and Expand Utilization of Trauma-Informed Training	Prevention
Support Continued Development of the Situation Table	Risk Intervention

Governance

This Plan will include an advisory committee, formerly known as the Regional Systems Leadership Table, as described in the legislation, and will continue to adapt to updates set forth by the Ministry of the Solicitor General. The advisory committee will oversee the Plan's implementation and, upon recommendation, develop action tables to further define and implement specific activities as defined in the Plan. It is important to note that the advisory committee is not a Committee of Council.



ACTION TABLES: The CSWB Advisory Committee will identify and connect with existing tables/committees to lead implementation where appropriate. The CSWB Advisory Committee will be responsible for creating Action Tables on an as needed basis to fill any gaps. Action Tables will have representation from municipalities and sector experts.



Alignment with Partners and Plans

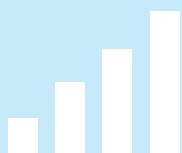
A wide range of regional and local plans and strategies were consulted to guide this work. At the regional level, this included but was not limited to *Home, Together: Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Master Plan*, *WECOSS: An Action Plan for Our Community*, *Provincial Policy Statement: Municipal Planning Standards, 2020*, and *Pathway to Potential: Windsor-Essex County Poverty Reduction Strategy 2024–2028*. Locally, reviews included police service strategic plans, the *Strengthen the Core – Downtown Windsor Revitalization Plan*, and municipal strategic plans from across the region. We also engaged with municipal departments and community partners, including but not limited to Planning, Housing, By-Law/Licensing, Parks, the Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee, the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, and the Safety Village.

The following section provides additional plan details, including high level indicators.

ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

GOAL: Empower residents of all ages and backgrounds to build meaningful connections, foster shared responsibility, and encourage community safety and well-being.

POTENTIAL INDICATORS



Change in sense of belonging

Number of people involved in plan activities

Support Development of Framework for Good Neighbour Program

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
Good Neighbour initiatives aim to promote respectful, safe, and cooperative communities by encouraging responsible behaviour and awareness of local by-laws, promotion of solution-focussed discussion, concurrence on reasonable expectations, and a standardized complaint process. They can take many forms, and can also be used as a vehicle to correct misperceptions about the scope and role of existing services (e.g., harm reduction, homeless serving roles).	Easily understood policy expectations alleviate conflict through shared understanding and expectation By-law enforcement can be facilitated to promote community safety

Lead a Youth-Crime Prevention Working Group and Advisory Committee

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
This initiative is designed to ensure youth crime prevention is a core component of the Plan. A Youth-Crime Prevention Working Group will be supported by a Youth Advisory Committee comprised of youth. The focus of the Youth Advisory and the Working Group will be to identify and action opportunities to enhance community safety through positive youth development initiatives.	Lack of positive opportunities for youth engagement can lead to youth-related crime Encouraging and supporting youth to “have a voice” in the Plan aligns with legislation and empowers youth to be a part of the solution

Create a Community Safety Small Events Fund

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
This initiative is designed to support grassroots, resident-led events that foster community connection, inclusion, and safety. By offering small grants to individuals, community groups, or neighbourhood associations to organize events that bring people together in public or shared spaces, the fund seeks to build linkages between community members with shared safety concerns and promote community safety resources.	Provides regional access to resources responding to hyper-local needs Encourages residents to address, create and implement responses to local safety challenges

Create, Support and Advertise a Community Safety Resource Hub

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
The purpose of this initiative is to support residents in building stronger, more connected communities by providing them with resources to learn about safety, build connection, understand their rights and responsibilities, and organize activities and events.	Sharing of resources makes it easier for community members to become engaged in the community safety and well-being An interactive, one-stop source is scalable and can grow as resources are created



SAFER PUBLIC SPACES

GOAL: Enhance the safety, accessibility, and inclusivity of public spaces by identifying local risks, implementing practical safety solutions, and fostering shared responsibility.

POTENTIAL INDICATORS



Change in perceived safety

Number of programs/events created

Reductions of incidents requiring police response and intervention

Support Expansion of Neighbourhood Watch Programming

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
Neighbourhood Watch Windsor is a community-driven crime prevention initiative where neighbours work together to improve local safety by keeping an eye out for one another and reporting any suspicious behaviour. Its goal is to lower crime rates by nurturing a sense of security and discouraging criminal activity. Although the program serves Windsor and Essex County, regional programs could benefit from additional support.	Leverages existing resources to create safer places Engages more neighbourhoods across the region in crime prevention and the promotion of local safety

Pilot Regional Community Safety Audits

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
The purpose of the Community Safety Audits is to connect residents, municipal administration, and appropriate service providers to identify, prioritize and explore perceived “unsafe” public spaces and adjacent private spaces, to generate recommendations for improvements. The location of Community Safety Audits will be recommended by residents and stakeholders and supported by data. The Safety Audits will utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles.	Increases community knowledge of safety and crime prevention and fosters shared responsibility Identifies safety improvements throughout the region

Support Safe Needle Disposal and Wellness-Related Initiatives

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
Sharps bins in high-risk areas are designed to prevent accidental punctures, cuts, and the spread of bloodborne pathogens by providing a designated, puncture-resistant container. Ongoing collaboration and data review with partners will optimize current and future sharps bin locations. This initiative will foster community partnerships and support harm reductive wellness-related activities and/or trainings to protect the community at large and vulnerable populations.	Creates safer public spaces by empowering residents with knowledge and decreasing the likelihood of encountering physical harm

Support Community Safety Considerations in Planning

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
Supporting community safety concerns in municipal urban planning involves integrating design, policy, and community engagement strategies to create environments that are safe, inclusive, and resilient. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is one strategy, when applied to planning, that helps build community safety at a foundational level. This policy-rooted initiative aims to support a proactive approach to safety in development by providing a framework and/or training to municipal staff and other local providers about CPTED and related frameworks, and how to assess a new development through a CPTED lens. This initiative will explore the feasibility of embedding the highest standard safety considerations in municipal planning practices.	Creates safer public spaces through CPTED principles Moves communities in the direction of consistent high safety standards



Support Early Interventions to Reduce Overall Service Need and Crisis Intervention

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
Promote de-stigmatization of mental health and addiction issues and raise awareness of existing supports to promote early intervention and overall well-being through the development of Community Safety Plans.	Creates safer public spaces through promotion of existing supports and tailored safety plans

Support Safe and Effective Emergency Response to Those in Crisis

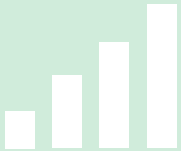
Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
Expand and strengthen programs that leverage crisis response teams that include both police and mental health workers (e.g., Youth Crisis Response Team, Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team, etc.).	Increases community safety through immediate crisis response



COORDINATED SYSTEMS

GOAL: Strengthen community safety and well-being through coordinated, system-wide approaches that embed equity and collaborative planning into municipal services, community engagement, and frontline response.

POTENTIAL INDICATORS



Number of coordination activities in progress/completed

Number of services (municipal and community) with access to coordination activities

Expand Regional Crime Prevention Council

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
The purpose of the Council is to act as a resource by providing data, expert guidance and recommendations to proactively address current and emerging broad-based community safety concerns. Regional members may include but are not limited to: police, municipal administration (Housing, Public Works, By-Law, Licencing, Parks, WECHU/WECOSS) and service providers.	Creates opportunities for expert advice on community safety and wellbeing issues Establishes pathways for current issues to be shared throughout Plan implementation

Leverage and Expand Utilization of Trauma-Informed Training

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
Trauma-informed training enhances both community safety and the delivery of inclusive, equitable services and care by equipping individuals and organizations to recognize and respond to the effects of trauma with empathy, respect, and cultural awareness. This approach reduces the risk of re-traumatization, de-escalates potentially volatile situations, and fosters trust between service providers and community members—especially those from marginalized or historically underserved groups. Efforts will continue to build on the foundation of providing trauma-informed training to municipal administration and community services providers.	Addresses identified need for universally accessible and responsive services Offers a foundation for delivering services that are optimized for future community needs, with a focus on preventing crime and victimization

Increase Awareness, Training and Capacity Building Related to GBV/IPV

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
With gender-based violence (GBV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) declared an epidemic across Windsor Essex County and an identified priority, municipal and community service providers require the skills and knowledge to respond effectively and inclusively. Expanding partnerships with local initiatives such as the Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee Windsor Essex (VAWCCWE) will strengthen awareness and community capacity. Training and educational opportunities will be available for regional municipal and community providers, building their ability to identify, respond to, and make appropriate referrals for clients experiencing GBV/IPV. Capacity building will continue through the identification and sharing of additional educational opportunities, including those targeted at responding to the unique needs of diverse communities experiencing GBV/IPV, and by increasing awareness of GBV/IPV services across the region.	Aligns with declaration of IPV epidemic, creating opportunities for action Ensures system leaders have the knowledge, skills, and ability to deliver policies and services that are responsive to GBV and IPV

Support Continued Development of the Situation Table

Initiative Purpose and Description	Connection to Goal
The Windsor & Essex County Situation Table's focus aligns with the broader notion of enhancing community safety and well-being. The Situation Table was established in response to a recognized need to coordinate resources and services to better serve community members with more complex needs. The purpose of the Situation Table is to bring together diverse front-line service providers across Windsor and Essex County, to collaboratively mobilize appropriate short-term community services. Support will be provided to encourage collaboration, strengthen inter-agency and community relationships, and build trust and respect between community service providers.	Responds to situations of acutely elevated risk before a crisis occurs Develops collaborative, multi-disciplinary interventions Promotes opportunities to enhance community planning (i.e. opportunities, barriers, recommendations, post-intervention satisfaction)

The Plan represents the second iteration of a process toward community safety and well-being that must involve residents, municipal and sector leaders, and collaborators from various backgrounds and levels of experience. In keeping with the living document approach, the CSWB Advisory Committee will reflect upon, incorporate and utilize lessons learned during the implementation process.

Community members, local leaders, and subject matter experts consistently emphasized that the approaches used to understand regional priorities and guide decisions were just as important as the actions themselves. This feedback informed the development of the following implementation principles in the Plan's first iteration that will continue to guide our understanding of identified priorities, and our work towards change within each area of focus.

Representation and Inclusion: Due to intersectionality, the complex social challenges faced by the region impact historically underrepresented communities more deeply than others. The path forward must include and support representative voices and those with diverse lived experiences at both the decision-making and partnership levels.

Collective Action: Committees, agencies and groups across multiple sectors are already working tirelessly to address the complex social challenges facing our region. Working in partnership with existing organizations to leverage, support or build upon the strengths and assets of our communities is a fundamental key to success.

Community Engagement: Everyone has a role to play in the safety and well-being of our communities. Actions to mitigate the physical, financial and linguistic barriers to participation that some community members may experience are vital to support meaningful participation. These actions include utilizing engagement approaches that help reduce barriers to participation, provide community members with opportunities to provide meaningful input, and track progress.

Data & Evaluation: Data and evidence-based strategies are critical for effective collective action, advocacy and resource allocation. Partners collaborate to share and analyze cross-sector data, recognize the need to address data gaps, and evaluate progress on identified initiatives and activities, making their involvement vital to the process. While writing this Plan, the province actively worked on creating a performance measurement

framework (PMF) for community safety and well-being planning. The purpose of the PMF is to provide a method for municipalities and partners to evaluate the success of local plans while offering a window into planning at the provincial level. The Plan's initiatives were intentionally aligned with the projected PMF outcomes, despite the province not having formally launched the PMF. The anticipated completion date of the PMF is early 2026. Plan activities will be accompanied by logic models detailing outcomes, outputs, inputs, and indicators related to each activity, which are in line with best practices identified by the Ministry.

Sustainable Funding: Establishing sustainable funding for the CSWB goals and initiatives will be a key principle of implementation. Building on the success of securing funding during the first cycle of the plan, identifying and pursuing additional funding opportunities will be essential to sustaining its ongoing impact. All funding and financing sources will need to be explored as part of every initiative, as there may be options for federal, provincial or community partner funding beyond investment by Windsor and the Essex County municipalities.



Community Safety and Well-Being: the ideal state of a sustainable community where everyone feels safe, has a sense of belonging, opportunities to participate, and where individuals and families are able to meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression.

Social Determinants of Health: the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These are protective factors of health and well-being, including access to income, education, employment and job security, safe and healthy working conditions, early childhood development, food security, quality housing, social inclusion, cohesive social safety network, health services, and equal access to all of the qualities, conditions and benefits of life without regard to any socio-demographic differences. The social determinants of health are the same factors which affect individual, family and community safety and well-being.

Risk Factors: characteristics, conditions or influences present in the lives of individuals, families, communities or society that may increase social disorder, crime and fear of crime, or the likelihood of victimization.

Protective Factors: positive characteristics or conditions that can moderate the negative effects of risk factors and foster healthier individuals, families and communities, thereby increasing personal and/or community safety and well-being.

Priority Populations: in alignment with feedback from community members and subject matter experts, the term priority population is being used to describe communities and groups who due to social, systemic, structural or historical factors have increased susceptibility to adverse risk factors. In the context of this project, identified priority populations include but are not limited to Indigenous communities, racialized communities, 2SLGBTQ+ folk, accessibility communities, youth, newcomers, seniors, persons with lived or living experience of homelessness, and persons with lived or living experience of substance use.

Crime Prevention: the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the actions taken – including the integrated community leadership required – to remove or reduce it.

Acutely Elevated Risk: a situation negatively affecting the health or safety of an individual, family, or specific group of people where there is a high probability of imminent and significant harm to self or others (e.g., offending or being victimized, lapsing on a treatment plan, overt mental health crisis situation, etc.). In these situations, agencies and organizations may be permitted in legislation to share personal information in order to prevent imminent harm. This often involves circumstances that indicate an extremely high probability of the occurrence of victimization from crime or social disorder, where left unattended, such situations will require targeted enforcement or other emergency, incident response.



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Project Team Members

Dana Paladino

David Sundin

Stephen Lynn

Michelle Oake

Amanda Alchin

Creative Momentum Consulting Team Members

Julie Fraser, Creative Momentum Consulting

Allison Prieur, Dare Impact Consulting

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WINDSOR ESSEX
**COMMUNITY SAFETY
& WELL-BEING PLAN**

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