



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: The Committee of the Whole  
From: Commissioner of Social Services and Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development  
Report: #2019-COW-15  
Date: June 12, 2019

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**Subject:**

Initiation of the Durham Region Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWP)

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**Recommendation:**

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That this report be received for information; and
  - B) That a copy of this report be sent to the area municipalities, Durham Region Police Service, and CSWP Stakeholders for information.
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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 On January 1, 2019, legislative amendments to the *Police Services Act, 1990*, mandated that every municipality prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWP) in partnership with their police services.
- 1.2 The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services has given municipalities two years (until January 1, 2021) to prepare and adopt their CSWP.

- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to advise Council that work is underway to complete a CSWP for Durham Region, on or before January 1, 2021.
- 1.4 A Steering Committee co-led by the Commissioner of Social Services and the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development will guide the process. The Regional CAO and DRPS Chief are the Executive Sponsors. It may be recommended at a later date that two members of Regional Council be appointed to provide support and public leadership to the project team.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Community Safety and Well-Being Plans are intended to formalize the shared responsibility of safe and healthy communities beyond policing. CSWPs required an integrated approach to bring municipalities, First Nations and partners together to mobilize the levers of safety and well-being collectively.
- 2.2 Current and mounting demographic pressure is placing new and different demands on the Region. The anticipated growth that is coming to Durham Region will bring with it fundamental changes to the make-up and character of the Region. The long-term sustainability and health of the Region is critical to community safety and well-being.
- 2.3 Having a made-in-Durham CSWP will produce a number of inherent benefits. Apart from creating a sense of shared ownership for community safety and well-being, the CSWP will:
  - a. Identify the key issues impacting the Region in general, and in particular to the area municipalities and specific areas within them;
  - b. Increase understanding of local risks and vulnerable groups;
  - c. Increase awareness, coordination and access to services;
  - d. Identify priority areas and recommendations for action;
  - e. Determine optimal strategies to improve community safety and well-being;
  - f. Identify the capacity across Durham Region to address community safety and well-being related issues;
  - g. Confirm operating procedures for a more integrated and aligned collaboration process across agencies and geography;
  - h. Reduce the financial burden of crime on society through cost-effective approaches with significant return on investment; and
  - i. Provide a platform for overarching multidisciplinary Regional benefit.

- 2.4 Additionally, this project provides opportunities to enhance many interrelated efforts across the Region, such as strategic planning, economic development and tourism, planning for regional growth, increasing transit ridership, emergency management, health and social services resource allocation, and more.
- 2.5 Some municipalities in Durham Region (such as the Town of Ajax) have had a community safety strategy in place for more than a decade. Various other upper and lower-tier municipalities around the province have also developed CSWPs. Best practices, and lessons learned from these Plans will be analyzed to inform and streamline Durham's process.
- 2.6 The CSWP will be aligned with the *Durham Region Strategic Plan*, Durham Region Works Department's *Vision Zero*, *Priority Neighbourhoods Roundtable*, *the Financial Empowerment Framework*, and other bodies of work underway. The CSWP will most closely align with the Durham Connect Table, led by Durham Regional Police Service.
- a. Durham Region Strategic Plan
    - Establishes the long-term vision for communities in Durham Region, and the Region's role in achieving that vision.
  - b. Durham Vision Zero
    - The Region's Works Department has developed a Strategic Road Safety Action Plan (SRSAP) to reduce the number and severity of collisions and traffic-related incidents.
  - c. Priority Neighborhoods Roundtable and the Financial Empowerment Framework.
    - Work to address the social determinants of health through collaboration, education, community engagement and financial empowerment opportunities.
  - d. Durham Connect
    - A partnership made up of multidisciplinary agencies mandated under provincial, regional, local and community-based organizations to improve community safety and well-being;
    - Provides collaborative deployment of resources and services to reduce imminent harm to individuals and families in Durham who demonstrate

acutely elevated risk factors.

### **3. Summary of the CSWP**

- 3.1 A CSWP involves taking an integrated approach to service delivery by working across a wide range of sectors, agencies, and organizations to assist partners whose mandate is focused on community safety and wellness. The Plan will proactively develop and implement evidence-based strategies and programs to address local priorities, such as risk factors, vulnerable groups, etc. related to crime and complex social issues, on a sustainable basis.
- 3.2 The goal of a CSWP is to achieve the ideal state of a sustainable community, where everyone has a sense of safety, belonging, access to services, and where individuals and families are able to meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income and social and cultural expression.
- 3.3 The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services requires the CSWP to include the following, at a minimum:
- a. Local priority risk factors that have been identified based on community consultations and multiple sources of data, such as Statistics Canada, and local sector-specific data, such as the Health Neighbourhoods reports;
  - b. Evidence-based programs and strategies to address those priority risk factors; and
  - c. Measurable outcomes with associated performance measures to ensure that the strategies are effective and positive outcomes are being achieved.
- 3.4 A Risk Driven Tracking Database (RTD) is maintained by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. It contains comprehensive data related to situations of acutely elevated risk. The Plan will involve a detailed background assessment of risks in Durham, and how these can be mitigated. DRPS has identified the top three highest-risk factors on the topic of community safety and well-being in Durham (ranked by frequency). These factors, the remaining risk factors known to DRPS, as well as others that are discovered through the process will be considered in the Plan. They are:
1. Mental Health and Cognitive Function;
  2. Anti-social/Problematic Behaviour (non-criminal); and
  3. Substance Abuse and Addiction.

#### **4. A Regional Approach**

4.1 A Region-wide approach to the development of the CSWP is logical due to its interdisciplinary nature, requiring expertise from various departments and agencies. The following highlight the benefits:

- a. The issue of community safety is intricately linked to many factors. It is a complex problem that requires a collaborative solution. The term “community safety” is one that is generally understood to be administered by police and those who provide services through the criminal justice system. From a broader lens, however, it is closely connected to the work of others in human service sectors, including housing, health/mental health, addictions, victim support, planning, as well as public leadership by elected officials. The approach to community safety and well-being needs to be premised on creating a wider community of practice.
- b. There is growing recognition that safe communities are sustainable communities. They are healthy, vibrant and attractive places to live, work, invest, play and learn. A Community Safety and Well-being Plan may in fact offer a critical launching pad for a systemic and integrated approach to improving quality of life. It may also offer an important point of leverage for creating broader connections across multiple organizations whose focus ultimately is on improving the quality of life of Durham residents. It may provide a platform for a multi-sector collaborative effort that in turn reduces risk, vulnerability, harm, and increases economic development.
- c. Championing a Community Safety and Well-being Plan provides an important point of leverage for creating additional benefit across the economic and socio-cultural spectrum. It will provide an opportunity for Durham Region and its partners to identify the issues and the areas of opportunity for collaborative action.

#### **5. The Process and Governance**

5.1 It is proposed that the planning process be led by a Steering Committee, including members of Planning and Economic Development, Social Services, DRPS (Durham Connect), the CAO's office, and will seek Regional Council's involvement at a later date.

- 5.2 A staff Project Team will act as the conduit for the transfer of information from the Working Groups to the Steering Committee. The Project Team will act in an advisory capacity to the Steering Committee. Its first task will be to create a Terms of Reference, outlining:
- a. The roles and responsibilities for the Steering Committee, Project Team, and Working Groups;
  - b. Project Scope;
  - c. Stakeholders;
  - d. Project Timeline; and
  - e. Deliverables.

Area municipalities will be engaged throughout the process, and the Area Municipal CAO's are in agreement with the Region leading this initiative.

- 5.3 A background assessment and jurisdictional review will be undertaken to better understand the issues at hand, best practices, and lessons learned from various other municipal CSWPs that have already been created across the province.
- 5.4 Plans and resources that already exist (i.e. Durham Connect, Vision Zero) will be leveraged to more closely define CSWP project scope, as well as create opportunities for collaboration and efficiencies.
- 5.5 The Stakeholder List created in the Terms of Reference will be used to shape public engagement on the CSWP. The public engagement will be broad reaching to the entire community, but also focus on vulnerable populations and those who access relevant services.
- 5.6 Risk factors and influential data identified by the Risk Driven Tracking Database, DRPS and Social Services, as well as information obtained through public consultation will be analyzed in detail to find potential efficiencies across the Region.
- 5.7 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) theory will be leveraged when analyzing priority areas in creating a greater sense of safety in the community.
- 5.8 Appropriate options that could be feasible to address the various goals of the CSWP will be identified with preliminary visions for implementation.
- 5.9 The Steering Committee will be responsible for making decisions concerning the CSWP. The Steering Committee will provide progress reports through the

Commissioner of Social Services, the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, and/or the Chief Administrative Officer, to Regional Council. The Committee will build on existing governance models (i.e. Durham Connect), while including DRPS, the CAO's Office, Social Services, Planning and Economic Development, Health, as well as Regional Council.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 Durham Region is required by the province to develop a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. This Plan is positioned to demonstrate the need for collaboration and could serve as a collaborative Call to Action. It will align the efforts of all partners – DRPS, municipalities, Regional departments, social service agency partners and affiliate organizations dedicated to community safety and wellness program delivery. It will galvanize all participants to achieve mutually supported goals and agreed-upon actions for community safety and well-being.
- 6.2 Once completed, the Durham CSWP will become a cohesive guide to provide safety, vibrancy and well-being in the Region. It will align other jurisdictional best practices, current Regional programs, and public feedback to create a stronger Durham Region.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Dr. Hugh Drouin  
Commissioner of Social Services

Original signed by

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

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer