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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

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From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development and  
Commissioner of Social Services  
Report: #2021-INFO-16  
Date: February 12, 2021

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**Subject:**

Durham Region Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWP) - Project Update

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**Recommendation:**

Receive for information

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 In January of 2019, legislative amendments to the Police Services Act mandated that communities across the province develop a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWP). Community safety and well-being describes a place where everyone feels safe, has a sense of belonging, where individuals and families can meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, as well as social and cultural expression.
- 1.2 In two-tier municipalities such as Durham Region, it is the responsibility of the upper-tier to develop the Plan. The legislated deadline for the completion of CSWPs was January 1, 2021.
- 1.3 Shortly after the COVID-19 provincial emergency was declared, the CSWP deadline was suspended by the Province and the Region's work on the project slowed considerably in order to deal with the demands of the pandemic. On December 24, 2020, the province announced a new CSWP deadline of July 1, 2021.

- 1.4 This new deadline was unexpected and is unrealistic given the demands facing the Region and its CSWP partners. The premise of a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, as outlined in the provincial framework, relies on different service systems including health, education, justice, and social services, sharing in the collective responsibility of developing the Plan and its subsequent implementation.
- 1.5 Given the second wave of the pandemic, our CSWP partners continue to be under considerable strain as they focus on immediate matters such as COVID testing; vaccine distribution; managing outbreaks in schools, daycare centres and long-term care homes; caring for vulnerable populations; and managing fatigue/burnout in service providers. As such, meaningful engagement with our partners in the CSWP process is unrealistic at present.
- 1.6 Accordingly, the CAO will be writing to the Province (Solicitor General) to request an extension to early 2022.

## **2. Project Updates**

- 2.1 Since the release of the provincial legislation, the Region has been committed to the development of the CSWP. Further to the information provided in [Report 2019-COW-15](#) and [Report 2019-SS-17](#), many project milestones have been achieved.
- 2.2 Working Group and Data Sub-Committee Meetings:
  - a. An internal working group and data sub-committee have met regularly to continue to develop the CSWP and share information. These groups have representation from the CAO's Office, DRPS, Planning and Economic Development, Social Services, Health, Paramedic Services and Corporate Communications. They receive oversight and approval from the project's executive sponsors (Regional CAO and DRPS Chief).
- 2.3 Identification of Preliminary Risk Factors (Before COVID-19):
  - a. The data sub-committee used the Provincial Risk Driven Tracking Database, existing reports, strategies, data and key indicators to identify areas of elevated risk. Based on this work, the following risk factors were identified:
    - Mental Health
    - Substance Use
    - Homelessness & Basic Needs
    - Criminal Involvement

- Victimization
- Social Isolation

#### 2.4 Establishment of the Steering Committee:

a. In keeping with the statutory requirements, a multi-sector Steering Committee (SC) has been established to guide the development of the Plan. The SC has met twice (November 2019 and October 2020) and is comprised of the following system leaders:

- Steering Committee Chair: Elaine Baxter-Trahair, Durham Region CAO
- Mayor Dan Carter, Regional Council
- Regional Chair John Henry, Regional Council (alternate)
- Mark Morissette, DRPS (Chief's Delegate)
- Chief Kelly LaRocca, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation
- Troy Cheseboro, Chief of Paramedic Services
- Bill Clancy, Police Services Board
- Paul McGary, Lakeridge Health
- Chris Bovie, Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences
- Tracy Barill, Durham Catholic District School Board
- Steven Woodman, Durham Children's Aid Society
- Gary Crossdale, Durham District School Board
- Lisa Kitchen, Lakeridge Health Ontario Health Team
- Vivian Curl, Community Foundation of Durham (Not-for-profit representative - primary)
- Cindy Murray, United Way (Not-for-profit representative - alternate)
- Rhonda Schwartz, Seniors Care Network
- Dr. Robert Kyle, Region of Durham
- Brian Bridgeman, Region of Durham
- Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou, Region of Durham
- Regional staff in an ex-officio capacity responsible for: Human Trafficking, Local Immigration Partnership, Broadband

b. In addition, we are seeking representation for: a diversity equity and inclusion (DEI) expert, as well as persons with lived experience.

#### 2.5 Area Municipal Involvement:

a. An area municipal working group has been established to ensure an integrated approach to identifying and addressing local priorities. This group

is comprised of area municipal CAO's (or delegates) and has met once to date (January 2020). CAO's and mayors were also invited to the Community Partner Roundtable and working group members were encouraged to complete the public survey (outlined below).

### **3. Major Engagement Milestones**

3.1 In addition to the work outlined above, the following engagement has taken place:

a. Community Partner Roundtable (November 2019):

- The Region and DRPS convened a meeting of community partners, all dedicated to the delivery programs and services that focus directly on community safety and well-being. There were almost 100 people in attendance for the full-day workshop.
- Staff from the Provincial Government (Ministry of the Solicitor General) provided a summary of the legislative context for community safety and well-being. Attendees had an opportunity to receive information about the six areas of elevated risks and collectively develop action plans to address these areas.

b. Public Survey (February 2020 – March 2020):

- The purpose of the survey was to validate findings to date and to learn from the community about relevant challenges and opportunities.
- The survey received 403 responses and the majority of participants concurred with the previously identified priority risk factors.

c. Multi-Media Project Promotion

- Television interview - Seniors Talk with DRPS (Rogerstv)
- Project website ([durham.ca/cswp](http://durham.ca/cswp))
- Social media campaign

### **4. Impact of COVID-19**

4.1 The Region has been committed to developing a stakeholder-driven CSWP that will serve as a foundational human services planning document integrating and aligning the work of Durham's stakeholders.

4.2 COVID-19 has revealed new vulnerabilities in the community and has resulted in new partnerships and bodies of work. Intelligence gathered as a result of COVID-19 will inform the next steps of the CSWP, including:

- a. Increased risk for those suffering from mental health, addictions, or domestic violence and/or social isolation.
- b. Increased stress and anxiety.
- c. Increase in alcohol use, opioids, and substance use in general.
- d. Effects on children and youth are yet to be understood, with increase in social isolation, stress, increased use of technology and being sedentary.
- e. Decreased access to supports and services closed during COVID-19.
- f. Increased social isolation for those who do not have access to technology.
- g. Recognition of the permanent job loss that COVID-19 has and will bring.
- h. The impacts on family dynamics will become more and more evident.

4.3 Responding to changes in priority risk factors and incorporating that intelligence into the CSWP requires all service systems working together. The planning team is confident a slightly delayed Plan will result in a more current document that will better serve the community in the long term.

## **5. New Provincial Deadline**

5.1 From a practical point of view, if the July 1 deadline is to be achieved, a draft of the document would need to have been drafted by now for internal and external review. In staff's view, it is more important to prepare a Plan that properly addresses the needs of the Durham community, than rushing to complete a substandard product by July 1.

5.2 The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) have expressed concern over the new deadline and are planning to address their concerns with the province on behalf of their respective organizations.

5.3 At the time of writing this report, it is understood that other Regions and single-tier municipalities will also be formally requesting an extension.

## **6. Next Steps**

6.1 While an extension to the deadline will be requested, work on the Plan will continue to the extent possible. Barring any other unforeseen circumstances, the following major milestones are anticipated by the end of the year or early 2022:

- Develop and distribute a new public survey to better understand the shifting priorities of the community, given the impacts of COVID-19.
- Meet with Steering Committee and area municipal working group to provide an update and gather information.
- Host an engagement session with service providers.
- Develop a draft CSWP and distribute to Steering Committee for review.
- Present final CSWP to Council for approval and adoption.
- Post the CSWP on durham.ca within 30 days of adoption.

## **7. Conclusion**

7.1 The CSWP will be developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative information collected through consultation with Council, area municipalities, Steering Committee members, service providers and members of the public.

7.2 To stay authentic to the stakeholder-driven, collaborative approach to developing a CSWP as outlined in the provincial planning framework, the Region will need more time than has been provided. This important work relies on the relationships that have been carefully cultivated over the last two years. The additional time being requested, ensures this Plan will offer meaningful guidance in getting the right services, to the right people, at the right time.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP  
Commissioner of Planning and  
Economic Development

Original signed by

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Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou  
Commissioner of Social Services