



REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

FROM: Julie Gonyou, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: January 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the January 19, 2021, report titled, Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Update, submitted by Julie Gonyou, CAO, be received and filed for information.

INTRODUCTION:

The Ontario government requires that all municipalities prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan as outlined in Bill 175 – *The Safer Ontario Act*¹. Legislative amendments related to Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) planning came into force on January 1, 2019, as an amendment to the Police Services Act, 1990 (PSA). Due to the efforts required to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ontario government has extended the deadline for municipalities to complete and adopt a CSWB Plan to July 1, 2021².

Municipalities have a leadership role in identifying their local priority risks in the community and addressing these risks through evidence-based programs and strategies, focusing on social development, prevention and risk intervention. The Town of Aylmer, County of Elgin and City of St. Thomas are taking a holistic approach to CSWB planning, and planning for a joint Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan is well underway.

¹ <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s18003>

² *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Support and Protection Act* 2020 amended the *Police Services Act*, S.O. 2019 to prescribe a new deadline for the completion and adoption of CSWB plans.

DISCUSSION:

The Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan will set out how partners across different sectors can work together to make our community a safer, more inclusive community where all residents thrive. CSWB planning recognizes that complex risks to safety and well-being cannot be addressed in isolation by any one organization, agency or sector. The goal of this process is to achieve greater coordination and collaboration on issues and situations before they escalate.

CSWB Goals:

The Goals of the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas Community Safety and Well-Being Plan are to:

- Engage citizens, businesses, agencies and organizations in making Elgin, Aylmer and St. Thomas healthier for all;
- Increase our understanding of local risk factors;
- Reduce demand for emergency response and acute care;
- Ensure individuals are receiving the right response at the right time by the right service provider;
- Increase the reputation of Elgin, Aylmer and St. Thomas as a safe and healthy community in which to live, work and play; and
- Increase the community's sense of pride.

Leadership:

The County of Elgin has been designated to lead this collaborative planning process with a Coordinating Committee and Advisory Committee. Jennifer Kirkham (Mischevious Cat Productions) has been hired to support the plan development in our community.

Coordinating Committee Members

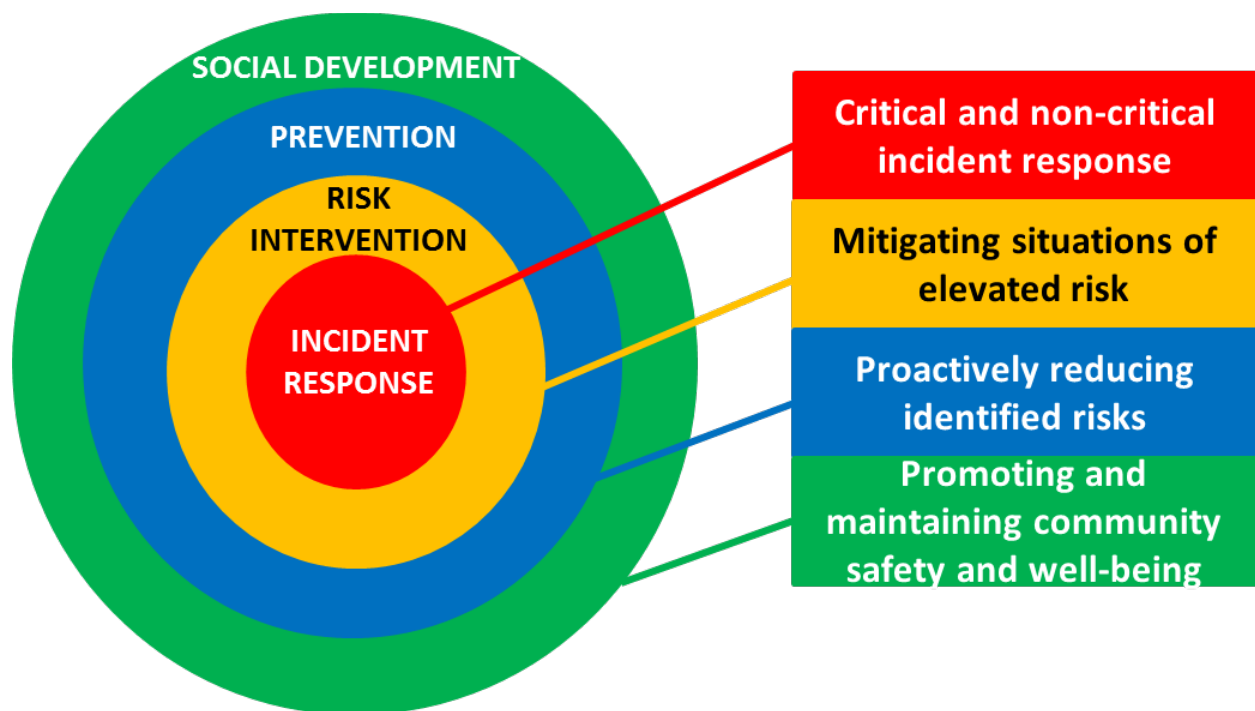
- Chief Administrative Officers from the County of Elgin and Town of Aylmer
- City Manager – City of St. Thomas
- Mayors from the Town of Aylmer and City of St. Thomas
- Councillor (Elgin County)
- Councillor (City of St. Thomas)
- Police Chiefs – Aylmer Police Service and St. Thomas Police Service
- Additional leadership and support: Elgin County Legislative Services Coordinator (Carolyn Krahm)

Advisory Committee Members

The Advisory Committee is comprised of over 20 organizations, representing various sectors including community agencies, emergency and police services, social service providers, and local government. Multi-sector collaboration is a key factor in our community's CSWB planning process. Existing planning tables and groups with multi-sectoral representation and mandates have been supportive of this process.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT:

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan work is being guided by the Province's Community Safety and Well-Being Framework³ ("Framework").



Requirements:

A CSWB Plan must include the following core information:

³ <https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/Publications/MCSCSSSOPanningFramework.html>

- 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;
- Evidence-based programs and strategies to address those local priority risk factors; and
- Measurable outcomes with associated performance measures to ensure that the strategies are effective and outcomes are being achieved.

Four (4) Phases

Planning for a CSWB Plan has been ongoing since March 2020. The planning process includes four (4) Phases:

Phase 1: Project Planning and Onboarding

- Kick off meeting with the Coordinating Committee
- Introductory email and video for the Advisory Committee

Phase 2: Research and Asset Mapping

- Data package
- Inventory of existing planning tables

Phase 3: Community Engagement (ongoing)

- Advisory Committee Online Discussion Forum
- Advisory Committee Survey
- Data walk session with the Advisory Committee
- General public survey (Open July 27 – December 4, 2020; 429 responses – 4.72 confidence interval)
- Interviews with the Ontario Health Team, Elgin Community Foundation

Phase 4: Plan Development (currently underway)

- Identify areas of focus for the Plan
- Review community assets
- Identify strategies
- Set measurable outcomes
- Performance measurement framework

Community Safety and Well-Being Elements

The public and community partner surveys asked questions about the following elements of Community Safety and Well-Being (*):

- Criminal Activity
- Discrimination, Marginalization and Racism
- Education and Skills Development
- Employment
- Emotional Violence
- Family Support
- Financial Security
- Housing Security
- Internet Access and Digital Literacy
- Mental Health Issues
- Mobility Safety
- Physical Health Issues
- Social Behaviours
- Social Environment
- Social Support
- Street Violence and Gang Issues
- Substance Use and Addiction
- Transportation
- Victimization

(*) note: survey respondents were provided with a definition of each element

Preliminary Identification of Community Priorities⁴

Top Priorities for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan identified through the public survey are:

1. Mental Health Issues
2. Education and Skills Development
3. Substance Use and Addiction
4. Criminal Activity
5. Housing Security
6. Employment

Community Partners identified the following Top Priorities:

1. Housing Security
2. Mental Health Issues
3. Substance Use and Addiction
4. Poverty and Income Security
5. Regional Economy

⁴ Responses are available by community and survey response summary is available on the County's CSWB landing page www.elgincounty.ca/CSWB. Meeting minutes, agendas and additional information about the CSWB Plan can be accessed on the County's website as well.

6. Primary Care/Physical Health

Next Steps in the CSWB Plan Development

The Advisory Committee and Coordinating Committee will conduct a comprehensive review of the priorities identified by community partners and the general public, along with the strategies/initiatives that are currently underway in our community. It is anticipated that the insights and ideas shared by community partners and the general public will inform the context of the plan and will identify any gaps in services or resources available in our community. As well, this information will be used to help build the strategies and actions for the plan.

FUNDING IMPLICATIONS:

The following list includes Provincial and Federal funding opportunities⁵ that could be leveraged to support the implementation of the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan.

Provincial Funding Opportunities

- Safer and Vital Communities (SVC) Grant;
- Proceeds of Crime – Front Line Policing (POC-FLP) Grant;
- Community Safety and Policing (CSP) Grant
- Youth Collective Impact Program
- Youth Opportunities Fund
- Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative
- Civil Remedies Grant Program
- Seniors Community Grant Program
- Ontario Trillium Foundation

⁵ Note: Timing for call-for-applications and eligibility criteria has not yet been reviewed.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exploring different ways of addressing community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging with our community and other stakeholders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fostering a healthy environment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhancing quality of place.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively.


Additional Comments: The CSWB planning process aligns with Elgin County Council's 2020-2022 Strategic Plan and associated Action Plan.

LOCAL MUNICIPAL PARTNER IMPACT:

As prescribed in legislation, every municipal Council shall prepare, and by resolution, adopt a CSWB plan. The same process must be followed for a joint CSWB Plan (i.e. every municipality involved must pass a resolution to adopt the joint plan). The *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Support and Protection Act, 2020* amended the *Police Services Act* by prescribing a new deadline for the completion and adoption of CSWB Plans. The new deadline for municipalities to prepare and adopt a CSWB Plan is July 1, 2021.

The PSA includes regulatory requirements for municipalities related to the publication of their CSWB plans. These requirements include:

- Publishing a CSWB Plan publicly (website) within 30 days after adopting it;
- Making printed copies of the CSWB Plan available for review by anyone who requests it;
- Publishing the plan in any other manner or form the municipality desires.



New legislation identifies that a municipality is required to provide the Minister of Community and Correctional Services with any prescribed information related to (upon request):

- The Municipality's CSWB plan, including preparation, adoption or implementation of the plan;
- Any outcomes from the municipality's CSWB plan; and
- Any other prescribed matter related to the CSWB plan⁶.

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:

A copy of this report will be provided to all Local Municipal Partner CAOs for distribution to their Councils, as appropriate.

CONCLUSION:

The implementation of a CSWB Plan will mark a shift in focus from a reactive, response-based approach to incidents to a more predictive, holistic approach to community safety.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Julie Gonyou
Chief Administrative Officer

⁶ Note: Additional requirements related to monitoring CSWB plans may be outlined in regulation in the future.

