

2022-2025

# PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

## Community Safety and Well-being Plan



**The County**  
PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY ♦ ONTARIO

## Land Acknowledgement

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*We acknowledge that the County of Prince Edward is on traditional land that has been inhabited by indigenous peoples from the beginning. We thank all generations of people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years. We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to the land.*

*Today, the County of Prince Edward is still home to many First Nations and Métis people, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to meet here, work, and continue stewardship on this land.*

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### **A NOTE ABOUT LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

A land acknowledgement statement is a recognition of the land that we are on. We speak these words with appreciation for the generations of peoples who have occupied and cared for the land. Land acknowledgements affirm our responsibility to continue to care for the land. Land acknowledgements offer respect to Indigenous peoples and their history with the land. It is important that these words are paired with actions that further the goals of truth and reconciliation.

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## From the Mayor of Prince Edward County



An updated Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) Plan for Prince Edward County is a welcome development for this community. The COVID-19 pandemic deepened the impact of some pre-existing issues that our community faced, while also causing other concerns to emerge. Furthermore, significant changes within in our community and the world around us have forced us to grapple with new and pressing challenges.

This CSWB Plan 2022-2025 reflects the new reality we face as we emerge from the global pandemic and continue on the path to recovery. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of more than 20 community agencies and many other participants, this plan outlines a number of thoughtful and evidence-based recommendations in five priority areas: housing and homelessness, seniors support, poverty reduction, mental health and problematic substance use, and domestic violence and intimate partner violence. Together, they provide a vision for making this community a safe, more accessible and equitable place for all.

Realizing this vision must not fall to one or even a handful of groups, agencies or public bodies. It will take all of us -- working collaboratively -- to make progress on achieving the goals outlined in this plan over the next several years. I truly believe this is possible. The people of Prince Edward County are passionate about their community and their sense of civic-mindedness shines through on a daily basis. By working together, we can create a safer and stronger community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Ferguson'.

Steve Ferguson  
Mayor, County of Prince Edward

## From the Chair of the CSWB Advisory Committee



On behalf of the Prince Edward County Police Services Board and the Community Safety and Well-being Advisory Committee, I am very pleased to present the 2022-25 Community Safety and Well-being Plan (CSWB Plan). The Plan is the culmination of 10 months of collaboration among community partners.

The County's municipal Council passed the first CSWB Plan in 2018 for the period of 2018-2021. Ann McIntosh was the facilitator of the Plan. She and OPP Commander Staff Sergeant John Hatch provided Council with an update on the plan in January 2020. The complication of the COVID-19 pandemic placed the implementation of the Plan on hold. In November 2020, Council passed a motion to create a new Terms of Reference for an updated Plan. At the same time, the Police Services Board (PSB) made a recommendation to Council to extend the plan to the end of 2022.

During this time, the PSB and the local OPP worked on new strategies to decrease victimization and the number of calls for service. We focused on the priority areas of the plan: domestic violence, homelessness and mental health. We know that social disorder situations, rather than criminal activity, are the cause for most police calls in The County. With this in mind, we continue to focus on crime prevention and community well-being.

In 2021, the PSB asked Council to allow them to continue to monitor and assist in the development of the CSWB Plan. Council provided funding to the PSB to hire a facilitator to assist the Board with the revised Plan.

As Chair of the CSWB Advisory Committee, I have worked closely with our new facilitator Lauri Prest and the five Action Teams. We collaborated to revise the Plan and have outlined steps to better coordinate among stakeholders. Through social development, prevention and risk intervention, we can begin to address existing and emerging issues in The County.

This Plan will work together with a variety of municipal plans and policies. We have worked closely with the Affordable Housing Corporation to ensure alignment with their ongoing policy development and upcoming affordable housing projects.

As evidence demonstrates, successful long-term sustainability of a Plan like this requires a facilitative approach. I am advocating for funding from the municipality and upper levels of government to support this facilitative approach and participatory leadership of the five Action Teams.

Our vision is for The County to be a community known for vibrancy, inclusivity and resiliency. There are gaps in service and barriers to safety and well-being in our

community. By exploring these gaps, we can create a healthier and more sustainable quality of life in Prince Edward County. We commit to ensuring that all residents have access to safe, reliable services and programs, including support for our most vulnerable.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R. Gwozdowski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small mark at the end.

Rick Gwozdowski  
Chairperson, PEC Police Services Board  
Chairperson, Community and Safety Well-Being Advisory Committee

## Foundational Commitments



**ACCESSIBILITY:** We will ensure that this plan supports everyone, regardless of physical or mental disabilities in accessing the full range of services, products and environments of Prince Edward County.



**ANTI-OPPRESSION:** We acknowledge that oppression is real. It is intersectional in its impact upon the community, and it is built into the structures of society. We seek to mitigate the effects of oppression wherever possible to make our community safer, more accessible and equitable for all people of The County.



**COLLABORATION:** We recognize the need for all groups to work together in a mutually supportive and collaborative way. Working together will help us tackle the systems of oppression and create new, more equitable ones.



**DIVERSITY:** We value diversity as a community asset. It is important for all citizens of The County to work together to create a safe and strong community.



**EQUITY:** We strive for equitable outcomes rather than equal opportunity. We will give tailored attention and support to equity-seeking members of our community. We are seeking a more just and fair society for all.



**INCLUSION:** We commit to seeking participation and representation of all citizens. We value inclusion regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, country of origin, religion, geography, economic status and/or physical or mental disabilities.

# The Plan in a Nutshell





## Executive Summary

This plan provides a broad overview of Prince Edward County's safety and well-being goals. More than 20 community agencies and representatives participated in developing these goals. The plan contains recommendations for actions to undertake over the **next four years**.

In this document, readers will find a summary of the philosophy behind the creation of a CSWB Plan. The Plan includes a description of the design principles and process used. This document describes how the authors collected and used information to create a **data-driven plan**.

The plan organizes the community goals into **five priority areas** with broad objectives. Each priority area includes in-depth data and contextual information to inform the recommendations. The plan includes a description of the recommended strategies and approach in each priority area.

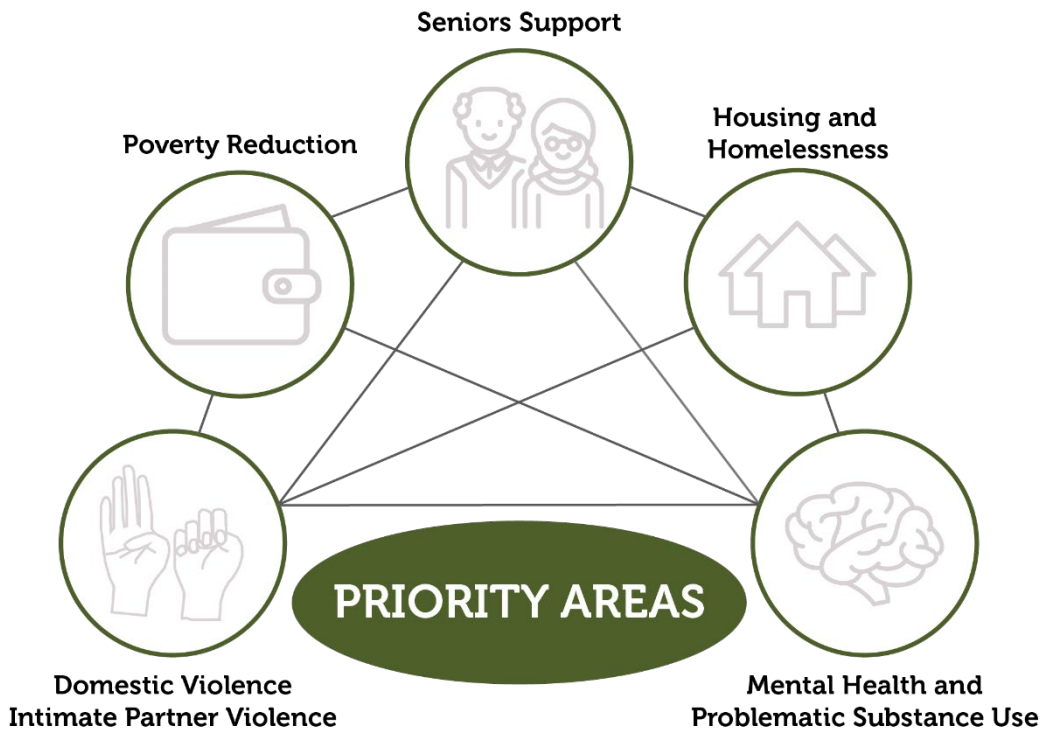


Figure 1: A diagram that shows the interconnectedness of the five priority areas: Seniors Support, Housing and Homelessness, Poverty Reduction, Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence and Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use.

This document uses acronyms throughout. Whenever an acronym is used, it will be spelled out in its entirety first. A glossary of acronyms is available at the end of the document.

## CSWB Process at a Glance

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Terms of reference** for the updated Plan are created and presented to Council.



### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An **Advisory Committee** for the updated Plan was assembled, bringing together primary stakeholders from the previous Plan and new organizations that have been established in the interim.



### ASSEMBLY OF ACTION TEAMS

The Advisory Committee established the **priority areas**, using local and Provincial statistics and data on the major community issues. Members of the Advisory Committee participated in **Action Teams**. These Action Teams defined goals and strategies for each priority area.



### CREATION OF DRAFT PLAN

From the Action Team recommendations, the Plan is compiled and a draft is presented to Council for **preliminary approval**.



### IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

After early approval, Action Teams meet again to develop an **implementation plan**.



### FINAL PLAN TO COUNCIL

Final Plan is submitted to Council for **approval**, and strategic actions begin.

## Five Priority Areas

The five priority areas of the CSWB Plan were decided through a review of the previous Plan, consultations with various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and a review of existing data sources. Three of these priority areas were addressed in the previous CSWB Plan (Seniors Support, Poverty Reduction and Mental Health and Addiction) while two new priority areas were added in 2022 (Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence and Housing and Homelessness).

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### Housing and Homelessness

Housing is a challenge facing all communities in Ontario, and Prince Edward County is no exception. Secure housing is tied to the physical, mental and social health of the community, as well as the health of the workforce, the welfare of children and the ability of people to receive education and maintain employment.

#### Community Safety and Well-being Goals

- ✓ Mitigate the impact of the housing crisis through collaborative and innovative solutions.
- ✓ Reduce the number of calls for service for unhoused people.



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### Seniors Support

Seniors make up a large proportion of the population of Prince Edward County. Supporting the senior population is a priority of this Plan. Seniors are disproportionately targeted as victims of online fraud and phone scams. The ability to stay mobile is an important factor in seniors' well-being. Independence, social bonding and financial control all contribute to seniors' health and well-being.

#### Community Safety and Well-being Goals

- ✓ Reduce fraud victimization of seniors.
- ✓ Increase mobility access for seniors in The County.
- ✓ Support independence, social connection and financial security for seniors.



**3**

**Poverty Reduction**

For the purposes of this Plan, "poverty" is defined as having a lack of access to financial resources. This may include having a low income and low financial literacy. Some people who live on low incomes do not obtain the benefits that they qualify for.

**Community Safety and Well-being Goals**

- ✓ Increase access to existing financial and social supports for people living in poverty.
- ✓ Coordinate between those supports to achieve better outcomes for residents living in poverty.



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**Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use**

Prince Edward County has seen a decline in the mental health of its residents in recent years. Problematic substance use has risen in the community. Mental health challenges and problematic substance use are often linked. There are many barriers to accessing services for mental health and problematic substance use.

**Community Safety and Well-being Goals**

- ✓ Reduce harm related to problematic substance use.
- ✓ Reduce the number of mental health-related calls for service.



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**Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence**

Domestic violence and intimate partner violence include the many forms of violence and non-consensual sexual harm or exploitation that can occur between people who have family or intimate relationships. Domestic and intimate partner violence have significant impacts on individual and community health.

**Community Safety and Well-being Goals**

- ✓ Reduce harm related to domestic violence and intimate partner violence.



# Priority Areas



## Priority Area 1: Housing and Homelessness

### COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING GOALS

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- Mitigate the impact of the housing crisis through collaborative and innovative solutions.
  - Reduce the number of calls for service for unhoused people.
- 

#### **Background**

Housing is another intersectional policy area which is currently a concern for most Ontarian municipalities whether rich or poor, rural or urban, small or large. A stable number of attainable housing units isn't just a concern about shelter. Housing is intimately tied to the local labour force, the physical, mental and social health of a community, the welfare of children and the education they receive, the ability for residents to maintain employment and more.

Communities like Prince Edward County are beginning to understand the many factors that contribute to keeping people housed. There is a growing understanding of the intersectionality of homelessness and that people experiencing homelessness may be chronically or episodically homeless. That homelessness may be visible or invisible in the community. Housing has become an increasingly important topic for policymakers and community leaders.

#### **Affordable housing**

Housing affordability is typically defined as a household spending less than 30% of its gross income on accommodation. Historically, upper levels of government played a significant role in addressing affordable housing supply, but this role has been diminished in recent decades. Responsibility for social housing programs has been delegated to local social services providers (locally to Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services). Municipalities can influence housing affordability through land use planning tools, but the roles and authorities of municipalities are narrowly defined.

While access to affordable or attainable housing is considered a local crisis in Prince Edward County, it is a global issue influenced by global forces. Any actions that come from the CSWB Plan must be monitored and evaluated in the context of these global forces.

### **The County perspective**

- ✓ Housing costs have increased dramatically in The County, rising over 300% in the last decade, and 200% in the last two years. This is due to many factors including the proliferation of short-term accommodations, second home buyers, low housing supply and high demand caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ The average home price in The County climbed from \$693,000 in September 2020 to \$1.371 million in March 2021 according to data from the Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation. These prices have cooled somewhat since interest rates were increased in the second quarter of 2022.
- ✓ The median after-tax household income in The County rose just 21% from 2015-2020. Home prices have increased at a pace that is ten times the increase in after-tax income.
- ✓ Only 16.9% of County residents are renters, compared to 30.2% of Ontarians, according to 2016 data.
- ✓ The average rent for a studio apartment in PEC rose from \$717 in September 2020 to \$1,095 in June 2022. One-bedroom units rose from \$1,288 to \$1,516 in the same period. This indicates a severe shortage of rental housing units.
- ✓ As of February 2022, 875 households were on the 4 to 6 year waiting list for housing units through Prince Edward-Lennox and Addington Social Services (PELASS). This list is continuing to grow more quickly than affordable housing becomes available.
- ✓ The local economy is dependent on the tourism sector, which generally offers lower-paid seasonal work. This, coupled with high housing costs creates vulnerability to labour shortages within the local economy.

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ The Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation (PECAHC) was formed in 2020 to address the local affordable housing crisis as part of The County's municipal strategic plan. The Corporation is governed by an independent board of directors, but the staff are municipal employees and work closely with other municipal departments. This arrangement has made it more efficient for the Corporation to advance affordable housing projects in partnership with the municipality. PECAHC has multiple

projects in development or in due diligence at the time of publishing this plan.

- ✓ The municipality made multiple changes to zoning and building by-law provisions in 2022. These changes were designed to promote a greater mix of housing options within Prince Edward County and to stimulate density and affordability.
- ✓ Through Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services, there are 242 Rent Geared to Income Units, Affordable Units and Market Rent Units in Picton and Wellington as well as approximately 42 Rent Supplement Units.

## Recommendations - Housing and Homelessness

<b>Strategy 1: Embrace new financial mechanisms to support and incentivize the creation of more affordable housing</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To develop a structure and coordinated approach to tackling poverty and its related effects within the municipality. This structure should include municipal, provincial, federal and non-governmental stakeholders.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Coordinate with the Thrive PEC project to align with the efforts of the Housing and Homelessness Action Team.</li> <li>✓ Engage the community in conversation around the economic impact of community funded housing.</li> <li>✓ Develop community investing initiatives for social housing. These could include developing a community bond fund, collaborating with upper levels of government on social impact bonds or collaborating with large foundations to organize capital.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 2: Provide support for tenants to help find and maintain affordable housing</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To connect individuals with available affordable housing units
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Collaborate with service agencies to provide education on accessing resources. Embed a "no wrong door" approach to help people navigate the support system.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop a communications campaign to help tenants understand their rights under the Residential Tenancies Act.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 3: Develop a collaborative housing and homelessness evaluation and monitoring plan</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To monitor the impact of the strategies and actions implemented by the Housing and Homelessness Action Team.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Build the implementation plan with evaluation in mind. Re-assess evaluation needs throughout the planning process.</li> <li>✓ With the lead organizations of each Action Team and the County Foundation Vital Signs Coordinator, select the most relevant local indicators of success.</li> <li>✓ Collaborate with the County Foundation to develop a monitoring plan and an Affordable Housing "report card" that can be presented at community conversations for discussion among stakeholders.</li> <li>✓ When Housing and Homelessness Action Team strategies have action plans, develop a performance accountability plan for each strategy.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 4: Develop integrated communities that include housing across the housing spectrum</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To create opportunities for more individuals to participate in an unaffordable market and reduce homelessness.
<b>Timeline</b>	Long-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Explore the need and availability of shelters and emergency housing in Prince Edward County. Consider different solutions and determine the approach that meets local needs (i.e. warming centre vs. emergency motel vs. traditional shelter for example).</li> <li>✓ Preserve the existing affordable housing units administered through Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services.</li> <li>✓ Support the development and construction of modular homes and tiny homes as solutions for increasing rental housing stock. Develop a tiny home community available for rent through PECAHC.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Develop communications materials that emphasize the affordability crisis and that strongly support new housing projects. Counter the "not in my backyard" mentality by emphasizing the community benefits of affordable housing.</li></ul>
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## Priority Area 2: Seniors Support

### COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING GOALS

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- Increase seniors' mobility and safety in getting around.
  - Reduce harm to seniors caused by fraud.
  - Support seniors' independence, social connection and financial security.
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#### Background

Seniors make up a large proportion of the population of Prince Edward County. Community safety and well-being in The County is necessarily tied to the safety and well-being of our large senior population.

- ✓ Since 2016, the number of people aged 65 and older living in The County increased 16.6%. This is slightly below the Ontario-wide rate of 17.1% over the same period.
- ✓ Seniors account for over a third of The County's population.
- ✓ The median age of County residents in 2021 was 56.8 years old. This is 15.2 years older than the provincial median age of 41.6.

#### Seniors and Fraud

According to the Ontario Provincial Police, seniors are disproportionately the targets and victims of online fraud and phone scams. There are many factors that make seniors attractive targets for fraudsters including their potential wealth, age-related decline in cognitive capabilities, or social isolation, for example.

Fraudsters are experts at what they do. It is important to remember that while seniors are disproportionately targeted by fraudsters, they are not the only targets.

Research indicates that fraud is highly underreported. As little as 5% of incidents of fraud are reported to authorities according to the Canadian Fraud Centre. There is also

significant social stigma attached to victims of fraud. Victims may feel shame or embarrassment and do not seek help or report the crime to authorities or support agencies.

### **The County perspective**

- ✓ In 2021, there were 149 incidents of fraud reported in The County, up 71% from the seven-year average. (This increase may be related to increased awareness and comfort with reporting.)

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ The previous CSWB Plan addressed seniors and fraud through awareness campaigns. These campaigns tried to educate seniors on the most common forms of fraud and how to avoid it. The campaign included multiple sessions held over three years.

## **Supporting Seniors' Mobility**

As people age, a major factor in well-being and safety is the ability to stay mobile and get around one's community. Maintaining mobility later in life, and the ability to get around independently is important for both mental and physical well-being. But getting around later in life often means driving or using medical scooters and mobility aids.

### **The County perspective**

- ✓ Prince Edward County has a large geography and low population. Most amenities are clustered in Picton and Wellington, with large portions of the population living in rural areas and smaller hamlets. Using a car to get around feels all but necessary for most members of the community, regardless of age.

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ The OPP and PEC Community Care for Seniors have jointly hosted scooter "rodeos" in the past as a community bonding event. The goal of the events was to raise awareness of how to operate medical and mobility scooters safely. The events featured safety demonstrations, mobility aid sales, and a scooter riding course.
- ✓ Community Care has operated a specialty transportation system for seniors for decades. They support essential shopping trips and medical appointments.
- ✓ The County Transit public transit system was established in 2019. The system includes four regular runs between Picton and Belleville, with on-demand service for the Western regions of The County. County Transit provides on-demand door-to-door service for seniors and disabled riders.

## Maintaining Independence, Social Connections, and Financial Security

A sense of independence, social bonding and the ability to control one's finances [is crucial](#) for the maintenance of health throughout life. Seniors, perhaps one of the more isolated groups in society even prior to the pandemic, are particularly vulnerable to feelings of isolation or losing their independence or social connections. A report of the national Federal/Provincial/Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for Seniors [reports that there has been a 67% increase in feelings of loneliness](#) for women aged 65-74, and a 45% increase for men, with lower gains for those genders after the age of 75.

### The County perspective

- ✓ In Prince Edward County, 27% of households are occupied by a single inhabitant, many of whom are seniors.
- ✓ Prince Edward County is a tight-knit rural community. Prior to the pandemic, seniors participated in an abundance of outdoor and volunteer activities. These opportunities are slowly returning.
- ✓ Local challenges to seniors' independence and connection include the requirement for a car or driver's licence to access most amenities, the limited capacity of rural internet and a decrease in Personal Support Workers (PSWs) in recent years.

### What can we build on?

- ✓ Community Care for Seniors has been performing regular wellness check-ins with seniors during the pandemic. Volunteers call all clients on a semi-regular basis to check in on well-being and address feelings of social isolation.
- ✓ The municipality supports the Community Care Seniors' Active Living Centres, helping to leverage funding from the province for these services. These programs encourage seniors to enjoy fitness classes and social activities in all wards of The County, closer to home.

## Recommendations - Seniors Support

<b>Strategy 1: Build on existing fraud prevention programs</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To better educate seniors on the dangers and new forms of online fraud. To reduce the social stigma associated with reporting fraud.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue existing programs using infrastructure already in place. (I.e. educational materials, OPP officers, Community Care for Seniors, etc.)</li> <li>✓ Expand scope of programs with a focus on reporting and counteracting social stigma. Shift goal from reducing incidences of fraud to strengthening reporting and reducing stigma.</li> <li>✓ Expand reach of program. Hold sessions and regular workshops in schools, community centres and event spaces. Recognize and support the diverse make-up of those who fall victim to fraud.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 2: Develop a long-term, strategic fraud education program</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	Create a long-term fraud education program. This regular program would be based in a strategic plan for a long-term response.
<b>Timeline</b>	Long-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Seniors Support Action Team would be responsible for developing the program.</li> <li>✓ Recognize the long-term and necessary nature of fraud education. Develop a regular communications and educational plan. Describe the recruitment, training and deployment of fraud campaign educators/officers.</li> <li>✓ Plan for regular review and updating of the fraud education plan. Encourage responses to new and evolving scams. (i.e. cryptocurrency, Canada Revenue Agency phone calls, grandparents scam, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 3: Launch a pedestrian safety campaign</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To better educate the public on pedestrian safety and the use of mobility scooters and devices.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium term

<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Build on existing work to launch pedestrian safety events in schools, community centres, and long-term care homes.</li> <li>✓ Continue the mobility scooter "rodeo" events. Create engaging opportunities to inform the public about the safe use of mobility devices.</li> <li>✓ Expand awareness of the program through an enhanced communications campaign.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 4: Advocate for continued municipal funding of active living programs for seniors</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure the continued availability of active living and mental health welfare programs for seniors.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Advocate for budgeted, medium- to long-term municipal funding for these programs.</li> <li>✓ Advocate for municipal communications and promotional support for seniors' wellness resources.</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 3: Poverty Reduction

### COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING GOALS

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- Increase access to existing financial and social supports for people living in poverty.
  - Coordinate between those supports to achieve better outcomes for residents living in poverty.
- 

#### Background

For the purposes of this Plan, "poverty" is defined as having a lack of access to financial resources. This may include having a low income, and/or low financial literacy.

- ✓ According to 2020 census data, 10.1% of residents (2,545 people) in Prince Edward County were considered low income based on the After-Tax Low-Income Measure (LIM-AT). This is the same as the provincial average.
- ✓ This a decrease from 13.5% of residents in 2015, while the provincial average decreased from 14.4%.
- ✓ Statistics Canada has warned that these 2020 data are complicated by the impacts of the pandemic and related government supports. 2020 income figures were significantly inflated nation-wide as a result of pandemic-related benefits.

#### Tax filing and accessing benefits

Some people who live on a low income do not obtain the benefits that they qualify for. Sometimes this is because people face barriers to filing their taxes. These barriers may range from a lack of knowledge on how to file, how to obtain help, or how filing can benefit individuals and their families. Other people who live in poverty may file their taxes, but miss opportunities to obtain benefits because they are unaware that they qualify or are unable to navigate the application process.

There are opportunities for low-income residents to apply for federal and provincial benefits such as the Canada Child Benefit or the Ontario Electricity Support Program. These benefits can add up to hundreds or thousands of dollars of additional financial



resources for families. Community Volunteer Income Tax Programs can be a useful support for navigating these systems.

### **The County perspective**

- ✓ The Federal Community Volunteer Income Tax Program is targeted support for people with no income or modest income and simple tax situations. As stated above, 10.1% of Prince Edward County residents are considered low-income and many are likely to qualify for these programs.

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ Community Care for Seniors and Prince Edward Learning Centre (PELC) operate Community Volunteer Income Tax Programs. These programs offer benefits screening to help identify financial benefits, credits, community services and life stabilization supports that clients may be eligible for.
- ✓ In 2022, PELC completed more than 170 benefits screenings through the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program. This program has helped clients access more than \$98,000 in unclaimed benefits and credits. Some of these clients had multiple years (up to 10 years) of filings that were incomplete.
- ✓ These programs have also helped clients navigate the complexity of the COVID-19 benefits system.

## **Poverty-reduction coordination**

Poverty is an intersectional issue that can be intertwined with each of the priorities of this CSWB Plan, plus many other factors not addressed here. The Poverty Reduction Action Team members understand that there are factors that made poverty worse in The County before the COVID-19 pandemic, but were aggravated by the pandemic. The Action Team identified the following factors as important to a coordinated poverty-reduction strategy:

**Supportive and connected communities:** Opportunities for community connection are available to people on a low income. There are sufficient events, spaces, and resources offered to build relationship and connection within the community. Involvement in the community is financially accessible and non-stigmatizing.

**Availability of affordable housing:** There are sufficient housing options that match the incomes of different low-income groups within the community.

**Incomes that support a basic standard of living:** Workers are earning a living wage that keeps up with inflation and allows for a basic standard of living.

**Job stability:** Alternative work arrangements are available to ensure all individuals have equal opportunity to work.

**Mechanisms to protect against sudden life events:** Individuals are protected against sudden events that put them at risk of poverty.

**Access to services and supports used by people on low-incomes:** Services have the capacity to meet demand, there are diverse services available, there is adequate funding and services are offered in accessible ways.

### **The County perspective**

- ✓ A survey conducted with clients of the PELC Benefits Screening program suggested that food insecurity was a major concern. 28.7% of clients said they do not have enough food to eat including fresh fruits and vegetables. 39.6% said they "sometimes" do not have enough. 85.7% were experiencing food insecurity or struggling with the high cost of groceries.
- ✓ The same survey indicated that 48.2% of clients were struggling with meeting basic needs. 47.6% were struggling with the high cost of utilities.

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ Many agencies and municipal committees are currently working to address the factors that intersect with poverty. Examples including the municipal Food Security Working Group, the County Food Collective, the Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation, Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services, the food security programs offered by more than a dozen agencies in The County, and the financial empowerment programs offered by PELC and Community Care For Seniors, to name just a few. The Poverty Reduction Action Team recommends a central poverty reduction policy or roundtable that would function with full commitment from the municipality.

**Recommendations - Poverty Reduction**

<b>Strategy 1: Establish a poverty reduction roundtable</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To develop a structure and coordinated approach to tackling poverty and its related effects within the municipality. This structure should include municipal, provincial, federal and non-governmental stakeholders.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Advocate for commitment from the municipality. This could include designating a staff position to support poverty-related issues, including food insecurity. This could also include joining the Tamarack Institute’s “Communities ending poverty” collective impact movement, examining how municipalities can mitigate poverty.</li> <li>✓ Designate resources within the CSWB implementation plan to support collaboration through the Poverty Roundtable.</li> <li>✓ Align goals of the Poverty Roundtable with “Communities Ending Poverty” initiative.</li> <li>✓ Adapt pre-existing programs to better meet the needs of The County (e.g. advocating to provincial and federal governments to increase financial supports available to the community)</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 2: Advocate for sustainable funding for financial empowerment programs</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure the sustainability of financial empowerment programs that have been proven to have positive outcomes for the community.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Increase awareness among the public and decision-makers of the benefits of financial empowerment programs. This could be done through presentations to Council and committees and evidence-based reporting.</li> <li>✓ Advocate for a municipal financial commitment to long-term, budgeted funding that provides stability to existing financial empowerment programs.</li> <li>✓ Advocate for the continuance and expansion of the Municipal Financial Relief Grant pilot program.</li> </ul>

<b>Strategy 3: Implement a coordinated community service navigation system</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	Reduce barriers that residents face in accessing poverty-related services and programs.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Through the implementation of the CSWB Plan, the municipality would play a coordinating role in community service navigation.</li> <li>✓ Start a process using a simplified methodology of systems design (e.g. Prosper Canada; single application, interconnected consent form, etc.) and provide training to front-line staff in the referral network.</li> <li>✓ Respect the diversity of organizations and systems that already exist in the community. Work to interconnect operational methods rather than replace them.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Engage, as a community, in a system design process to explore the lived experiences of current system of programs and opportunities.</li> <li>○ Identify ways in which the experience can be streamlined. Implement systems change to create a coordinated systems response to connect service needs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Develop a communications plan to tell residents where to access the service and to increase overall awareness of current services.</li> <li>✓ Assess capacity of current service offering and increase the capacity of current service offerings if needed.</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 4: Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use

### COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING GOALS

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- Reduce harm related to problematic substance use.
  - Reduce the number of mental health-related calls for service.
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#### Background

In the past two decades, mental health has become a priority of governments, communities, healthcare systems and non-profit organizations. At the same time, we are growing our understanding of how addictions and dependence on problematic substances are linked to our mental health. Mental health and problematic substance use are often addressed jointly from a policy perspective. A National Institute on Drug Abuse study noted that [up to 50% of individuals diagnosed](#) with a mental health disorder will also be diagnosed with a substance use disorder at some point in their lives.

#### Mental health and problematic substance use in general

Mental health and problematic substance use was a priority of the previous CSWB Plan, though the terminology has changed. Previously referred to as "mental health and addictions," the shift in terminology acknowledges that not all individuals who struggle with substance use are diagnosed with a substance use disorder. Also, not all substances that cause harm are problematic in and of themselves, nor are they necessarily criminal or illicit substances. It is the problematic use of the substance, and the consequences that follow, that the CSWB Plan seeks to address.

#### The County perspective

- ✓ Prince Edward County has seen a decline in the quality of mental health of its residents, as well as a rise in the level of problematic substance use. Data from the Hastings Prince Edward Public Health Unit indicates that the region's hospital

admissions for opioid, cannabis and alcohol use are generally higher than the provincial average.

- ✓ The mental health of youth has suffered during the pandemic. According to Statistics Canada only 40% of 15-24-year-olds reported that their mental health as "good" in 2020. In 2019, the number reporting "good" was 60%. Lower graduation rates, rising substance abuse and school disengagement remain a cause for concern among County youth. Youth reported barriers such as long wait times for mental health services, the lack of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer (LGBTQ+) and Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) counselors and a lack of transportation to services.

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ There are services in the community that support people with mental healthcare needs or problematic substance use behaviours. The Action Team determined that perhaps the most significant factors that influence access to these services are the number of services available and individual access or financial barriers to the services.

## **Hoarding**

Hoarding is a psychiatric diagnosis assigned to individuals who excessively save items and the idea of discharging items causes extreme stress. Hoarders cannot bear to depart from any of their belongings which results in excessive clutter to the extent that it impairs functioning and may create a health and safety risk.

### **The County perspective**

- ✓ County first responders have noticed an increase in hoarding situations when responding to calls for service in recent years.

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ An informal hoarding coalition exists in Prince Edward County, comprising agencies like Prince Edward County Fire and Rescue, Addictions and Mental Health Services - Prince Edward, and Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services.

## **Bullying**

As defined by Bullying Canada, bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose, and the person being bullied has a hard time defending themselves. Bullying is a pattern of behaviour, not a one-off incident of rudeness. It is targeted and happens over the long term. There is usually a power imbalance between the bully and the bullied. This power imbalance is often informed by race, gender, sexuality, class or other social factors.

Bullying Canada states that one in three adolescent students have reported being bullied and almost half of Canadian parents have reported a child that is the victim of bullying. Cyberbullying has emerged as a common form of bullying among adolescents. Bullying can lead to physical and mental health issues, substance use for coping, difficulties with school and learning and increased suicidal ideation.

### **The County perspective**

- ✓ In a recent survey of BIPOC conducted by All Welcome Here, 100% of BIPOC students at Prince Edward County Collegiate Institute reported being victim to race-based bullying.
- ✓ The OPP does not receive a significant number of calls for service related to bullying; however, the experience of front-line agencies indicates that bullying is an underreported issue and that it remains a cause for concern for youth in the community.

### **What can we build on?**

- ✓ The OPP Community Safety Officer has conducted cyberbullying education in the school system. The school system and the police are important partners, but not the only partners who can contribute to anti-bullying education.
- ✓ Children's Mental Health Week occurs every May. This national campaign can be useful for raising awareness on a local level.

**Recommendations - Mental health and problematic substance use**

<b>Strategy 1: Develop a PEC mental health and problematic substance use collective to support the coordination and collaboration of services</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To provide peer support services to people who are living with mental health and problematic substance use issues
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop a collaborative communications plan that includes shared objectives between agencies.</li> <li>✓ Increase coordination and collaboration of mental health and problematic substance use programming and training.</li> <li>✓ Develop a centralized and accessible system to increase awareness of other services among service providers.</li> <li>✓ Create a referral protocol based on a "no wrong door" approach. Create a working group of major stakeholders that agree to design, adopt and consult with the public regarding this policy before implementing and training staff.</li> <li>✓ Reactivate the Harm Reduction Task Force under the OPP and the Mental Health Working Group that disbanded in 2020, staffed by community partners.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 2: Expand peer support networks</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To connect individuals with available affordable housing units
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Work with the expanded Mental Health and Substance Use Peer Support Networks to design terms of reference for a working group that will fulfill these functions. The working group may design standardized recruitment, training and referral programs for any organization in The County, consult with other service providers and develop an action plan to implement these programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 3: Re-invigorate and formalize the local hoarding coalition</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To support individuals struggling with hoarding in PEC to prevent health and safety issues.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium term



<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Working with existing partners in the hoarding coalition, review what other jurisdictions are doing to address hoarding and gain knowledge about hoarding behaviours.</li> <li>✓ Determine a suitable service model for clients and service providers for Prince Edward County.</li> </ul>
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**Strategy 4: Support a community initiative to prevent problematic substance use and related risky behaviour by youth**

<b>Purpose</b>	To build community momentum behind a strategy that addresses problematic substance use and related risky behaviour in youth.
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<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
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<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assemble a working group of youth, education, mental health and addiction and community agencies to develop a strategy and initiative to prevent problematic substance use and other related risky behaviours by youth.</li> <li>✓ Advocate for financial and other resource support for the implementation of this community initiative.</li> </ul>
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**Strategy 5: Develop a collaborative mental health & problematic substance use evaluation and monitoring plan**

<b>Purpose</b>	To monitor the impact of the strategies and actions implemented by the Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use Action Team.
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<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
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<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Build the implementation plan with evaluation in mind. Re-assess evaluation needs throughout the planning process.</li> <li>✓ With the lead organizations of each Acton Team and the County Foundation Vital Signs Coordinator, select the most relevant local indicators of success.</li> <li>✓ Collaborate with the County Foundation to develop a monitoring plan and a Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use "report card" that can be presented at community conversations for discussion among stakeholders.</li> <li>✓ When Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use Action Team strategies have action plans, develop a performance accountability plan for each strategy.</li> </ul>
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**Strategy 6: Develop a PEC bullying collective to create collaborative strategies to reduce the harms of bullying in the community**

<b>Purpose</b>	To reduce the harms caused by bullying through collaborative programs and services
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assemble relevant partners, including but not limited to the school boards, OPP, mental health and community agencies that serve youth in the region. Collaborate on strategies that not only raise awareness of bullying but also attempt to address the root causes of bullying in the local community.</li> <li>✓ Engage youth - particularly LGBTQ+, BIPOC and youth living in poverty - to develop strategies and peer support programs.</li> <li>✓ Connect with Bullying Canada, Children's Mental Health Week and other agencies to obtain existing educational and public awareness content.</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 5: Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence

### COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING GOALS

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- Reduce harms caused by domestic violence and intimate partner violence.
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#### Background

This priority area focuses on reducing harm to residents and community members caused by different types of domestic violence and intimate partner violence. For the purposes of this Plan, these are defined as:

- ✓ **"Domestic" or "Family violence"** is any form of abuse or neglect that a child or adult experiences from a family member or from someone with whom they have a relationship in their home.
- ✓ **Intimate partner violence** is physical, sexual or psychological harm caused by a current or former partner or spouse.
- ✓ **Sexual violence** or **sexual exploitation** is any sexual violence or exploitation that happens outside of the family or intimate partner setting.

#### Domestic and intimate partner violence reporting

There are resources in the community to assist people experiencing domestic and intimate partner violence. But accessing these resources or reporting to police is complicated for many victims. The Action Team acknowledged that domestic and intimate partner violence is underreported and that statistics are limited tools for understanding the issue in the community.

##### The County perspective

- ✓ In The County, domestic violence appears to have decreased on average in recent years, based on reported incidents. There have been spikes in reported incidents that can be explained by global factors. In 2018, reporting of sexual

assaults from the past spiked likely as a result of the #MeToo movement. In 2020-21, the pandemic lockdowns created unsafe conditions for people trapped at home with abusers.

- ✓ Locally, Alternatives for Women reported a 48% decrease in the seven-year average of clients experiencing domestic or intimate partner violence. They also saw a decrease of 5% in the number of crisis calls they received.
- ✓ Local factors that are believed to impact the rate of reporting include the rural nature of The County and the potential for isolation, the lack of affordable alternative housing options for victims, lack of transportation and childcare to support victims, and lack of LGBTQ+ supports.
- ✓ Despite these trends, and acknowledging the limitations of reporting statistics, this Plan continues to prioritize domestic and intimate partner violence. The Action Team acknowledges the significant impact that domestic and intimate partner violence has on individual and community health and the need for continued focus.

**What can we build on?**

- ✓ Alternatives for Women and Victim Services are key supports for women experiencing domestic and intimate partner violence.
- ✓ The Action Team identified three phases of intervention: primary (preventing domestic violence before it occurs), secondary (preventing domestic violence from recurring after incidents) and tertiary (mitigating the long-term impacts of domestic violence.) Primary intervention is difficult to address within the context of the CSWB Plan. The Action Team prioritized secondary and tertiary interventions among the Plan strategies.

**Recommendations - Domestic violence and intimate partner violence**

<b>Strategy 1: Develop a system for collaborative safety planning</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To increase awareness and coordination of domestic violence services and support
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Re-establish the High-risk Action Review Team (HART). This team does collaborative case management for high risk domestic violence cases.</li> <li>✓ Establish a Domestic Violence Coordinator position within the County OPP detachment. The role of this position would be a single point of contact for all domestic and intimate partner violence cases. They would identify the victim's needs, complete risk assessments and determine whether the case should be referred to HART.</li> <li>✓ Develop a process for collaborative safety planning that clarifies and formalizes the referral pathway.</li> <li>✓ Create an inventory of all service providers involved in addressing the needs of victims of domestic and intimate partner violence. This inventory can be used to connect clients to more specialized services such as transportation, parenting support and financial counselling.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 2: Increase the availability of existing supports and educational resources for domestic violence and intimate partner violence</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To improve the system of domestic and intimate partner violence-related services to better support victims. To prevent the occurrence and recurrence of violence and to reduce associated harms.
<b>Timeline</b>	Medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Establish a neighbourhood watch program. Engage community members to perform check-ins with individuals at risk and designate homes as safe spaces.</li> <li>✓ Assess current services to identify gaps and recommendations to improve the system of domestic and intimate partner violence services.</li> <li>✓ Create and implement an action plan based on the findings of the assessment.</li> </ul>

<b>Strategy 3: Educate youth on gender equality and healthy relationships</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To shift the culture of violence against women at an early age
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Partner with school boards to develop initiatives to educate students on healthy relationships, violence against women and gender equality</li> <li>✓ Engage students to lead the development of school or community-based strategies the advance equality for women and girls.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy 4: Advocate for system-level gender-based equity, diversity and inclusion</b>	
<b>Purpose</b>	To create communities that promote gender equality.
<b>Timeline</b>	Short- to medium-term
<b>Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Collaborate with employers to promote workplace policies that promote safe and supportive workplaces for all genders.</li> <li>✓ Conduct a gender analysis on the local work landscape. Identify and review policies and legislation that influence the unique challenges that women face in a gendered society.</li> </ul>

# Background



## What is a Community Safety and Well-being Plan?

The Province of Ontario requires every municipality to develop a Community Safety and Well-being Plan (the "CSWB Plan"). The *Safer Ontario Act* of 2018, the *Ontario Police Services Act*, and the new *Community Safety and Policing Act* govern CSWB Plans.

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*A CSWB Plan is a strategic document that guides a municipality in improving the safety, health and welfare of its community.*

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Municipalities must consult with an advisory committee, the public and local organizations in developing their CSWB Plan. This community input must be combined with available data and statistics. Municipalities must update or revise their Plans every four years.

According to the Act, the CSWB Plan must:

- a) *Identify risk factors in the municipality or First Nation, including, without limitation, systemic discrimination and other social factors that contribute to crime, victimization, addiction, drug overdose and suicide and any other risk factors prescribed by the Minister;*
- b) *Identify which risk factors the municipality or First Nation will treat as a priority to reduce;*
- c) *Identify strategies to reduce the prioritized risk factors, including providing new services, changing existing services, improving the integration of existing services or coordinating existing services in a different way;*
- d) *Set out measurable outcomes that the strategies are intended to produce;*
- e) *Address any other issues that may be prescribed by the Minister; and,*
- f) *Contain any other information that may be prescribed by the Minister.*

s. 251(a)-(f) of the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*



## What makes a successful Community Safety and Well-being Plan?

A successful CSWB Plan embraces the elements that are unique to the community. The Province has also defined several "Critical Success Factors" for CSWB Plans in their [Community Safety and Well-Being Planning Framework](#):



### **Strength-based**

The Plan embraces the strengths of the community and of work already accomplished



### **Risk-focused**

The Plan is focused on mitigating risks, not triage after the fact. The focus is on vulnerable populations and exploring why those risks exist in the community.



### **Awareness and understanding**

The Plan's participants understand their role. They understand the value of a strategic, long-term plan designed to improve less conventional metrics.



### **Highest level commitment**

The Plan is spearheaded by the municipality or other community leaders. Those involved in its design are committed to its success and implementation.



### **Effective partnerships**

The Plan relies on strong, effective partnerships, collaboration and compromise among a variety of agencies.



### **Evidence and evaluation**

The Plan is evidence-based and factually grounded. It is supported using quality, local data at every stage of process, including evaluation.



### **Cultural responsiveness**

The Plan considers cultural differences, systemic oppression and the differing approaches that may need to be taken for different groups in the community.

## History of CSWB Planning in Prince Edward County

This CSWB Plan is the second for Prince Edward County. The first plan, authored in 2018 was only the fourth CSWB Plan to be approved by the Province of Ontario.

The CSWB Advisory Committee reviewed the 2018-2021 Plan and focused on its successes. This updated Plan for 2022-2025 builds on extensive collaboration with local stakeholders. The Plan collaborators used high-quality local data to reach evidence-based conclusions. This Plan offers guidance for addressing the most pressing issues related to Prince Edward County's safety and well-being.

The Advisory Committee recommended a continued focus on three priorities from the previous Plan:

- ✓ Mental health and problematic substance use
- ✓ Senior support
- ✓ Poverty reduction

The Committee recommended adding two new priorities to respond to emerging issues in the community:

- ✓ Housing and homelessness
- ✓ Domestic violence and intimate partner violence

The Committee aimed to create an attainable strategic plan focused on sustainable solutions.

## The CSWB Approach: Four Levels of Response

A well-made CSWB Plan will proactively address some of the most important safety and well-being issues in a community. A good Plan is a result of a collaborative, provincially-guided process. The provincial process promotes four areas of planning response. The Plan should attempt to support issues at each of the four response levels:

- ✓ Social development
- ✓ Risk prevention
- ✓ Risk intervention
- ✓ Incident response

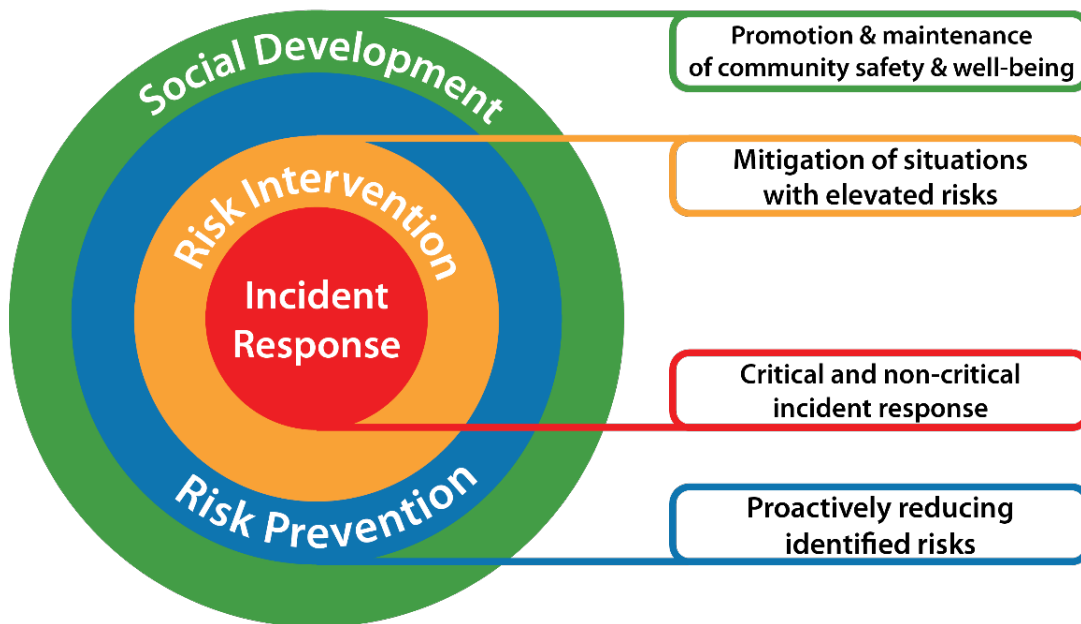


Figure 2: The four "levels" of community risk response, preferring to intervene at less invasive and structural stages like social development, before moving towards risk intervention and emergency response in more extreme, uncommon cases

**Social Development:** measures taken to promote the overall social health of the community, by increasing quality of living, community, education, etc., and thus reduce the risk of victimization.

**Risk Intervention:** measures that directly respond to situations in which there is an elevated risk of harm or victimization.

**Risk Prevention:** measures that use evidence and data to identify risks to community safety, and prevent or mitigate them before they result in victimization or harm to residents.

**Incident Response:** immediate measures taken to respond to urgent incidents, e.g., mental health crisis response teams, law enforcement officers.

Considering these four levels of response is useful in addressing community safety issues. The outer layers of the structure are particularly important. These types of responses address problems before they arise, targeting the root causes. They have

the potential to reduce the need for emergency response. The CSWB Committee designed this Plan with this approach.

Focusing on social development and risk prevention requires increased collaboration from all stakeholders. They must work together with high commitment, starting at the leadership level. This approach is interdisciplinary and respects the different viewpoints of the various sectors. It involves identifying risks before they lead to emergencies. And it requires specifying objectives, setting measurable goals, and honestly assessing programs.

## Methodology & Data

The Provincial handbook for Community Safety and Well-being Plans states that:

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*The CSWB partners should "gather information and evidence to paint a clear picture of what is happening in the community to support the identification of local priority risks."*

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Throughout this Plan, the Committee used data to paint this picture. But how did they collect the data? Where does it come from? How has it been used to inform the development of the Plan?

### WHERE DOES THE DATA COME FROM?

Small municipalities can be at a disadvantage when it comes to evidence-based policy development. The data that we have access to is often aggregated and regional, rather than specific to the community. For example, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) [does not count housing starts and completions for small municipalities](#). The Hastings Prince Edward Public Health Unit collects combined data for both counties. It can be difficult to identify local community trends when aggregated data is all that is available.

Having said that, The County is fortunate to have local agencies with quality data collection programs. These agencies are critical partners in filling in gaps in regional data with quality local data. The County Foundation's Vital Signs data bank was a valuable source of data for this Plan. Agencies like Alternatives for Women, the Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation, PEC Community Care for Seniors, All Welcome Here and others provided local data. This Plan prioritizes local data wherever possible.

The Plan cites other data sources based on the quality of methodology, breadth of data and age of the data set. The Plan draws on census data from Statistics Canada as the gold standard of data collection. Regional and national data from Public Health, CMHC and the Canadian Institute of Realtors provide context to local data.

Information about general outcomes (e.g. the link between exercise and mental health) comes from reputable bodies like the National Institute of Health. And where no local data exists, estimates and projections from reputable institutes like Emsi are cited with caveats.

## HOW IS THE DATA USED?

The CSWB Advisory Committee has chosen to use the Results-Based Accountability model (RBA) of policy development. RBA is a disciplined way of thinking and acting to improve complex social problems.

This method uses data and evidence analysis to work backwards from a desired outcome. RBA applies "Turn the Curve" thinking to policy questions:

- ✓ Look at data to see the history of the issue and where things would go without intervention.
- ✓ Analyze the "story" behind the data. What are the forces at play? What are the root causes?
- ✓ Identify the partners who have a role in improving the data.
- ✓ Brainstorm actions that can address the root causes impacting the data.
- ✓ Develop a comprehensive action plan.

Evaluation involves asking three simple questions that measure performance and accountability:

- ✓ How much did we do?
- ✓ How well did we do it?
- ✓ Is anyone better off?

RBA can help communities and organizations move beyond talking about problems to taking action to solve them. The RBA framework considers both "population accountability" and "performance accountability." Population accountability organizes work at the whole community level. How can organizations work together to improve community health? Performance accountability organizes work at the agency level. What actions will have the greatest impact on agency clients? The connection between population and performance accountability is important. What we do for our clients is contributing to the health of the whole community. This framework helps us understand who takes responsibility for which outcomes.

## Results-Based Accountability™

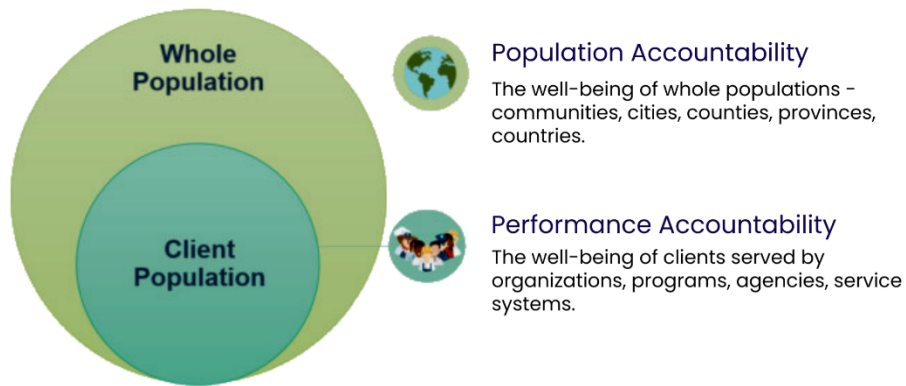


Figure 3: Describing results-based accountability process, dealing with both the well-being of individual clients, and of entire populations.

Organizations across North America use the RBA framework. The City of Toronto has adopted the framework as part of its Policy Excellence process. In this CSWB Plan, the action teams used the RBA process to determine the most important factors driving the community issues. This process helped the teams narrow their focus on specific possible actions.

In summary, the RBA process allowed for a greater understanding of the forces at play in the community. This helped focus the Committee's attention on actions that could have the greatest impact on addressing those forces.

## Principles for Measurement

The principles for measurement serve as a benchmark for how progress and goals will be measured in their effectiveness. These principles are distinct from the foundational commitments (listed above), which serve as a guide for how the CSWB solutions was designed.

These principles are:

- 
**Adaptive**  
 Are the goals and solutions adaptive to address emerging priority risks? Can the solutions be adapted to serve vulnerable populations with specific needs?
- 
**Specific, realistic, measurable**  
 Are the goals and solutions specific, realistic and contribute to measurable outcomes?
- 
**Collaborative**  
 Do the goals and solutions build on the excellence of collaborative work that is already happening among local partners?
- 
**Community involvement**  
 Do the goals and solutions provide educational opportunities and opportunities to involve and engage the community in the Plan?
- 
**Sustainable**  
 Are the goals and solutions sustainable? Does the Plan include innovative and creative solutions that support sustainability?
- 
**Local**  
 Do the goals and solutions in the Plan represent Prince Edward County's unique local needs?
- 
**Critical success factors**  
 Does the Plan consider the Critical Success Factors from the Provincial guide for CSWB Planning?



## Community Profile

Prince Edward County is a rural community in the Toronto-Ottawa corridor, with an economy based around agriculture and tourism. The County is known for its beautiful environments, beaches (most notably Sandbanks Provincial Park), hiking trails, and wineries and fine foods, all of which have attracted tourists for nearly two centuries.

### POPULATION

As of 2021, The County counted population of 25,704, up 3.9% from 2016—somewhat slower than the provincial average of 5.8% growth. Significant demographic statistics from the 2016 census include:

<b>Metric</b>	<b>County Population</b>	<b>Provincial Average</b>
Senior population	33.5% over the age of 65	18.5%
Visible minorities	2.2%	29.3%
Foreign-born individuals	10.3%	29.1%
Indigenous people	3%	2.8%

The County's population is older than the provincial average. Just over a third (33.5%) of the population is age 65+, compared to the provincial average of 18.5%. This demographic trend has been consistent over the last 15 years.

Culturally, the population is predominantly white with visible minorities making up only 2.2% of the County's population in 2016. This is significantly lower than the provincial average of 29.3%.

Prince Edward County's Official Plan projects that by 2038, the total population will grow to 38,834 people. That is approximately a 17% increase from 2021. The increase would be comprised largely of seasonal residents, who would comprise 31.2% of the total population.

### Population and Employment Projections - 2011-2038

<b>Metric</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2038</b>	<b>Net Increase</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
Permanent population	24,605	26,709	2,104	8.65
Seasonal population	5,966	12,125	6,159	103.2%
Total population	30,571	38,834	8,263	27.0%
Employment (jobs)	6,475	8,750	2,275	35.1%

Source: Watson & Associates (2017) County of Prince Edward 2017 Development Charges Background Study

## ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

The County's largest industries are tourism and agriculture. Jobs in retail trade and accommodation/food services make up 22.1% of all employed positions. Agriculture contributes 8.5% of the same. Tourism and agriculture often work hand-in-hand. The wine and beverage sector leverages both industries, and a quarter of farmers sell product direct-to-consumer or to local restaurants for farm-to-table experiences.

Employment tends to be highly seasonal and focused on the summer tourism season. Tourism sector employment tends to be lower-paid work. This, coupled with rising costs of living, creates challenges for people to both work and live in The County year-round.

The County has an average-income population. In 2015, the municipality had a median after-tax household income of \$59,259, about \$6,000 (~10%) lower than the provincial median. In 2020, that had grown to \$72,000 per household, \$7,500 (still ~10%) lower than the provincial median.

According to the [Ontario Living Wage Network](#), a living wage in PEC is \$17.95/hour, comparable to its neighbours in Kingston (\$17.75/hr) and Hastings County (also \$17.95/hr). Assuming the average County resident works the [provincial average of ~35 hours/week](#), and earns the local median of \$29,600/year, this would put the median full-time employment wage in PEC at \$16.26/hr—nearly \$1.50 lower than the living wage. Despite this, only 10.1 % of PEC's population was classified as “low-income” in the 2020 Census, the same as the provincial average.

## HEALTH

Mental health in Prince Edward County has declined over the last decade. In recent years, physical and mental health challenges have been made worse by pandemic-related lockdowns and an increasing a sense of disconnection from the community.

Mental health emergency department visits have broadly increased in the last decade for 12-34-year-olds. The same visits have stayed roughly level for people in older demographics. It is worth noting that this metric only measures those willing to seek treatment for their mental health, and does not capture the complete picture. 14% of all calls for service to the OPP involve mental health incidents. This number spiked to 17% in 2020-21 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mental health is also intimately connected to problematic substance use. Alcohol remains the most prevalent problematic substance, with incidents of alcohol-impaired driving rising 24% in the last year, and 8% over the last seven years.

Opioid use has likely risen as well. The main source of data related to opioid use includes both Hastings and Prince Edward Counties, which does not offer a clear local picture. The incidence of opioid use in Prince Edward County is generally thought to be lower than that of Hastings County, but no data is available to confirm that.

Access to a primary care physician is a concern for many County residents. Five of The County's family doctors are scheduled to retire in the near future, leaving 5,000 residents (20% of the population) without a primary care physician. The municipality has partnered with the Prince Edward Family Health Team to enhance recruitment efforts in response.

## HOUSING

Prince Edward County has faced a notoriously high cost of housing in recent years, combined with one of the nation's lowest vacancy rates. There are many factors that contribute to the lack of housing: overwhelming demand, low housing supply, second home buyers, the proliferation of short-term accommodations (STAs), pandemic-prompted low interest rates, social supports, and national high savings rates.

The County's vacancy rate is only 0.2%—the fourth lowest in the province, and ninth lowest in the country. Housing costs have jumped over 300% in the last ten years, with 200% of that in the last two years alone. Median market rents have risen anywhere from 113% for a one-bedroom, to 140% for a bachelor. These issues have been the focus of much municipal policy, and have given rise to a new priority area for this Plan.

## CRIME

Crime in The County remains low, with most forms of criminal behaviour and total calls for service to the Ontario Provincial Police trending downward. A handful of notable exceptions to this exist, though they are not necessarily indicative of larger trends given that most can be attributed to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.


Reports of sexual assault have been on the rise likely due to an increased level of reporting thanks to the #MeToo movement and other cultural shifts. This assumption is supported by the fact that of all sexual assaults reported in 2021, roughly a third were historical. While this is not necessarily indicative of larger trends, sexual assault has remained a focus of this Plan.




The second area of increased crime reporting is property crimes. This has been attributed to the pandemic-driven increase in online shopping which created the conditions for theft of deliveries from peoples' front porches.


The final area of increased crime reporting is fraud. This is likely due to the fact that seniors tend to be primary targets for fraud activity, and The County's senior population has been steadily increasing in recent decades. Combatting fraud, with a particular focus on senior support, will remain a key focus of this Plan for these reasons.

## Alignment with Municipal Initiatives and Plans

Many municipal initiatives, policies, plans and services are already in alignment with the priorities of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan. The chart below provides a summary of municipal activities that can be built upon for the success of this Plan. This is not an exhaustive list, and is accurate as of the time of publishing this Plan.

Priority Area	Municipal alignment	Department
 <p>Seniors Support</p>	County Transit provides specialized door-to-door service for seniors	Community Programs, Services and Initiatives
	Municipal funding for Community Care Active Living Centre (leverages provincial funding)	Community Programs, Services and Initiatives / Finance
	Participate in "scooter rodeo" program providing education on fire safety and mobility devices	Fire & Rescue
	Wellington and District Community Centre is a stroke and cardiac rehab facility and has policies and procedures in place to create safe space for seniors to be active	Recreation and Community Facilities
	Assistance calls and safety education campaigns to help residents, particularly seniors, with home safety devices	Fire & Rescue
	Revised Accessibility Plan (2022) promotes ease of mobility and access for all, including seniors	Corporate & Legislative Services
	Land stewardship partnerships with community organizations and ad hoc residents' groups involve seniors in designing, planting and maintaining active outdoor areas	Operations / Community Programs, Services and Initiatives
	Municipal Community Grants program funds a variety of community agencies that support seniors' recreation and volunteerism	Community Programs, Services and Initiatives / Finance
	Library programs geared toward seniors, including "FUNctional Fitness" chair-based exercise	Prince Edward County Libraries
	Duty to report any elder abuse or suspected elder abuse under the Long-Term Care Act	All public-facing departments
	Major capital project to redevelop the H.J. MacFarland Memorial Home long-term care facility	Long Term Care
Proclamations related to elder abuse with communications support	Mayors Office / Community Programs, Services and Initiatives	
Poverty Reduction	Municipal Relief Grant Program piloted in 2022 to provide tax or water bill credits to low-income households	Finance

	Period Poverty program in implementation phase (free period products to be offered in municipal washrooms)	Recreation and Community Facilities
	Community garden programs in place in Consecon, Delhi Park and Macaulay Village, supported by municipal staff	Recreation and Community Facilities / Operations
	Funding for food security programs through the Food Security Working Group	Community Programs, Services and Initiatives
	Free library programming for all ages, plus free digital collection and musical instrument lending library	Prince Edward County Libraries
	Free and subsidized recreation programs provided in community facilities and through Recreation Ward Committee funding	Recreation and Community Facilities
	Certified Living Wage Employer at the Supporter level	Human Resources
<b>Housing and Homelessness</b> 	Multiple affordable housing projects in various stages of due diligence, including a tiny home community, seniors' housing, housing for Indigenous youth	Affordable Housing
	Secondary Suites Subsidy program piloted in 2022 to support the development of long-term rental units on residential properties	Community Programs, Services and Initiatives / Affordable Housing
	Zoning and building by-law changes implemented in 2022 to support the development of a mix of housing in The County	Development Services
	New provisions for staff accommodations on business properties, paired with education for business owners	Development Services / Community Programs, Services and Initiatives
	Development of internal processes for supporting the transfer of surplus municipal property to the Affordable Housing Corporation	Affordable Housing
	Support community-run winter accommodation / warming centre programs with logistical and communications support	Community Programs, Services and Initiatives / Fire & Rescue
<b>Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use</b> 	Allied healthcare survey conducted in 2022 with data collection on mental health and addiction service needs	Community Programs, Services and Initiatives
	CAO and other leadership staff participate in the Prince Edward Hastings Ontario Health Team	CAO's Office / Community Programs, Services and Initiatives, Long Term Care
	Participation in hoarding coalition	Fire & Rescue
	Respectful Use policy in place at recreational facilities, including anti-bullying messaging in recreational spaces	Recreation and Community Facilities
	Proclamations related to mental health awareness, with communications support	Mayor's Office / Community Programs, Services and Initiatives

	Expanded Human Resources team includes Coordinator of Organizational Development and Culture to provide support to municipal staff	Human Resources
<p><b>Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence</b></p> 	Proclamations related to domestic violence and violence against women, with communications support	Mayor's Office / Community Programs, Services and Initiatives
	Internal human resources policies reviewed in 2022 to provide stronger policies around domestic violence as it relates to the workplace	Human Resources
	Actively seeking funding for affordable housing projects to support victims of domestic violence	Affordable Housing
	Duty to report any reasonable suspicion that a child needs protection under the Child Youth and Family Service Act	All public-facing departments

**Alignment with municipal plans**

The CSWB Plan should be read and understood in the context of other municipal plans. These include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ The municipality's [Corporate Strategic Plan](#)
- ✓ The municipality's [Official Plan](#)
- ✓ The [Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation Business Plan](#)
- ✓ The [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#)

**Thrive PEC**

The municipality is a partner in the community-led [Thrive PEC](#) project: an asset-based community and economic development project. Many of the priorities of Thrive PEC align with the priorities of the CSWB Plan.

# Resources



## Resources and Background Information

### Community Safety and Well-Being Planning

- ✓ [Community Safety and Well-being Planning Framework: A Shared Commitment in Ontario](#) (Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services)

### Prince Edward County Community Information

- ✓ The County Foundation [Vital Signs Data Bank](#) - Data on a variety of community health indicators.
- ✓ [Thrive PEC](#) website - A community-led, asset-based community economic development project.
- ✓ Police Services Board [Year End Report](#) - 2021
- ✓ [Canadian Census Data - 2021](#) - Prince Edward County
- ✓ [Prince Edward County Official Plan](#) - published 2021

### Housing and Homelessness

- ✓ The [Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation Business Plan](#)
- ✓ [Prince Edward County Attainable Housing Report](#) - Produced by Queen's Business Consulting (QBC) group on behalf of the Prince Edward County Attainable Housing Network (PECAHN)
- ✓ [Short-Term Accommodations in Prince Edward County, Market overview, housing impacts, regulatory options](#) - Study by David Wachsmuth et al, commissioned by Prince Edward County
- ✓ [Point-in-Time Count Homelessness Report](#) - Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services, 2021

### Seniors Support

- ✓ [Social Isolation Among Older Adults During the Pandemic](#) - A study published by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors Forum
- ✓ [Understanding Social Isolation and Loneliness Among Older Canadians and How to Address It](#) - A study funded by the Retired Teachers of Ontario
- ✓ [Working Together for Seniors: A Toolkit to Promote Seniors' Social Integration in Community Services, Programs and Policies](#) - Published by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors

### Poverty Reduction

- ✓ [Ontario Living Wage Network](#)- Information about living wage advocacy
- ✓ [Prince Edward Learning Centre Financial Empowerment](#) program report, 2022
- ✓ Tamarack Institute [Communities Ending Poverty](#) initiative

### Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use

- ✓ [Bullying Canada](#) website - Statistics and information about bullying
- ✓ [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders](#) (DSM-5-TR)



## Glossary of acronyms used in this document

BIPOC - Black, Indigenous, People (or Person) of Colour

CMHC - Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

CSWB - Community Safety and Well-being

HART - High-risk Action Review Team

LGBTQ+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and other gender and sexual identities

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

OPP - Ontario Provincial Police

PEC - Prince Edward County

PECAHC - Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation

PELASS - Prince Edward County Lennox and Addington Social Services

PELC - Prince Edward Learning Centre

PSB - Police Services Board

RBA - Results Based Accountability

STA - Short Term Accommodation

# Acknowledgements



## Acknowledgements

### Advisory Committee Members

Mike Branscombe, Prince Edward County Fire and Rescue  
 Carl Bowker, Hastings Quinte Paramedic Services  
 Connor Dorey, Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services  
 Charles Dowdall, Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation  
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 Mary Jane McDowell, Prince Edward Family Health Team  
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 Anne VanVlack, The County Foundation  
 Deborah Warring, Hasting Quinte Paramedic Services  
 Rachel Wong, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

### Action Team Members

The Advisory Committee wishes to further thank the members of the various Action Teams for their efforts and contributions to the success of this CSWB Plan. Note that facilitator Lauri Prest and Programs Advisor Noah Lister-Stevens also attended all meetings of the Action Teams.

#### Seniors Support

David Fox, PEC Community Care for Seniors Association  
 John Hatch, Ontario Provincial Police  
 Debbie MacDonald Moynes, PEC Community Care for Seniors Association  
 Aaron Miller, Ontario Provincial Police  
 Joanne Munro-Cape, Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services

#### Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence

Carl Bowker, Hastings Quinte Paramedic Services  
 John Hatch, Ontario Provincial Police  
 Elise Hineman, Sexual Assault for Quinte and District  
 Mary Jane McDowell, Prince Edward Family Health Team  
 Aaron Miller, Ontario Provincial Police  
 Leah Morgan, Alternatives For Women  
 Joanne Munro-Cape, Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services  
 Dave Pym, Quinte Healthcare Corporation  
 Anne VanVlack, The County Foundation  
 Rachel Wong, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

### **Poverty Reduction**

Connor Dorey, Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services  
 Charles Dowdall, Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation  
 David Fox, PEC Community Care for Seniors Association  
 John Hatch, Ontario Provincial Police  
 Aaron Miller, Ontario Provincial Police  
 Anne VanVlack, The County Foundation  
 Rachel Wong, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

### **Housing and Homelessness**

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 Aaron Miller, Ontario Provincial Police  
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### **Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use**

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 Deborah Warring, Hasting Quinte Paramedic Services  
 Rachel Wong, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

## **Participating Organizations**

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Prince Edward County Police Services Board  
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 Prince Edward Family Health Team  
 Prince Edward County Lennox and Addington Social Services  
 Alternatives for Women  
 Hastings Quinte Paramedic Services  
 Prince Edward Learning Centre  
 Community Living Prince Edward

Recreation Outreach Centre  
Quinte Healthcare Corporation  
PEC Community Care for Seniors Association  
The County Foundation  
All Welcome Here  
Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation  
Sexual Assault for Quinte and District  
Addictions and Mental Health Services Hastings Prince Edward  
Prince Edward County Fire and Rescue  
Hastings Prince Edward Public Health  
St. Leonard's Community Support, Prevention and Residential Services

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Rachel Wong (Health Promoter, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health)  
Lauri Prest (Facilitator)  
Noah Lister-Stevens (Programs Advisor, Prince Edward County)  
Julianne Snepsts (Programs Supervisor, Prince Edward County)

## Photography Credits

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Page 55 - Image of walking trail at Sandbanks by Jenny Thompson  
Page 57 - Image of barn in the morning by Robbie Garden