

Subject: Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Progress Update

File Number: ACS2023-CSS-GEN-009

Report to Community Services Committee on 27 June 2023

and Council 12 July 2023

Submitted on June 15, 2023 by Clara Freire, General Manager, Community and Social Services

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Ward: Citywide

Objet : Mise à jour du Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités

Numéro de dossier : ACS2023-CSS-GEN-009

Rapport présenté au Comité des services communautaires

Rapport soumis le 27 juin 2023

et au Conseil le 12 juillet 2023

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Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Community Services Committee recommend that Council:

- 1. Receive this report providing an update on the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan; and**
- 2. Reaffirm the City of Ottawa’s commitment to the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and its priorities.**

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des services communautaires recommande au Conseil ce qui suit:

- 1. recevoir le présent rapport, qui fait le point sur le Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités; et**
- 2. réaffirmer l’engagement de la Ville d’Ottawa à l’égard du Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités et de ses priorités.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assumption and Analysis

The purpose of this report is to report to Members of Council with the annual progress update on the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWB Plan), including the evaluation and performance measurement framework and financial strategy.

Community-Safety and Well-Being Plans are legislated by the Provincial government. The City’s first Community Safety and Well-Being Plan was approved on October 27, 2021 ([ACS2021-EPS-PPD-0003](#)). Following the consultative process with residents, six priority areas as well as goals, strategies, and outcomes to address these priorities were identified and approved by Council: Discrimination, marginalization and racism, Financial security and poverty reduction, Gender-based violence and violence against women, Housing, Integrated and simpler systems, and Mental well-being.

Upon approval of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, the General Manager, Community and Social Services was directed to complete the legislated requirements of the [ACS2021-EPS-PPD-0003](#) report, specifically:

“to develop a governance structure, an evaluation and performance measurement framework, and a financial strategy for the administration, implementation, evaluation, and funding of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan as set out further in this report, and to report back to the appropriate Standing Committee of Council as soon as feasible.”

In April 2022, a progress update ([ACS 2022-CDD-GEN-004](#)) was presented to Council

outlining work completed to date and next steps, including the establishment of a governance structure. A call for applications for specific Advisory Committee positions was launched over the summer 2022. In September 2022, the selection committee announced the appointment of the [Chair and 12 members of the Advisory Committee](#).

Staff made important progress in year one establishing the operational infrastructure required for sustained success, including the appointment of the Advisory Committee's members, who will provide guidance and strategic direction to the plan, the establishment of performance measurement and evaluation framework, and the continued progress against the implementation plan.

In 2022, staff and stakeholders built a strong foundation for the plan by conducting research, mapping the landscape, and leading discussions to build on successful work already occurring in Ottawa.

One of the key accomplishments was the launch of the CityStudio partnership, a formal, trust-based partnership between the University of Ottawa and the City of Ottawa, which will lead to innovative solutions to Ottawa's social challenges. Since the launch of the partnership, several CityStudio projects have already produced studies and recommendations in the Community Safety and Well-Being priority areas.

In addition, staff have established a framework for a data-driven approach to measuring progress and informing actions across the CSWB Plan. A methodical process guided the development and implementation of the framework.

Last year, the CSWB Office also launched a communications strategy to increase awareness among key stakeholders and residents of the current status of the plan and make information on services and programs more understandable and accessible to the community. Accomplishments to date against the communications strategy include the launch of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan's website, the development of a video raising awareness of the plan's goals, and a travelling exhibit showcasing progress to date and community partners' contributions.

Next Steps

The feedback from all engagement activities demonstrates the complexity and connection between issues regarding safety and well-being and confirms that tackling these challenges will require time. These priority areas are not only shared responsibilities among all members of the community but also require an integrated approach among partners to tackle their root causes and to address collective goals.

As part of the plan's implementation, it is expected that City departments as well as community agencies, groups and other entities will build on existing work to address identified gaps while also seeking to be more coordinated and efficient in the delivery of programs and services.

The implementation work carried out by staff builds a strong foundation to advance the six goals of the Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan. One of the core concepts of the planning process is that it will complement the work already underway across the city and use existing resources and assets in a more innovative, effective, and efficient way. Staff will identify where existing City strategies and programs are advancing the CSWB Plan goals and where new actions and structures are needed. Where a new strategy is required, the CSWB Office will identify supporting actions to occur in parallel to the strategy development.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for this report.

Public Consultation/Input

Based on a collective impact approach, the implementation plan was informed by findings from research and community consultations, advice from the CSWB Advisory Committee, and lessons learned from past approaches.

From a communications standpoint, openness and transparency guided the action planning and contributed to building community understanding and trust. Specific communications channels, such as the website, the Engage Ottawa page, and the newsletter were used to ensure the plan is transparent and accountable to the community.

RÉSUMÉ

Hypothèse et analyse

Le présent rapport a pour objet de faire rapport aux membres du Conseil sur l'état d'avancement annuel du Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités (Plan de SBEC), y compris le cadre d'évaluation et de mesure du rendement et la stratégie financière.

Les Plans de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités sont légiférés par le gouvernement provincial. Le premier Plan de sécurité et bien-être dans les collectivités de la Ville a été approuvé le 27 octobre 2021 ([ACS2021-EPS-PPD-0003](#)). À la suite du processus de consultation avec les résidents, le Conseil a cerné et approuvé six

domaines prioritaires ainsi que les buts, les stratégies et les résultats pour répondre à ces priorités : la discrimination, la marginalisation et le racisme; la sécurité financière et la réduction de la pauvreté; la violence fondée sur le genre et la violence à l'égard des femmes; le logement; des systèmes intégrés et simplifiés; et le bien-être mental.

Après l'approbation du Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités, la directrice générale des Services sociaux et communautaires a reçu l'ordre de remplir les exigences prévues par la loi dans le rapport [ACS2021-EPS-PPD-003](#), plus précisément:

« d'élaborer une structure de gouvernance, un cadre d'évaluation et de mesure du rendement, ainsi qu'une stratégie financière pour l'administration, la mise en œuvre, l'évaluation et le financement du Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités, comme indiqué plus loin dans le présent rapport, et de soumettre un rapport à ce sujet au comité permanent du Conseil concerné dès que possible ».

En avril 2022, une mise à jour des progrès ([ACS 2022-CDD-GEN-004](#)) a été présentée au Conseil, soulignant le travail accompli à ce jour et les prochaines étapes, y compris l'établissement d'une structure de gouvernance. Au cours de l'été 2022, le personnel a lancé un appel de candidatures concernant certains postes au sein du Comité consultatif. En septembre 2022, le comité de sélection a annoncé la nomination de la [présidente et de 12 membres du Comité consultatif](#).

Le personnel a fait d'importants progrès au cours de la première année en établissant l'infrastructure opérationnelle requise pour assurer un succès soutenu, y compris la nomination des membres du Comité consultatif, qui fourniront des conseils et une orientation stratégique au plan, l'établissement d'un cadre de mesure et les progrès continus réalisés par rapport au plan de mise en œuvre.

En 2022, le personnel et les intervenants ont bâti une base solide pour le plan en menant des recherches, en effectuant une analyse environnementale et en menant des discussions pour tirer parti du travail fructueux qui se déroule déjà à Ottawa.

L'une des principales réalisations a été le lancement du partenariat CitéStudio, un partenariat officiel fondé sur la confiance entre l'Université d'Ottawa et la Ville d'Ottawa, qui mènera à des solutions novatrices aux défis sociaux d'Ottawa. Depuis le lancement du partenariat, plusieurs projets de CitéStudio ont déjà produit des études et des recommandations dans les domaines prioritaires de la sécurité et du bien-être dans les collectivités.

De plus, le personnel a établi un cadre pour une approche axée sur les données afin de mesurer les progrès et d'informer les mesures dans l'ensemble du Plan de SBEC. Un processus méthodique a guidé l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre du cadre.

L'an dernier, le Bureau de SBEC a également lancé une stratégie de communication pour sensibiliser davantage les intervenants clés et les résidents à l'état actuel du Plan et rendre l'information sur les services et les programmes plus compréhensible et accessible à la communauté. Les réalisations à ce jour par rapport à la stratégie de communication comprennent le lancement du site Web du Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités, l'élaboration d'une vidéo de sensibilisation aux objectifs du Plan et une exposition itinérante présentant les progrès réalisés à ce jour et les contributions des partenaires communautaires.

Prochaines étapes

La rétroaction provenant de toutes les activités de mobilisation démontre la complexité et le lien entre les enjeux relatifs à la sécurité et au bien-être et confirme que la résolution de ces défis nécessitera du temps. Ces domaines prioritaires ne sont pas seulement des responsabilités partagées entre tous les membres de la communauté, mais nécessitent également une approche intégrée entre les partenaires pour s'attaquer à leurs causes profondes et pour atteindre les objectifs collectifs.

Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du plan, on s'attend à ce que les directions générales de la Ville ainsi que les organismes communautaires, les groupes et d'autres entités misent sur les travaux existants pour combler les lacunes cernées tout en cherchant à être plus coordonnés et plus efficaces dans la prestation des programmes et des services.

Le plan de mise en œuvre effectué par le personnel établit une base solide pour faire progresser les six objectifs du Plan de sécurité et de bien-être dans les collectivités (SBEC). L'un des concepts fondamentaux du processus de planification est qu'il effectuera le travail déjà en cours dans toute la ville et qu'il utilisera les ressources et les biens existants de façon plus novatrice, efficace et efficiente. Le personnel indiquera où les stratégies et les programmes existants de la Ville font progresser les objectifs du Plan de SBEC et où de nouvelles mesures sont nécessaires. Lorsqu'une nouvelle stratégie est nécessaire, le Bureau de SBEC déterminera des mesures de soutien à prendre parallèlement à l'élaboration de la stratégie.

Répercussions financières

Aucune répercussion financière n'est associée au présent rapport.

Consultations publiques et commentaires

En se fondant sur une approche axée sur les retombées collectives, le plan de mise en œuvre a été guidé par les constatations issues de la recherche et des consultations communautaires, les conseils du Comité consultatif pour le Plan de SBEC et les leçons tirées des approches antérieures.

Du point de vue des communications, l'ouverture et la transparence ont guidé la planification des mesures et contribué à renforcer la compréhension et la confiance des collectivités. Des canaux de communication particuliers, comme le site Web, la page de Participons Ottawa et le bulletin d'information, ont été utilisés pour s'assurer que le Plan est transparent et responsable envers les collectivités.

BACKGROUND

On October 27, 2021, Council approved the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan ([ACS2021-EPS-PPD-0003](#)). The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is a collective impact plan that addresses the local risks to safety and well-being at the community level and proposes both priorities as well as action items to be undertaken by various governments, institutions, groups, and agencies who are working together in order to mitigate those risks.

The plan seeks to improve community safety through long-term multi-disciplinary efforts to address social determinants of health (i.e., the conditions in which people are born, live, and work that include educational attainment, employment opportunities, early childhood development, housing, and food security).

The plan presents strategies that require collaborative action by various governments, institutions, and agencies with a goal of collectively creating a sustainable city where everyone is safe, has a sense of belonging, access to services, and can meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression.

Provincial Legislation

Community Safety and Well-Being plans are provincially legislated under the [Police Services Act](#) which states a requirement to ensure the safety and security of all citizens and properties within Ontario. The legislation provides direction on the development of the plan and stresses the importance of focusing on issues most relevant to the specific municipality. It also emphasizes that risk factors across the social determinants of health should be considered in the development of the plan.

As such, factors such as poverty, unemployment, inadequate housing, mental well-being, gender-based violence, systemic discrimination, racism, and marginalization are identified as barriers that increase the likelihood that communities will experience unsafe situations or conditions.

Provincial Planning Framework

The Ministry of the Solicitor General outlines a planning framework to support municipalities in developing a comprehensive approach to mitigate harm and promote safety and well-being. Four levels of intervention guide the plan's development and will continue to be key inputs into the plan as it evolves:

Social development: addresses underlying causes of social issues through upstream approaches that promote and maintain individual and community wellness.

Prevention: applies proactive strategies to known and identified risks that are likely to result in harm to individuals or communities if left unmitigated.

Risk intervention: identifies and responds to situations of acutely elevated risk and mobilizes immediate interventions before an emergency or crisis-driven response is required.

Incident response: requires intervention by first responders such as police, paramedics, and other emergency services.

Ottawa's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan consists of strategies that fall within the four levels of intervention, while focusing our collective efforts on social development and prevention. Ultimately, the goal is to reduce the need for incident response for downstream issues.

Collective Impact Approach

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan takes a collective impact approach. This form of collaboration brings people together in a structured way to focus on a common agenda and plan of action to address a complex social problem. The approach engages residents, community organizations, agencies, service providers and all levels of government to work collaboratively in the development and implementation of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

Collective impact research shows that the following five core conditions need to be met for an initiative of this kind to be successful: developing a common agenda; using shared measurement to understand progress; building on mutually reinforcing activities; engaging in continuous communications; and providing a backbone to move the work

forward.

- **Common Agenda:** to ensure the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, all participants need to have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.
- **Shared Measurement:** collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.
- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
- **Continuous Communication:** consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation.
- **Backbone Support:** creating and managing collective impact requires a dedicated staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Community-Led Approaches

Building a community safety and well-being plan using a collective impact approach, requires engagement, participation, and ownership from residents, multi-sector partners, community groups, businesses, and other stakeholders.

Engagement with residents and stakeholders played a key role in shaping the priorities of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Two formal consultation sessions with residents and stakeholders took place in 2020 and 2021, and the feedback was later analyzed and summarized in the [What We Heard Report – Priority Setting Engagement Summary](#), and the [What We Heard Report – Goals and Objectives Engagement Summary](#).

The engagement process provided an opportunity to ensure that the Plan focused on the greatest priorities of Ottawa residents and community members.

Representation of residents involved in the consultative process included: Indigenous, Black, racialized, equity deserving groups, individuals living with disabilities, those living in poverty, francophones, 2SLGBTQQIA+, older adults, immigrants and refugees, women, youth, business organizations, as well as individuals who work with and support

these groups. In total, 630 residents participated in the consultations throughout the “priority setting” consultation period and 983 different individuals participated in the consultations throughout the “goals and objectives” engagement period.

The feedback from all engagement activities demonstrates the complexity and connection between issues regarding safety and well-being and confirms that these issues are not only shared responsibilities among all members of the community but also require an integrated approach among partners to tackle their root causes and to address collective goals.

The Plan’s Priorities

Following the consultative process with residents, six priority areas as well as goals, strategies, and outcomes to address these priorities were identified and approved by Council:

- Discrimination, marginalization and racism
- Financial security and poverty reduction
- Gender-based violence and violence against women
- Housing
- Integrated and simpler systems
- Mental well-being

Intersectional and Equity Lens and Lived Experience

The plan recognizes the importance of ensuring that all residents, regardless of their race, gender, or other intersecting identities have equal opportunity to enjoy a sense of safety and well-being.

In order to achieve this objective, an intersectional lens is applied to the plan and power dynamics and imbalances due to discrimination, racism, and marginalization are incorporated into the overall approach, implementation, and continuous improvement opportunities. This approach aligns to the principles of intersectionality and equity within the City’s Women and Gender Equity Strategy, Anti-Racism Strategy, and Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Community Safety and Well-Being Office is in ongoing discussions with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition on how to develop and advance partnership in this work and through the intersection and implementation of aligned priorities.

The plan also recognizes that efforts to address safety and well-being should consider the voices of people with lived and living experience. The contributions of people with lived and living experience in mental health and addictions for instance, have been critical to developing trauma informed and culturally responsive solutions to the mental health crisis.

Ottawa's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan 2021-2031

Ottawa's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is an iterative community plan. The goals, strategies, and outcomes establish the focus and direction of work within each priority over the next ten years and are being used to develop detailed action plans and initiatives within each area to address and improve safety and well-being across Ottawa.

In order to be responsive and to ensure it evolves to continue to meet emerging needs in Ottawa, the Plan will be updated every four years. An update will take place in 2025.

DISCUSSION

Building a Strong Foundation

Upon approval of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, the General Manager, Community and Social Services was directed to complete the legislated requirements, specifically:

“to develop a governance structure, an evaluation and performance measurement framework, and a financial strategy for the administration, implementation, evaluation, and funding of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan as set out further in this report, and to report back to the appropriate Standing Committee of Council as soon as feasible.” ([ACS2021-EPS-PPD-0003](#))

Building a strong foundation is critical to the success of collective impact initiatives such as the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Collective impact research shows that the following five core conditions need to be met for an initiative of this kind to be successful: developing a common agenda; using shared measurement to understand progress; building on mutually reinforcing activities; engaging in continuous communications; and providing a backbone to move the work forward.

Staff made important progress in year one establishing the operational infrastructure required for sustained success, including the setting up of the CSWB Office, the appointment of the Advisory Committee members, the establishment of the performance measurement framework, ongoing progress against the implementation

plan, and the launch of its communication strategy.

Setting-up the Backbone Infrastructure

A solid backbone infrastructure is needed to ensure that all actions and initiatives are moving forward by keeping an eye on the overall vision and strategy. The backbone - or governance structure - will bring partners to the table around shared measurement strategies and mutually reinforcing activities.

In October 2021, as part of the approval of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, City Council recommended four permanent Full-Time Equivalents be allocated as well as non-compensation funding to support the plan. These funding recommendations were approved through the 2022 budget process going into effect on January 1, 2022.

Early in 2022, the CSWB Office directed their efforts towards establishing a solid governance structure for the plan as well as identifying community champions.

Stakeholder engagement and relationship building were key priorities to set a strong foundation. This work involved convening stakeholders, facilitating conversations, and promoting dialogue among community partners representing the six priority areas. Establishing a culture that fosters relationships and trust across stakeholders is critical to building public will and, ultimately, to the plan's success. This community outreach has been bringing different leaders together to spark dialogue, inspire mutual learning, and create the conditions for successful action planning.

Completing environmental scans also played a critical role in the plan's strategic planning phase. One of the core concepts of the planning process is that it will complement the work already underway across the city while promoting solutions unique to Ottawa and using existing resources and assets in a more innovative, effective, and efficient way. To meet this requirement, the team has completed environmental scans, including literature reviews, data analysis, and systems mapping, in the plan's six priority areas.

In addition, the team developed a strong evidenced-based performance measurement framework. This work leading to its creation included analyzing data to identify gaps and needs, launching a data procurement process with Statistics Canada, and establishing metrics (indicators, measurement, and approach) to measure the success of the plan.

Finally, the team launched a communications strategy to increase awareness - among key stakeholders and residents - of the current status and progress of the plan and make information on services and programs more understandable and accessible to the

community. Accomplishments to-date against the communications strategy include the launch of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan's Website, and in January 2023, the addition of a video summarizing the plan's objectives, progress to date and community partners' contributions.

Progress in the Area of Governance

In April 2022, a progress update ([ACS 2022-CSS-GEN-004](#)) was provided to Council announcing a renewed Advisory Committee would be established as part of the new governance structure to provide guidance and strategic direction to the CSWB Plan.

Finding and engaging influential leaders is critical to the success of collective Impact approaches. These champions bring with them a number of strategic assets, including a sphere of influence that can be leveraged for resources and connections that can move actions forward more quickly.

A call for applications for select Advisory Committee positions was launched over the 2022 summer. A selection committee made up of community leaders and City staff reviewed the applications with the goal of reviewing representation in terms of race, gender, disability, language and age. The selection process also discussed the leaders' capacity to align their respective networks and resources to support the strategic direction of the plan and priorities, and their organizations' commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In September 2022, the selection committee announced the appointment of the [13 members \(including the Chair\) of the Advisory Committee](#), who provide guidance and strategic direction to the plan. Members include community representatives, content experts in fields of key enablers for the plan, community agencies, service providers, and City staff. This committee will continue to evolve to reflect the diverse Ottawa community.

The Advisory Committee's mandate is to guide the implementation of Ottawa's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan by aligning people, partners and resources to improve outcomes for the community identified priorities. It takes an intersectional approach by examining the experiences and recommendations of all including members of equity-deserving groups, including women, racialized people, youth, newcomers, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, Francophones, and people living with disabilities. It also utilizes an anti-racist, anti-discrimination, intersectional, trauma informed approach.

Performance Measurement Framework

In parallel to the development of the governance process, staff undertook a multi-staged

approach to develop the CSWB performance measurement framework. This work consisted of establishing metrics (indicators, measurement, and approach), engaging in peer review with experts, launching a data procurement process with Statistics Canada, and analyzing baseline data to advance the plan's goals and outcomes. Establishing a solid framework for a data-driven approach is essential to measuring progress and informing actions across all aspects of the CSWB Plan.

The first step to guide the development of the evaluation framework included reviews summarizing recent work related to safety and well-being measurement in Canada, to describe key well-being frameworks used in Canada and internationally, and to provide an overview of the work already conducted under Ottawa's CSWB Plan.

An internal and external peer review process was launched in the Fall of 2022 to validate the CSWB plan's framework. Input was obtained from: the Community and Social Services Department, Ottawa Public Health, the Ottawa Neighborhood Study, the University of Ottawa, Statistics Canada, and the CSWB Advisory Committee.

Progress under the CSWB Plan refers to improving the conditions in which people grow, live and work through partnerships that support thriving communities where people feel safe. A framework for a data-driven approach to measuring progress and guide actions across aspects of the CSWB Plan was developed to:

1. inform the strategic direction and priorities of the plan
2. inform the plan's corporate functions and
3. assess project outcomes

Accordingly, measuring progress on the CSWB Plan is based on three reporting streams:

1. Population-level indicators of safety and well-being in Ottawa:

The purpose of this reporting stream is to establish systematic monitoring of key safety and well-being indicators in Ottawa. Tracking this information at the population level provides information about changes in the prevalence of risk factors and their distribution across sociodemographic groups. This reporting stream grounds the CSWB Plan in context and serves as a barometer for assessing the current state of safety and well-being in relation to the past. Data about safety and well-being trends in the city support planning related to strategic direction, priorities, and specific initiatives.

2. CSWB Plan inputs, activities and outputs:

The purpose of this reporting stream is to provide information about the CSWB Plan's operations and effectiveness. Examples include:

- Governance related activities of the CSWB plan's advisory committee, priority action tables, and communications
- Partnerships with community organizations, universities and other City departments
- Funding contributions from internal and external sources

3. Project outcomes under the CSWB Plan:

The purpose of this reporting stream is to demonstrate the value of specific initiatives actioned under the plan through program evaluations and research. Program evaluations are conducted for CSWB Plan initiatives that are funded by the City or through grants and funding agreements where the City was the main or co-applicant. As an integral part of evidence-informed decision making, the CSWB Plan includes a research agenda to build knowledge, guide interventions, and support funding requests.

Document 1: Performance Measurement Framework – Community Safety and Well-Being outlines the multi-level approach to measuring the progress of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and its six priorities over time.

Next steps

Key findings from population surveys, project evaluations, and research will be shared via the annual reporting on CSWB Plan to City Council.

Communications strategy

A strong communications plan is essential to ensure that leaders and partners are strategically engaged and know the impact of their contributions as well as those of others. Continuous communication is also needed to create community engagement and buy in.

The Community Safety and Well-Being Office launched a communications strategy to increase awareness - among key stakeholders and residents - of the current status and progress of the plan and make information on services and programs more understandable and accessible to the community.

The strategy was based on the results of the environmental scan. The scan included a review of existing City consultation reports (including the CSWB Plan What We Heard Reports), engagement plans, the Ottawa.ca as well as the Engage Ottawa sites, as well as resources and toolkits for the community.

Common themes from participants included: the need for centralized directories that contain information informing residents on what services they can access and where they can access them (they should be easy to navigate and be provided through different media); the importance of making resources accessible to those that do not have the means to access the information via the Internet; and the need to go into neighborhoods to communicate about services.

To respond to the needs of residents, the strategy is proposing new and innovative approaches, such as storytelling and usage of alternative channels to improve communication with key stakeholders, build residents' trust and boost community engagement. The Communications Plan will be aligned with the plan's goals and will contribute to its priorities.

Accomplishments to-date against the communications strategy include the launch of the [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan's Website](#), and the development of a [video](#) summarizing the plan's objectives, progress to date and partners' contributions.

This year, the CSWB Office also launched a visual campaign, a [travelling photo exhibit](#) highlighting social issues (rooted in the six priorities of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan) within the City of Ottawa as well as key milestones in community social services and the city staff and partners who made them happen. All those featured in the exhibit are connected to the plan's six priorities.

The exhibit specifically contributes to one of the goals of the Integrated and simpler systems' priority - to improve access to services by adapting communications to be more understandable and accessible to the community.

Financial Strategy

As has been previously reported, no new funding was provided from the provincial government for community safety and well-being planning, nor has any provincial project-specific funding been provided to municipalities in this regard.

In October 2021, the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan was approved by Council in report [ACS2021-EPS-PPD-0003](#). This report included the recommendations of four permanent Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) and core operational funding. This funding

along with additional priority project specific funding was then approved by Council during the 2022 budget process to support the operations of the CSWB Plan. They priority project specific funding includes the following:

- directed to the Community and Social Services Department to work with the Guiding Council on the development of an alternate response to mental health and addiction crisis
- allocated to the Community and Safety Well-Being Plan toward the mental health priority with a focus on mental health crisis response in the Byward Market and Lowertown area
- the Community Safety and Well-Being Fund to scale up and strengthened existing community services

Ongoing work will identify gaps and assess where additional resources may be required for the implementation of actions or initiatives derived from the proposed goals, strategies, and outcomes for each of the plan's priorities. Staff will report back with recommendations for funding opportunities in relation to these actions and initiatives.

Work will also continue to identify funding strategies including use of existing resources and budgets, grants from other levels of government, and grants and sponsorships from private organizations, among others. Initiatives to be delivered both by City departments and by external entities will be considered as part of this assessment, where possible. Any municipal funding requirements will be brought forward for Council's consideration as part of annual Budget processes.

Work regarding a financial strategy for the proposed plan will be ongoing as additional actions and initiatives are developed and implemented, and as the proposed plan evolves over time.

Implementation Plan: Progress Updates

One of the first steps in advancing priorities is to complement the work already underway across the city and use existing resources and assets in a more innovative, effective, and efficient way. To meet this requirement, the CSWB Office has been performing stakeholder analyses as well as environmental scans in the plan's six priority areas. This exercise also helped identify the current prominent issues in the community.

Discrimination, marginalization and racism

Discrimination is the denial of equal treatment and opportunity to individuals or

populations because of personal characteristics and membership in specific groups, with respect to education, accommodation, health care, employment, access to services, goods and facilities.

Marginalization occurs when a person or groups of people are less able to do things or access basic services or opportunities, such as education, healthcare and employment. The lack of access to services and opportunities doesn't allow them to participate fully in society.

Racism is the belief that people of some races are inferior to others, and the behavior which is the result of this belief. Racism is not limited to individual acts of prejudice, either deliberate or accidental. Rather, the most damaging racism is built into the systems and institutions that shape our lives and is called systemic racism.

During public consultations, people shared concerns about those most impacted by systemic discrimination having difficulty both accessing and navigating resources and services. Lack of access creates barriers to the system in general and often leaves out those who need services the most.

Experiences of discrimination, marginalization and racism can affect all aspects of someone's life and have an impact on their access to programs and services, their safety and well-being.

Addressing discrimination, marginalization and racism is a key priority of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Systemic inequities such as racism result in marginalization and discrimination. These impact certain groups more than others and add stressors that decrease their likelihood of being financially secure, accessing services when needed, accessing stable housing, being mentally well and being safe from gender-based violence. Therefore, any efforts to increase individual and community safety and well-being, be they at the incident response, risk intervention, prevention, or social development level, must apply an intersectional equity lens and prioritize these groups.

An intersectional equity lens considers the ways in which particular individuals and groups are disadvantaged by multiple and interconnected sources of oppression that compound historical patterns of exclusion. The CSWB Plan mainstreams an intersectional equity lens throughout all its priorities and applies it at all stages of analysis and work.

There are no specific standalone goals, strategies or outcomes for this priority, but the

plan also works to support the Anti-Racism Secretariat (ARS) the Women and Gender Equity Strategy (WGES), and other community initiatives that exist that address discrimination and systemic discrimination. This means, for instance, examining, identifying, and confronting systemic racism, racism and racial microaggressions in City's policies, practices, programs and services.

Alignment with Anti-Racism Strategy

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan has specific commitments in the Anti-Racism Strategy, which are being integrated in the work planning under the respective priorities. Other recommendations target the governance structure of the Plan, in order to “ensure equitable opportunities for Black and racialized communities to participate in the City's governance and decision-making processes” (Recommendation 2):

Action 2.7 – Advertise, and explain the selection processes, for the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan governance structure to Black and other racialized communities.

Action 2.8 – Ensure representation of Black and other racialized communities in the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Advisory Committee and Action Teams.

Staff followed these recommendations when establishing the plan's governance structure. When a call for applications for select Advisory Committee positions was launched, a selection committee made up of community leaders and City staff reviewed the applications with the goals of reviewing representation in terms of race, gender, disability, language and age. The selection process also discussed their organizations' commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Next steps

In 2023-2024 the same recommendations will be followed to ensure representation of Black and other racialized communities in the CSWB Plan Action Teams.

Financial Security and Poverty Reduction

Poverty is the deprivation of resources, choices, and power necessary for civic, cultural, economic, political and social participation in society. The experience of living in poverty includes not being able to satisfy basic needs such as food, shelter, or sanitation supplies; having limited access to necessities such as health care, childcare, education, and social services; and being unable to live to one's full potential. Poverty reduction involves both addressing the root causes (why it occurs in the first place) and alleviating the effects of poverty in the community.

Someone who is financially secure is not worried about whether their income can cover daily expenses. They have enough resources to pay for emergencies, absorb financial losses, and save to meet financial goals. They would also be able to act promptly to address needs as they arise, such as dental or eye care, fixing or buying a car, calling a plumber, buying office clothes or school supplies.

Systemic inequities such as racism, sexism, and colonization impact certain groups more than others, and add stressors that increase their likelihood of being affected by poverty. Households disproportionately affected by poverty include – but are not limited to – Indigenous, racialized, newcomer, those living with disabilities, and/or female lone parents. Therefore, any efforts to reduce poverty and increase financial security must prioritize these groups.

Key facts:

- In September 2022, inflation in Canada was up 6.9% compared the same time in 2021. One of the main drivers of increased prices was the cost of food. (Statistics Canada. 2022. [Consumer Price Index](#), September 2022.)
- The costs of feeding a family of four in Ottawa rose more than 20% during the pandemic. (Ottawa Public Health. 2022. [2022 Nutritious Food Basket: Monitoring food affordability in Ottawa](#).)
- Inflation has made it more difficult for people to save money. In 2022, just under one quarter (24%) had to draw from their savings to pay for their expenses, 29% said they were not able to save as much money, and 19% said they were no longer able to save money every month. (Statistics Canada. 2022. [Rising prices are affecting the ability to meet day-to-day expenses for most Canadians](#).)

The goal of the Financial Security and Poverty Reduction priority is to develop actions to address local poverty, and one strategy towards this goal as outlined in the CSWB plan is the development of a municipal poverty reduction strategy. The community identified two main priorities and actions to address local poverty, namely creating a municipal poverty reduction strategy and a municipal food security strategy.

These strategies will contribute to improving the lives of Ottawa residents, through access to food and increased employment supports. The poverty reduction strategy will develop local strategic goals on poverty reduction, employment creation, and reducing the challenges faced by those living on low income.

Poverty and food insecurity are deeply connected to each other. In collaboration with community partners, the CSWB will work to ensure that residents are able to access local culturally appropriate food, without relying on food banks, whenever possible.

In 2022, the CSWB Office and stakeholders built a strong foundation for this priority by conducting research and environmental scans, and leading discussions to build on successful work already occurring in Ottawa.

Poverty Reduction Roundtable

The Coalition of Community Health and Resources Centers, Ottawa Community Food Partnership, and Ottawa Food Bank began a partnership in 2021 through Tamarack Institute [Communities Ending Poverty](#) initiative to begin the development of an Ottawa poverty reduction strategy.

In 2022, these partners came together to convene and facilitate the development of the strategy. Aligning with the collective impact principles, residents, community organizations, agencies, service providers and all levels of government were also invited to participate in the development and implementation of this strategy.

To kick off the strategy development, a Poverty Reduction Strategy Stakeholder Roundtable was held in June 2023. The roundtable brought together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss priority areas and develop a common agenda. Participants committed to ensure that the proposed actions complement what is already happening and do not duplicate existing work. The roundtable was conceived to build momentum to move forward the strategy and the road map.

Next steps will involve compiling the feedback received from the roundtable participants and summarizing it in a What We Heard Report. The report will then be shared with the community during engagement sessions and via other means.

Next steps

In 2023-2024 staff will focus on building the poverty reduction strategy, with a focus on financial security, economic development, employment, and food security as related to these three. The work will also involve ensuring alignment of the City's food security portfolios and continuing to support community efforts towards the development of a municipal food security strategy. In addition, staff will work closely with community partners to ensure Ottawa food programs are inclusive, safe and culturally appropriate.

Gender-based violence and violence against women

Gender-based violence and violence against women includes physical, economic,

sexual, and emotional abuse and victimization that is rooted in gender norms and unequal power dynamics. (United Nations. 2016. [Gender statistics](#).) Unequal access to social determinants of health (e.g., housing, good quality health care, and employment) as well as discrimination, marginalization and racism create conditions that place individuals at a greater risk of experiencing violence. Gender-based violence and violence against women are mentioned separately to recognize the pervasiveness of violence against women and build public awareness about the alarming rise in hate and violence that gender-diverse people are facing.

Key facts:

- In Canada, women are more likely than men to experience sexual assault, harassment online, and unwanted sexual attention in their place of work. (Statistics Canada. 2019. [Gender-based violence and unwanted sexual behaviour in Canada, 2018: Initial findings from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#). *The Daily*.)
- Gender-diverse people, queer, and trans individuals are disproportionately impacted by gender-based violence (GBV), experience distinct forms of GBV, and often face additional barriers when reaching out for support related to GBV (Wisdom2Action. [Queering Gender-Based Violence Prevention & Response in Canada: Toolkit & Report](#).)
- Despite growing awareness of gender inequality, data continues to indicate the disproportionate risk of harm experienced by women and gender diverse people.
- In public consultations led by the City of Ottawa, most participants indicated they did not know about survivors services for gender-diverse persons and/or women. Timely access to those services was also identified as a problem. (Emergency and Protective Services (City of Ottawa). 2021. Community Safety and Well-Being Plan: What We Heard report – Goals and objectives engagement summary.)
- A 2022 Ottawa based systems analysis and asset mapping exercise confirmed the demand for services and supports is greater than supply, with more than 60% of organizations turning people away due to capacity constraints. Survivors with intersecting identities have a particularly difficult time accessing timely and relevant services.
- During public consultations, participants advised that male dominated sectors

create toxic environments that result in safety concerns for women. Further, when women are out in public, they continue to feel isolated and afraid of men. Respondents indicated these fears not only arise in passing encounters or with known acquaintances, but also arise when women deal with authority figures. (Emergency and Protective Services (City of Ottawa). 2021.)

The CSWB priority dedicated to gender-based violence and violence against women aligns with priorities outlined with the City of Ottawa's Women and Gender Equity Strategy. The priority consists of strategies that fall within all four levels of intervention outlined by the provincial framework with a particular focus on social development and prevention. The goal ultimately aims to prevent violence before it happens and reduce the need for an incident response.

The priority's three main goals are: ensuring every survivor has access to services and supports, preventing gender-based violence and violence against women, and providing alternatives to reporting for survivors. Key partners to-date for the implementation of the goals include the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW), Unsafe at Home Ottawa (UAHO), community-based organizations, Ottawa Police Service (OPS), Ottawa Public Health (OPH), Crime Prevention Ottawa, and the University of Ottawa through CityStudio.

In 2022, staff and stakeholders made considerable progress in the area of research, landscape mapping, and asset and gap analyses.

In 2022, the CSWB Office hired a consulting agency who, in collaboration with the Women & Gender Equity Secretariat, Unsafe at Home Ottawa (UAHO), and the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW) conducted a scoping study to map out availability and gaps in services for the survivors and victims of gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against women (VAW) as well as actions that can be taken through a collective impact lens and the role of the City in this work as an advocate, funder, and capacity builder. The study also collected information about culturally appropriate preventive and response services, key challenges in the sector, and organizations' capacity to collect, analyze, and share data.

Next steps

In 2023-2024 staff will work through key sector leaders, such as the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW), on action planning and prioritization based on the 2022 landscape mapping and asset and gap analysis. In March 2023, [Motion No.2023 - 10/05](#) was passed that re-committed Staff to integrating Intimate Partner

Violence (IPV) into the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The CSWB Office will collaborate with community partners and Crime Prevention Ottawa to identify immediate strategic opportunities for the City to reduce IPV in Ottawa and will report back to the Community Services Committee by no later than Q4 2023 with an implementation plan.

Housing

During public consultations, the most common concern expressed by members of the public and stakeholders for the Housing priority was the lack of affordable housing and the direct impact this has on the lives of individuals. Respondents reported that the lack of access to affordable housing acts as a barrier to improving their lives as well as the lives of individuals in their communities.

Key Facts:

- On January 29, 2020, Council declared an Affordable Housing and Homelessness Emergency and Crisis.
- Nearly one-quarter (23%) of tenant households in the city experience core housing needs – the unit requires major repairs, it costs more than 30% of before-tax income, and/or it does not have enough bedrooms for the number of occupants. (Statistics Canada. 2017. [Core housing need.](#))
- Besides the structural conditions mentioned above (e.g. cost of housing), housing instability can be also driven by individual factors (e.g. education, job skills, health) and life events (e.g. domestic violence, separation)

This crisis led to a call to action and set the foundation for increased efforts to improve housing conditions through the [10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan](#) and other initiatives.

Additionally, on March 10, 2021, Council approved the City's first long range financial plan for Housing Services at the City, a comprehensive funding strategy to implement the 10-Year Housing and Homeless Plan objectives.

As mentioned above, one of the core concepts of the Community Safety and Well-being planning process is that it will complement the work already underway across the city while promoting solutions unique to Ottawa and using existing resources and assets in a more innovative, effective, and efficient way. As such, the Housing priority will not include specific goals, strategic objectives, or outcomes but rather will support these existing initiatives and will aim to address any gaps that are not already considered.

Next steps

The actions of the 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan - approved by Council - represent the key objectives of this priority. In 2023-2024, the CSWB Office will continue to work with the Housing department to contribute to the department's strategic goals.

Integrated and Simpler Systems

In public consultations with residents and stakeholders led by the City of Ottawa, residents emphasized the need to simplify access and delivery of community and social services through an integrated model.

Key Facts:

- Almost half (49%) of respondents who participated in public consultations said the application process for City's services is complex and hard to use.
- Four in ten (40%) respondents also said they do not have information about services that are available in their community.
- Some residents raised concern about a lack of culturally appropriate and customized services that pose barriers to access for racialized and Indigenous communities, and people who speak languages other than English. (City of Ottawa. 2021. Community Safety and Well-Being Plan: What we heard report – Goals and objectives engagement summary.)

Improved access to services through adequate knowledge of services and simpler navigation is expected to have a strong positive impact on community safety and well-being.

Integrated and simpler systems (ISS) in the context of the CSWB Plan includes the processes, methodologies, and policies needed to help government, organizations and service agencies work collaboratively to create a more streamlined system. ISS is a priority on its own as well as a useful tool to advance the other CSWB plan priorities.

Having ISS as a standalone as well as a cross-cutting priority allows the City to allocate resources for activities related to systems change (e.g., change of policies, processes and procedures). These are also aligned with Community and Social Services department's human service integration initiative, data governance strategy and community funding framework.

Through the engagement with residents and stakeholders, the following goals were identified in this priority area: promoting data sharing, improving effectiveness of

community grant funding, and improving access to services for residents.

Integrated access to services

Building on the lessons learned throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and listening to community feedback, the Community and Social Services Department (CSSD) re-affirmed its commitment to simplify access to person-centered services.

In line with the CSWB Plan's priority to integrate and simplify systems, the Community and Social Services department established a Human Services Integration team in 2021. In 2022, the team conducted research to learn from leading human services integration practices, examined access pathways to internal programs to identify barriers and opportunities to simplify access, and engaged staff and tested new approaches to system navigation and integrated service delivery.

The department created a cross-service Silo-Buster Group, of which the CSWB Office is a contributing member. The Group guided and influenced a theory of change, an outcome and measurement framework and a roadmap with recommendations to improve access to services and advance human services integration in the department. A critical component for change has included the launch of new models to test new integration approaches improving access to person-centered services.

The creation of the Catherine Street Community Service Hub represents a significant step towards this strategic goal. Serving the Centretown area, the Hub is an accessible, person-centred space where residents can access City and community social supports in one location. It requires no appointment and offers a wide range of programming, including crisis support, housing support, and financial and social assistance.

Mobile case work

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Employment and Social Services launched the Outreach and Mobile Services Team, which brings programs and services, such as employment, financial, childcare, and other social services into the community and closer to the residents who need them. The team provides services from different locations and partner organizations throughout the city, such as shelters, day programs, community centers and food banks.

Community Engagement Team

The Community Engagement Team launched in January of 2022 in areas that have been disproportionately impacted through the pandemic (such as the Lowertown, Byward Market, and downtown core). Since its launch, it has been conducting outreach activities and connecting with housed and non-housed residents, local businesses, and

community partners to better understand their issues and concerns. In its first six months, this team took part in nearly 6,000 engagements with residents to identify needs and connect them to services.

The CSWB Travelling Photo Exhibit

The [CSWB Travelling Photo Exhibit](#) was conceived to respond to the needs of the residents, highlighted in recent consultations and summarized in What We Heard reports. Common themes from participants included:

- the need for centralized directories that contain information informing residents on what services they can access and where they can access them.
Respondents said that these centralized directories should be easy to navigate and be provided through different media
- the importance of making resources accessible to those that do not have the means to access the information via the Internet
- the need to go into neighborhoods rather than expecting residents to come to services.

The CSWB Travelling Photo Exhibit highlights social issues (rooted in the six priorities of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan) within Ottawa as well as key milestones in community social services and the people who made them happen. The subjects of the exhibit are individuals (working for the City or for community partners) connected to the plan's six priorities. The exhibit will travel to various Ottawa Public Library branches and community centres. The main objective of the exhibit is to increase residents' awareness and access to services.

Promote data sharing

The Community and Social Services Department administers a range of social programs from all three levels of government. This results in complexity for where data is stored and how it can be accessed. With a goal of advancing the use of data to respond to residents' needs, staff members have focused efforts on improving data quality and access. In 2022 staff:

- gained access to five additional administrative datasets
- conducted three training sessions on the importance of data quality and demographic data collection within the Ontario Works program
- released five additional datasets and two public dashboards

Internally, staff have endorsed a Community and Social Services Data Strategy that focuses on increasing the data maturity of the department through data quality, increased data capability, data equity, and data partnerships which spans this Term of Council.

Improve effectiveness of community grant funding

Community Funding improves community well-being by investing financial and capacity-building resources in the non-profit social services sector to address the root causes of poverty and increase equitable access to services for the residents facing most barriers in our community. Community Funding improves community collaboration by the following:

- Building capacity of community-led networks and coalitions by contributing knowledgeable input to support the sharing of information, efficient use of resources and strategic planning to maximize synergies and strengthen Ottawa's social services sector; and
- Ensuring that relationships with community partners and agencies are established and expanded as required to maximize the impact of Community Funding funded programs in the community; and
- Providing feedback to funded service providers related to service delivery and access to services; and
- Planning, organizing, and developing strategies on issues related to access to services, service delivery models, and improvements to programming and deliverables.

In 2022, 94 community agencies received \$27M in 5-year core sustainability funding that addresses poverty reduction, community development and social infrastructure. This includes 22 new agencies that were onboarded into Community Funding. Many of these new agencies are grassroots organizations founded by, led by, and focused on Indigenous Black and other racialized communities.

Next steps

In 2023, the Community and Social Services department will continue to actively and meaningfully implement actions to integrate human services and simplify access to services. Within Community and Social Services specifically this will include mapping of an integrated client journey, identifying high impact integration prototypes and maintaining momentum of the progress made to date. This work will include actions

such as nurturing and developing partnerships with community agencies including in the Catherine Street Community Service Hub, expanding navigation services and broadening the use of an integrated client consent form to facilitate access to multiple services.

In the area of community funding, the Community Funding Framework is in the process of developing an Evaluation Framework. Evaluations and impact assessments are a key component in ensuring transparency and accountability in the allocation of publicly funded resources. The Evaluation framework will have many benefits to both the City and funded agencies, including:

- A mechanism to identify the strengths and opportunities to support strategic decision making, both for the City and the agencies
- Enhanced transparency, supporting clear criteria for funding decisions and clear measures of progress towards the stated objectives
- Added accountability for funds dispersion, showing that funds are being used for their intended purpose
- Increased ability to communicate impact of services on the community and share stories with the broader Ottawa community

Community Funding will use the data reported by the funded agencies to create a report each year on collective success and impact that will be shared with City Council and the community. This information will also be used by the Community Funding team to identify opportunities to work with funded agencies on areas they are interested in expanding or collaborating on. Because the data will highlight needs and strengths of the social service sector, it will provide insight for future planning to continue to best support the Ottawa Community. Finally, the Community Funding team will have a better understanding if the funding investments are supporting equitable access to services to residents facing the greatest needs and barriers.

The framework will be finalized in July 2023 and the full implementation of the framework will be implemented in January 2024.

Also, in the area of evaluation, the Community Funding team is running a pilot project in 2023 with a software (IEP System) to support agencies in building their technical capacity. The software will have two primary features: a data collection tool and a dashboard and reporting functionality. The software is aimed at addressing one of the

barriers identified by agencies when discussing the implementation of an evaluation system which is a lack of technical resources.

Mental well-being

Mental well-being or mental health refers to the ability to pursue one's interests, be fulfilled, and feel a sense of belonging. Mental health is often confused with a mental health condition, which is a diagnosed disorder that can impact a person's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. While mental health applies to all, only a percentage of the population will have a diagnosed mental health condition.

In public consultations with residents and stakeholders, mental well-being emerged as one of the top five priorities for the CSWB plan. The residents reported long waitlists for mental health and related services, difficulties navigating the service delivery system, and poor affordability of services as the key barriers to mental well-being. They also voiced their concern about Ottawa Police Services responding to mental health crises and the risk of criminalizing people with mental health issues.

Key Facts:

- Results from a population survey of Ottawa residents conducted in November 2021 indicate worse self-rated mental health compared to before COVID-19.
- COVID-19 has exacerbated the community impacts of problematic substance use and has exposed some gaps in mental health services for residents in need. This has been particularly evident in our City's downtown core and Lowertown.
- Some populations in Ottawa were more likely to report 'fair' or 'poor' mental health in November 2021: people with disabilities (41%) versus those without (23%), and people 18 to 34 years old (32%) compared to those over 65 years old (14%). (Ottawa Public Health. 2022. [Status of mental health, addictions and substance use health in Ottawa during the COVID-19 pandemic, Fall 2021. Results of a population survey November 5 to 18, 2021.](#))

The work of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan focuses on improving access to mental well-being and substance use supports and services as well as promoting mental well-being in a stigma-free environment. This includes exploring safer alternatives for mental health crises response.

The mental well-being priority of the CSWB plan consists of strategies that fall within all four levels of intervention outlined by the provincial framework with a particular focus on

targeting social determinants of mental well-being through social development and prevention programs, with the ultimate aim to reduce the need for an incident response to crisis related to mental well-being.

Alignment between strategies addressing mental well-being and the provincial framework includes:

- Social development: address social determinants of mental well-being
- Prevention: reduce stigma
- Risk intervention: improve access to services and support
- Incident response: explore safer alternatives for mental health crisis response

In 2022, some of this work included:

- Participating as a member on the [Ottawa Guiding Council for Mental Health and Addictions \(GCMHA\)](#) for the development of an alternative response to mental health and substance use crisis in Ottawa
- Innovative anti-stigma projects as part of the CityStudio partnership

Safer Alternative Response to Mental Health and Substance Use

The membership of the Guiding Council is made up of representation from Ottawa based community, health and service networks working to respond to mental health crises; and public institutions that have mandated responsibilities to respond to mental health and substance use crises. The Guiding Council is made up of eleven networks that represent 150 organizations throughout the city of Ottawa who work with community members who are experiencing crises around mental health and substance use.

The Guiding Council has been working intensely since April 2021 on the establishment of a strategy to respond to mental health and substance use crises. A full report on the Guiding Council's work including public consultation results and research studies on the alternative response to mental health and substance use crisis will be available via a separate report to Community Services Committee presented in June 2023.

Next steps

In 2023-2024 the CSWB Office's priority will be the strategy and implementation of the mental health and substance use crisis' alternative response, which will be the subject of a report presented to Community Services Committee in June 2023. In addition,

Staff will work to advance internal City actions, such as the planning and delivery of trauma-informed training and anti-stigma training for City staff providing front line and support services.

CityStudio

CityStudio Ottawa is a formal partnership between the University of Ottawa and the City of Ottawa. The purpose of this partnership is to bring students, faculty, municipal staff and community members together to address our city's priority issues around health and well-being.

Now among the 15 well-established CityStudios around the world, CityStudio Ottawa will respond to the priorities of Ottawa's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

Since its launch in Fall 2022, 15 City staff have led 17 CityStudio projects, with 362 students, all related to the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Students, staff and faculty have undertaken work to identify measures to promote housing affordability in Ottawa, promote substance use health among university students, and develop an information campaign to support food security among seniors.

CityStudio not only promotes civic engagement, but also provides support to community partners, in sectors such as health and social services, in which resources and financial constraints are common.

Participation of community partners is also a key pillar of CityStudio and students have worked with local not for profit organizations to develop program evaluation and implementation plans for community partners.

CityStudio Project Example – Financial Security and Poverty Reduction

For this project, CSWB Office partnered with The Good Companions Seniors' Centre as the community partner working with the University of Ottawa. This is the first project with a community partner aiming to create materials for immediate use by the partner. Many agencies in Ottawa work to connect seniors with food. However, there are still many seniors who are food insecure and who may not know about existing food resources and services across the city or feel they cannot access them. Students developed implementable advertising campaigns aiming to reach such seniors and connect them with existing programs. This project will benefit older adults 55+ as well as adults with disabilities as served by The Good Companions and other food security agencies in Ottawa. The CSWB Office will now work with the University of Ottawa and Good Companions to adapt and use student campaign materials.

Next steps

The feedback from all engagement activities demonstrates the complexity and connection between issues regarding safety and well-being and confirms that

1. Tackling these issues will require time; and
2. These issues are not only shared responsibilities among all members of the community but also require an integrated approach among partners to tackle their root causes and to address collective goals.

As part of the plan's implementation, it is expected that City departments as well as community agencies, groups and other entities will build on existing work to address these identified gaps while also seeking to be more coordinated and efficient in the delivery of programs and services.

One of the core concepts of the planning process is that it will complement the work already underway across the city and use existing resources and assets in a more innovative, effective, and efficient way. Staff will identify where existing City strategies and programs are advancing the CSWB Plan goals and where new actions are structures are needed. Where a new strategy is required, staff will identify supporting actions to occur in parallel to the strategy development.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the report recommendations.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receiving the update on the Community Safety and Well-being Plan. There are no legal impediments to reaffirming the City's commitment to the Plan and its priorities.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This is a city-wide report.

CONSULTATION

A community safety and well-being plan requires engagement, participation, and ownership from residents, multi-sector partners, community groups, businesses, and other stakeholders.

Based on a collective impact approach, the Plan was informed by findings from research and community consultations, advice from the CSWB Advisory Committee with 13 members, and lessons learned from past approaches. Since its development, close to 3,000 residents and partners have been engaged.

The plan recognizes that efforts to address safety and well-being should consider the voices of people with lived and living experience. The contributions of people with lived and living experience in mental health and addictions for instance, have been critical to developing trauma informed and culturally responsive solutions to the mental health crisis.

From a communications standpoint, openness and transparency guided the action planning and contributed to building community understanding and trust. Specific communications channels, such as the website, the Engage Ottawa page, and the newsletter were used to ensure the plan is transparent and accountable to the residents.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is a provincial directive that recognizes the importance of ensuring that all residents, regardless of their ability and other intersecting identities have an equal opportunity to have a sense of safety and well-being within their community. Following a consultative process with residents, including people with disabilities and service providers, six priority areas were identified with corresponding goals, strategies and outcomes. The priorities include: discrimination, marginalization and racism, financial security and poverty reduction, gender-based violence and violence against women, housing, integrated and simpler systems, and mental well-being.

Ableism and discrimination result in negative impacts to people with disabilities and can affect many Safety and Well-Being Plan priorities. These systemic inequities can decrease opportunities for people with disabilities to be financially secure through employment, accessing health and social services when needed, acquiring accessible and stable housing accommodation and/or maintaining mental and physical health well-being.

The 2023-2024 implementation plan update provides details on the strong foundation being built to advance the six priorities of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The plan complements work already underway and uses existing resources and assets in a more innovative, effective, and efficient way to identify where new actions or

structures are needed. Positive actions taken to increase individual and community safety and well-being, for example, through governance and actions recommended by the appointed diverse and inclusive plan advisory committee, communication strategies, risk intervention, risk prevention, or at a social development level, must consistently apply an accessibility lens to design and develop services and strategies that prioritize all equity-deserving groups and their unique requirements and be inclusive of people with visible and non-visible, episodic, temporary or permanent disabilities.

City services are provided to people with disabilities according to the obligations of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, 191/11. All recommendations contained in this report will support and enhance accessible service provision and improve mental and physical health and well-being outcomes to the benefit of people with disabilities.

As part of the plan's implementation, City departments as well as community agencies, groups and other entities will build on existing work to address identified gaps while also seeking to be more coordinated and efficient in the delivery of programs and services. Active community consultation and commitment to engage with the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee for continued cross-disability advice, considerations and feedback will be sought for the plan and future progress updates.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY IMPLICATIONS

The following existing authority, as set out under the Delegation of Authority By-law No. 2023-67, will be exercised to implement the report recommendations: Schedule D: Community and Social Services Department.

Per the October 27, 2021 Community Safety and Well-Being Plan ([ACS2021-EPS-PPD-0003](#)) Report, staff will report back annually on the progress.

INDIGENOUS, GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

The plan recognizes the importance of ensuring that all residents, regardless of their race, gender, or other intersecting identities have equal opportunity to enjoy a sense of safety and well-being.

Discrimination, marginalization and racism increase the risk of harm across populations and are relevant to all CSWB Plan priorities and levels of the provincial framework. Experiences of discrimination, marginalization and racism can affect all aspects of someone's life and place them at greater risk of harm. Understanding how the risk of harm varies for different groups of people will guide the City of Ottawa in its work to

close those gaps and improve community safety. Obtaining information that is disaggregated by sociodemographic factors is one important component to advancing an anti-racism and anti-discrimination approach across all CSWB priorities.

Systemic inequities such as racism, sexism, and colonization result in marginalization and discrimination. These impact certain groups more than others and add stressors that decrease their likelihood of being financially secure, accessing services when needed, accessing stable housing, being mentally well and being safe from gender-based violence.

Therefore, any efforts to increase individual and community safety and well-being, be they at the incident response, risk intervention, prevention, or social development level, must apply an intersectional equity lens and prioritize these groups. An intersectional equity lens considers the ways in which particular individuals and groups are disadvantaged by multiple and interconnected sources of oppression that compound historical patterns of exclusion. Social identities and other characteristics interact and interconnect in evolving ways that require intentional analysis and the development of tailored solutions across a broad range of populations. The CSWB Plan works to mainstream an intersectional equity lens throughout all its priorities and applies it at all stages and levels of analysis and work.

This approach aligns to the principles of intersectionality and equity within the City's Women and Gender Equity Strategy, Anti-Racism Strategy, and Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan.

Indigenous Policy Considerations

A representative from the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition is a member of the Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee. The Community Safety and Well-Being Office is in ongoing discussions with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition on how to develop and advance partnership in this work and through the intersection and implementation of aligned priorities.

Gender and Equity Implications

Systemic inequities such as racism, sexism, and colonization result in marginalization and discrimination. These impact certain groups more than others and add stressors that decrease their likelihood of being financially secure, accessing services when needed, accessing stable housing, being mentally well and being safe from gender-based violence.

Therefore, any efforts to increase individual and community safety and well-being, be they at the incident response, risk intervention, prevention, or social development level, must apply an intersectional equity lens and prioritize these groups. An intersectional equity lens considers the ways in which particular individuals and groups are disadvantaged by multiple and interconnected sources of oppression that compound historical patterns of exclusion. Social identities and other characteristics interact and interconnect in evolving ways that require intentional analysis and the development of tailored solutions across a broad range of populations. The CSWB Plan works to mainstream an intersectional equity lens throughout all its priorities and applies it at all stages and levels of analysis and work.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific rural implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Community and Social Services remains committed to the strategic priority Thriving Communities. The work of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan as outlined in this report strives to promote and address safety, social and physical well-being for residents most at risk.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Performance Measurement Framework - Community Safety and Well-Being

DISPOSITION

Staff will undertake the next steps for the Plan's 2023-2024 implementation, as described in this report and will also implement any direction received as part of the consideration of this report.