

# South Simcoe



## Community Safety and Well-Being Plan 2021-2025



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## Acknowledgments

The development of this Community Safety and Well-Being Plan was influenced and informed by the passion and dedication of committed community partners and our residents. As a result of their commitment, time, resources, willingness to collaborate, shared knowledge, and experience we have the opportunity to work together to better the lives of our residents.

We acknowledge and express our gratitude to:

- The County of Simcoe for resourcing the coordination and development of the Plan.
- Members of Council for recognizing the value of this work and supporting our efforts to elevate safety and well-being for all our residents.
- The residents from across our municipalities that participated in our initial public consultation who shared their time, ideas, and personal experiences to help shape and inform our efforts.
- The thousands of collective hours generously offered by community stakeholders, our police service(s), municipal partners, the County of Simcoe, the Advisory Body, Indigenous partners, community organizations, collaborative tables and others that contributed their thoughts and feedback to Phase 1 of this Plan.
- The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit for leading us through the Prioritization Matrix process to support risk identification early in our work.
- The advice and support of Chief Andrew Fletcher, South Simcoe Police and Dr. Hugh Russell for their extensive knowledge and connection to the foundations of Community Safety and Well-Being planning in Ontario.
- Special recognition to those in our community and across the County that are already tirelessly working to address the areas of risk identified in this Plan. Your accomplishments are considerable and your passion is unwavering.
- Last, but certainly not least, to those with lived experience that courageously and candidly provided insight that can only come from experience - thank you. We will advance our efforts in addressing risk as we embark on Phase 2, together.

## Land Acknowledgment

The work that has been done in the development of this Plan and the work that will unfold as a result of this Plan, will take place in municipalities across Simcoe County.

We recognize and support First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous communities and the organizations that exist to support the work that they are doing every day to improve safety and well-being .

In recognition of the longstanding history of the land that we reside on and the work this Plan will be undertaken on, we offer this land acknowledgment.

**We acknowledge the land that our community safety and well-being planning will take place on is the traditional land of the Anishinaabe People.**

**The Anishinaabe include the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. It should be noted that the Wendat and the Haudenosaunee Nations have also walked on this territory over time.**

**In times of great change, we recognize more than ever the importance to honour Indigenous history and culture and are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation, respect and good health with all First Nation, Métis and Inuit people and our community as a whole.**

To further acknowledge our commitment to reconciliation, this Plan recognizes and respects the right to Indigenous planning and governance of Indigenous people, by Indigenous Peoples. The historic truth of colonialism and its long-standing negative intergenerational impacts has led to the marginalization of Indigenous Peoples and has resulted in fractured communities. With a lot to mend, a culture of mutual respect, engagement, dialogue, and support will steer our collaboration as we work to improve the lives of those in our respective communities.

We support and respect the Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, planning process, and outcomes. We will work closely with Indigenous partners and open ourselves to the interchange of knowledge and skills that will complement our joint efforts to support safety and well-being in our communities.



# Forward

On behalf of the members of Council of the Towns of Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil, we, the Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee, are pleased to present the South Simcoe Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan.

We are grateful to the County of Simcoe and the South Simcoe Police Service for their leadership, resources and support throughout the planning process.

Our journey towards the development of our Plan began before COVID-19. Even before the compounded impacts of a pandemic, we recognized that not all residents in our community enjoy the same sense of safety and well-being. We felt strongly that our planning needed to continue moving forward as a component of our pandemic response.

CSWB planning is an opportunity to focus on upstream strategies that will have positive impacts at the individual and community level. Focusing our efforts on addressing the root cause(s) and concentrating our efforts and investments in social development priorities is critical. Our CSWB Plan has prioritized four areas of focus: mental health and addictions, housing, education, and income.

Our municipalities are two of the fastest-growing municipalities in Canada. We need to do our utmost to ensure that our current residents and future ones have every opportunity to live in a community that offers them safety and encourages well-being. Situations can be complex. The solutions to complex social problems are non-linear and require us to think, plan and partner in non-traditional ways.

We have incredibly committed partners, as evidenced throughout this Plan. The CSWB plan recognizes work already underway in our community to support safety and well-being, and we will align our work to build on and strengthen these efforts.

The South Simcoe CSWB Plan is a shared commitment from local government, police, and community partners in the health, community and social service sectors to work together to address the risks and needs in our community.

We are very excited to embark on the next phase of this work with our residents and community partners.

Sincerely,



Geoff McKnight  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury



Sandy Foster  
Health and Wellness Catalyst  
Town of Innisfil



Police Chief Andrew Fletcher  
South Simcoe Police Service

# Plan at a Glance

Our Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan is our commitment to work together towards improved social outcomes for our residents.

Beyond the legislative requirements for the Plan under Bill 175, *Safer Ontario Act (2018)*, this plan looks at tackling tough social issues from a different angle. Our Plan identifies and lays the foundation for local social development priorities over four years (2021-2025). Just as the areas of risk identified in our local Plan are intricately connected, our Plan is also connected to other CSWB planning taking shape across our county. We recognize and value the role that planning locally and planning together brings to our objectives. We share common goals but appreciate that the needs and how we move forward can be unique to each community. We will leverage and support the many existing initiatives that advance safety and well-being.

Across Simcoe County, planning is moving forward in eight areas of risk:



Underpinning all of our planning are the values that we hold dear:

**- Diversity - Equity - Inclusion - Lived Experience**

661 total resident responses to online surveys



50 resident responses to the South Simcoe online survey

Over 95 individual consultations



Multiple group engagement sessions

For each area of focus (risk), we have identified three common priorities:



Data and Performance Measurement



Information Sharing, Knowledge Transfer and Exchange



Inter-Sectoral Collaboration

Strategic directions, strategic goals and outcomes unique to each focus area (risk) have been established.

The process by which this work will unfold reflects both a local and regional structure. Social issues are complex and interconnected. So too, our responses must be upstream, multi-sectoral, non-linear, agile and informed.

## Mental Health and Addictions

We are committed to improving equity, access and quality of mental health and addiction (MHA) services across the continuum for all residents.

We will do this by:

- Identifying, then mapping out a 'Comprehensive Continuum of Core Services' framework (eg. withdrawal management)
- Increasing client and family engagement
- Increasing knowledge, skills, understanding and capacity around harm reduction and trauma-informed approach
- Building capacity for people to self-manage their mental well-being
- Promoting positive mental health strategies that help employers support employees
- Identifying impact metrics related to MHA to contribute to an overarching CSWB scorecard

## Housing

We are committed to addressing the need for housing that is affordable and attainable and to support people so that they remain housed.

We will do this by:

- Identifying, then mapping out a 'Comprehensive Continuum for Housing Stabilization Supports' framework (e.g. housing, clinical and complementary supports)
- Increasing the capacity to best utilize available tools to support the development of affordable / attainable housing
- Increasing information sharing opportunities
- Aligning work with current federal, provincial, and local homelessness support access systems
- Identifying impact metrics related to housing stability to contribute to an overarching CSWB scorecard

## Education

We are committed to ensuring everyone in our community has a clear pathway to education regardless of their age, with a focus on futureproofing our local skilled trades and health care sectors.

We will do this by:

- Identifying, then mapping an 'Inter-Sectoral Pathways to Education' framework
- Increasing the number of skilled trade people that train and remain in our community
- Aligning training with employment opportunities
- Breaking down barriers to education (e.g. language, literacy, discrimination)
- Increasing the capacity in our community to support those looking to upskill, pursue a second career or apprentice in a skilled trade
- Improving the perceived value of apprenticeships and careers in the trades for both the employer and the potential apprentice
- Increasing education outreach and engagement strategies with youth, women, those with disabilities, and Indigenous communities
- Identifying impact metrics related to education to contribute to an overarching CSWB scorecard

## Income

We are committed to advancing income stability for our residents by addressing urgent needs in a dignified way, while striving towards more sustainable solutions that focus on social inclusion and life stabilization supports.

We will do this by:

- Identifying, then mapping a 'Core Urgent Needs' framework
- Improving collaboration between government, business and service providers to supporting a more inclusive economy and inclusive business practices
- Increasing awareness, understanding, and compassion related to the impacts of poverty
- Equipping residents with tools needed in today's economy (eg. digital access, financial literacy, etc)
- Increasing life-stabilization opportunities for residents
- Identifying impact metrics related to income stability to contribute to an overarching CSWB scorecard

### COVID-19

Formal CSWB planning commenced in July of 2019. Our data and areas of risk were identified before the global pandemic that started in Spring 2020. Despite having to respond to the immediate crisis that the pandemic imposed, stakeholders and community partners felt strongly that we continue moving forward with our CSWB planning. If the risks existed in our community before the pandemic, we knew that our residents would be at even greater risk during and post-pandemic. We have seen the disproportionate impacts that the pandemic has had on residents that are marginalized, living in poverty, homeless and those with mental health and addiction issues. We know that others are struggling day in and day out as well.

The Government of Ontario was quick to respond to the needs of residents through financial supplements and supports. This financial support has been a lifeline for many during this pandemic. We understand that these supports will come to an end shortly. We anticipate that the recovery period from COVID-19 will have a tremendous impact on the health, social and human service sectors. There has never been a time when planning such as this has been more critical.

Our collaboration model and our strategies are agile enough to respond to emerging issues and changing priorities as they arise in our community.

### Municipal Elections

The next municipal Election will be held in October 2022. The CSWB Plan spans 2021 – 2025. We acknowledge that the Plan will need to be reviewed by a new sitting Council at the appropriate time.

### Transitions

In 2019, legislation was passed that outlines requirements to integrate the LHINs and other provincial health agencies into a single agency, Ontario Health. As this process continues to unfold, we recognize that the health care system is working through a period of restructuring. Local Ontario Health Teams (OHT) will connect healthcare providers and services around the needs of patients and families moving forward. We will work closely with the local OHT and the OHT for Specialized Populations.



## Key Terms Used Throughout

- CSWB - Community Safety and Well-Being
- GMG - Geographical Municipal Grouping (the municipalities forming a joint CSWB Plan)
- GMCC - Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee  
(the executive committee overseeing the development of their Plan)
- MHA - Mental Health and Addictions
- OHT - Ontario Health Team
- OPP - Ontario Provincial Police
- SMDHU - Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

## Why are we planning?

While we celebrate what makes the municipalities of Simcoe County great, we recognize that not every resident enjoys the same quality of life. There are factors in our life that either hinder or help us. Depending on these factors and circumstances, residents may find themselves struggling to achieve education, find work, having to decide if they pay for their housing or put food on the table, feeling disconnected and alone, struggling every day with mental health or addiction, or wondering where they can find the help they need and how they will carry on. Many of those mentioned above are considered to be among the social determinants of health. The social determinants of health are the collective set of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine a person's health. Where we are born, grow up, live, work, and age also influence our health and well-being.

The circumstances surrounding the determinants of health are complex. Often, police find themselves responding to calls that are complex but not criminal with no chargeable offences. The police are available to the public 24/7, but that does not mean that they are the most appropriate to respond to calls that are often medically or socially complex. In looking at root cause, there is a clear indication that all sectors have a shared responsibility to support our residents' safety and well-being.

The Government of Ontario has demonstrated its commitment to supporting communities by developing a provincial approach to community safety and well-being. Under the Province of Ontario's Bill 175, *Safer Ontario Act (2018)*, the Ministry of the Solicitor General requires that the Council of every municipality shall prepare and, by resolution, adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan on or before July 1, 2021. The CSWB Plan will address local needs based on local risk factors. This type of planning is intended to focus on upstream strategies. By examining and addressing root causes rather than just the symptoms, we can improve the lives of residents in our community by changing outcomes specific to health, well-being and safety.



# What is Community Safety and Well-Being Planning?

As stated in the CSWB Planning Framework:

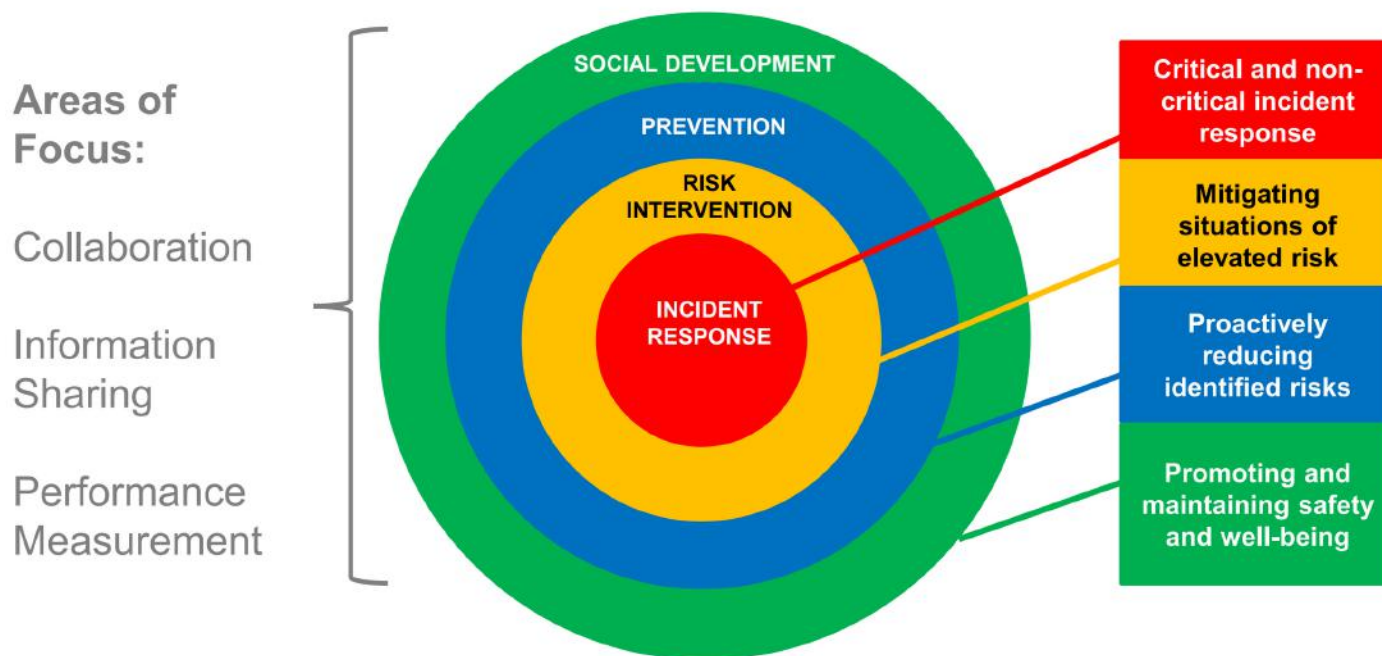
Community safety and well-being is the ideal state of a sustainable community where everyone is safe, has a sense of belonging, opportunities to participate, and where individuals and families are able to meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression.

## Collaborative, inter-sectoral planning encourages the following:

- Enhanced collaboration among sectors
- Increased understanding of risk and vulnerable groups
- Increased engagement of those with lived experience
- Increased awareness and access to services
- Transformation of service delivery
- Better coordination of services for those with complex needs
- Stronger families and healthy childhood development
- Healthier, more productive individuals that positively contribute to the community
- Enhance feelings of safety and social inclusion
- Trends, gaps, priorities and successes identified through better sharing and use of data
- Reduced investment in, and reliance on, incident response



# The CSWB Planning Framework Outlines Four Levels of Intervention



*By re-focusing existing efforts and resources in a more strategic and impactful way, we can make our community safer and healthier.*

## Social Development

### Promoting and maintaining community safety and well-being.

This is where a wide range of sectors, agencies, organizations and those with lived experience bring different perspectives to the table to address complex social issues from every angle. Strategies need to be put in place that target the root causes of these issues.

## Prevention

### Reducing identified risks.

Proactively implementing evidence-based situation measures, policies or programs to reduce locally-identified priority risks to community safety and well-being before they escalate and result in crime, victimization and harm.

## Risk Intervention

### Mitigating elevated risk situations.

Risk intervention is intended to be immediate and prevent an incident. Multiple sectors work together to address situations where there is an elevated risk of harm – stopping something bad from happening before it is about to happen.

## Incident Response

### Immediate response to urgent incidents

This includes immediate and reactionary responses that may involve a sense of urgency like police, fire, emergency medical services, a child welfare organization taking a child out of their home, a person being apprehended under the *Mental Health Act*, or a school principal expelling a student.

## Introduction

Simcoe County is located in the central part of Southern Ontario. The County lies just north of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and spans from the shores of Lake Simcoe to the east, to Georgian Bay in the west. Simcoe County is considered part of the Greater Golden Horseshoe area. The County extends 4,840.54 square kilometers between Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe. The County has an estimated population of 465,000 people and is the second-largest County based on population and third largest based on the physical size in Ontario. The County of Simcoe is comprised of sixteen towns and townships. Although separate politically and administratively from the County, the cities of Barrie and Orillia are geographically and economically part of the County.



Simcoe County has many strengths. We are connected (highways, railways, airways). We are growing (housing development, new business, employment opportunities, population). We compete globally (health and wellness, tourism, advanced manufacturing, construction, aerospace and defence, retail, professional services agri-food and beverage, information and communication technology). We support learning (College and University). We have fun (watersports, winter sports, hiking, biking, golfing, resorts, outdoor adventures, theatre, festivals). We support local (entrepreneurs, small businesses, artisans, fairs, farmers markets, downtowns). We appreciate our diverse geography (flat-lying clay plains, rolling hills, wetlands, and escarpment). We love and respect our natural environment (forests, trails, green space, lakes, waterways, beaches). We value culture and our historic sites. We respect and acknowledge those that walked on this land before us, and we welcome new ones as we continue to grow and diversify.

## Planning Timeline

- 
- 2018 –  
In-Person Community Engagement Sessions
  - July 2019 –  
Data Working Group Formed
  - Sept/Dec 2019 –  
Local Data Collection and Analysis
  - Feb 2020 –  
Data Summary Report Prepared
  - Mar/Apr 2020 –  
Proposed Risks Identified
  - Mar 2020 -present –  
COVID-19 Pandemic
  - May/Jun 2020 –  
Asset Inventory and Mapping
  - Jul 2020 –  
Research to Validate Risks
  - Aug/Dec 2020 –  
Community and Stakeholder Engagement,  
Validation and Refinement of Risks
  - Jan/Feb 2021 –  
Early Working Groups
  - Feb 2021 –  
Community Engagement Survey  
(focused on strategies)
  - Mar/Apr 2021 –  
Plan Creation
  - May/Jun 2021 –  
Plan Adoption (each Municipality)

## Phase 1 – How We Structured Our Planning

The CSWB Plan(s) were created based on Geographic Municipal Groupings (GMGs). Planning according to GMGs made sense for several reasons:

- Key partners (e.g. the County of Simcoe, SMDHU) already group and display aggregate data to be meaningful and appropriate for analysis and follow-up activities
- There are numerous instances of shared services between municipalities
- The County of Simcoe supports municipalities through a broad range of services that expand across local municipal boundaries and support natural geographical groupings
- The community partners (community services, social services, health care, and other support services) provide their services across the multiple municipalities
- These groupings will optimize and leverage (where possible) the work that is already being done; and
- Integrated Police Services Board/ Police / OPP detachments already exist (this affects data, services, and future strategies).

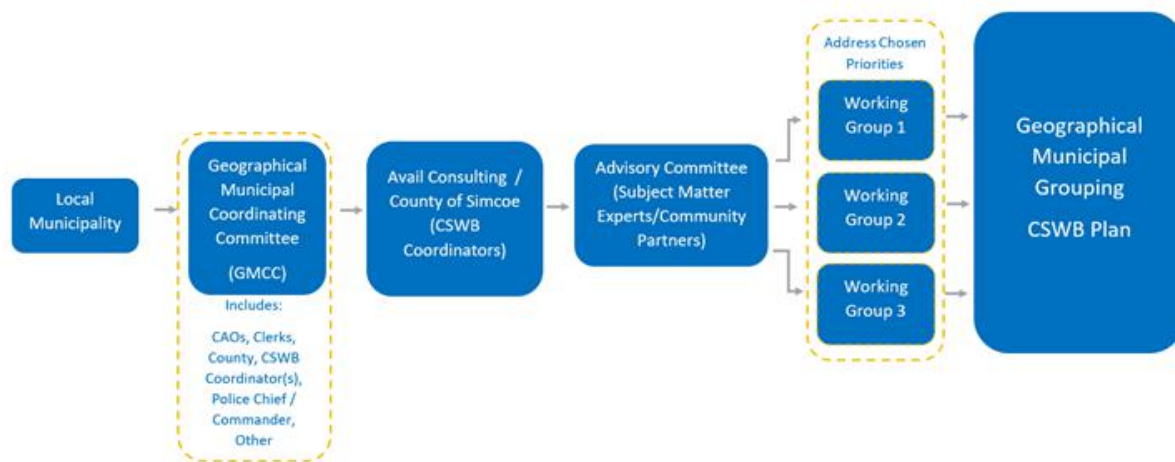
Our planning has considered the joint County-wide initiatives and planning tables that support residents across Simcoe County. It was also important to us that planning groups could engage in planning at a more local level and address the unique needs of their residents. The municipalities within each GMG worked with their local Police Service and formed a Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee (GMCC) to lead the development of their local Plan.

To that end, the data for the indicator framework was pulled at the GMG level.

South Simcoe	Couchiching	North Simcoe	South Georgian Bay and Springwater	Nottawasaga
Bradford West Gwillimbury Innisfil	Orillia Oro-Medonte Ramara Severn	Midland Penetanguishene Tay Tiny	Clearview Collingwood Springwater Wasaga	Adjala-Tosorontio Essa New Tecumseth

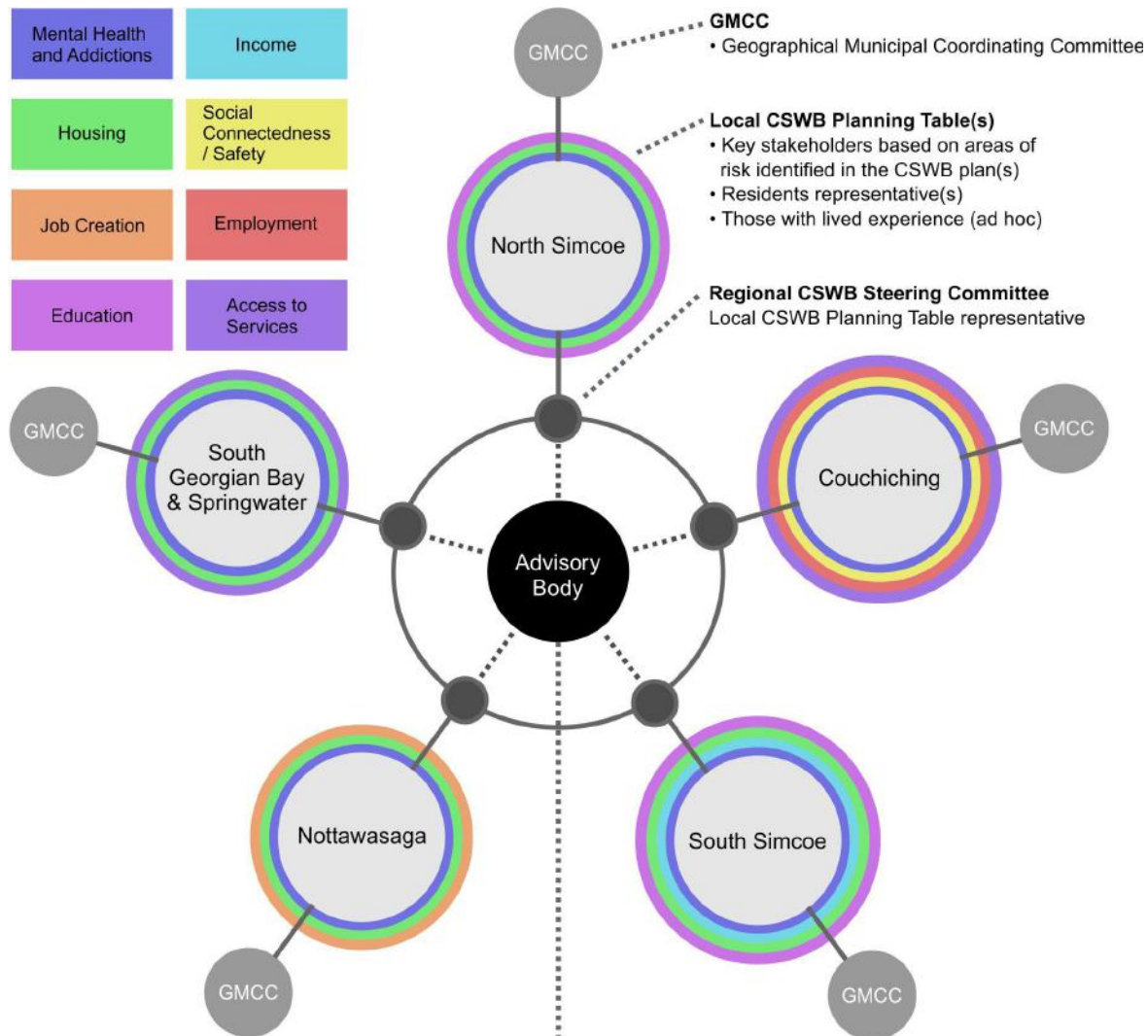
## Phase 1: Plan Development (pre-July 1st, 2021) Governance Structure

With the external resources provided by the County of Simcoe, the Municipalities led Phase 1 - planning and development of the CSWB Plan. The structure was as follows:



# Phase 2: Our Model of Collaboration, Planning, Action and Alignment (post-July 1st, 2021)

Factors that influence our safety and well-being are often complex and are dependant on other factors. Addressing these factors at an individual and systems-level requires broad sector collaboration and involvement.



<b>MHA</b>	Formerly, the Mental Health Coalition (in transition)
<b>Housing</b>	Affordable Housing Advisory Committee • Municipal Liaison Group • SCATEH
<b>Public Health</b>	Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy (SMOS)
<b>Poverty/Income</b>	Poverty Reduction Task Group
<b>Child, Youth and Family Services</b>	Child, Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County: Integrated Planning Table + 18 groups / initiatives
<b>Health</b>	OHTs, OHT for Specialized Populations • North Simcoe Muskoka Specialized Geriatric Services • Aboriginal Health Circle
<b>Social Connectedness</b>	Seniors Isolation Planning Table • Simcoe County Age Friendly
<b>Education</b>	TBD
<b>Employment</b>	TBD
<b>Access to Services</b>	(Embedded in other tables)
<b>Job Creation</b>	Economic Development Committee (County)



## Our Model of Collaboration, Planning, Action and Alignment will:

1. Address areas of risk by focusing our efforts on upstream approaches through social development initiatives.
2. Address areas of risk using a systems-based approach, acknowledging that local needs and implementation strategies may vary in each GMG.
3. Leverage existing resources and work underway related to the areas of risk and not duplicating efforts (Appendix A).

## Our Model also will:

- Create opportunities for local issues and those with lived experience from our community to co-design solutions
- Look beyond traditional relationships and structures through an innovative approach
- Facilitate information sharing locally and at a regional level
- Create a feedback loop between the Advisory Body, Regional Steering Committee and local CSWB Table(s)
- Strengthen advocacy efforts
- Ensure strategies across the areas of risk recognize dependencies and enablers and align to support these
- Identify established and emerging CSWB issues at the GMG level and connect them to local system solutions as well as broader County solutions
- Anticipate issues and allow for agility in our response
- Optimize efficiency and best use of resources

With the support of our community partners, the Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee (GMCC) will ensure that the CSWB Plan is implemented. Leveraging broader system planning already underway, the Regional CSWB Steering Committee and local CSWB Table will move the strategies forward.

The GMCC and Advisory Body will remain intact and continue to support the local CSWB Planning.

## Phase 2

Residents in each community will continue to be engaged as the local CSWB Table(s) form in each GMG and work gets underway. Future engagement efforts should explore various engagement methodologies to ensure a more accurate reflection of the population and needs.



## Root Cause(s)

We intend to address root causes through inter-sectoral collaboration. Despite being well-intentioned, too often, planning is performed in stand-alone sectors. Under the umbrella of community safety and well-being, we will take a systems-approach and focus on the correlations and interconnected root causes of the areas of risk identified in this Plan and across Simcoe County.

Our police service(s) in Simcoe County are key partners in our CSWB planning and work that will unfold. The majority of the calls that they currently respond to do not result in a chargeable offence; instead, calls are re-directed to the appropriate community partner (service). Increasing police response to non-chargeable offences gives us much to consider.

As previously mentioned, moving upstream to address the root causes through social development priorities will effectively decrease the responses needed in the other CSWB Framework domains (prevention, intervention and incident response). The safety of individuals and our community as a whole is not the sole responsibility of our local police service. As a community and across sectors, we need to work together to address the risks and vulnerabilities before harm occurs.

## GMCC: Oversight and governance of the local CSWB Plan

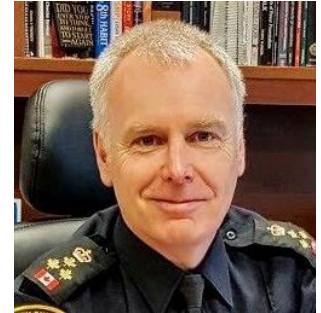
- Membership will reflect representation from each municipality participating in the joint CSWB Plan
- The GMCC representative is the direct link to the respective municipal Council



Geoff McKnight  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury



Sandy Foster  
Health and Wellness Catalyst  
Town of Innisfil



Chief Andrew Fletcher  
Police Chief  
South Simcoe Police Service

### Local CSWB Table: Responsible for leading the implementation of the CSWB Plan

- This table should reflect local representation of those with experience and those with expertise in each of the eight areas of risk, even though the local Plan may only be addressing three or four areas of risk at this time. Note: Without all areas of risk involved, we run the risk of planning in silos
- When and where possible, members should be selected based on their subject matter expertise and connection to vulnerable populations that are identified in this Plan
- There are sophisticated planning tables that already exist at the regional level. The work of these tables should be considered as part of the local planning to avoid duplication and optimize our resources
- The local CSWB Table will elect a Chair or designate, representing the GMG on the Regional CSWB Steering Committee. Representation from all GMGs will support information sharing, avoid duplication and leverage the good work of others

#### Proposed Membership:

- Representation from eight areas of risk
- Police (front line)
- Municipal representation (ad hoc)
- Indigenous Organization
- Residents with lived experience (specific to areas of risk identified in local CSWB Plan)



**Regional CSWB Steering Committee:** Responsible for maintaining communication and connection to the Advisory Body. Responsible for joint strategic planning efforts that benefit and advance the actions of the collective and individual local CSWB Table in each GMG.

- The Regional CSWB Steering Committee will be the direct link to the Advisory Body
- Proposed membership is based on the local GMG representation and organizations that have a core mandate to promote community safety and well-being to all residents across the County
- Members will have leadership roles within their organization

**Proposed Membership:**

- Chair or designate of Local GMG(s)
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- South Simcoe Police
- Ontario Provincial Police
- County of Simcoe
- Indigenous Partner Organization

**Advisory Body:** Responsible for providing subject matter expertise in an advisory capacity.

- Advisory Body members are (typically) active on regional planning tables. Advisory Body members are the link or conduit between CSWB planning and broader system planning from an information sharing perspective
- Advisory Body members may participate or delegate an alternate from their organization to participate on local CSWB Tables or the Regional CSWB Steering Committee ad hoc, depending on the strategy or initiative
- It is anticipated that the Advisory Body will meet semi-annually but will stay connected to the Regional CSWB Steering Committee through updates sent to the Advisory Body or requests for subject matter expertise
- The Advisory Body members that sit on broader system planning tables (specific to the areas of risk) can tap into the local CSWB Table to share information, gauge local needs, connect with those open to sharing lived experience perspectives
- The Chair of the Local CSWB Table will participate on the Advisory Body meetings (semi-annually)

## System Leadership Roles (continued)

### Advisory Body Membership:

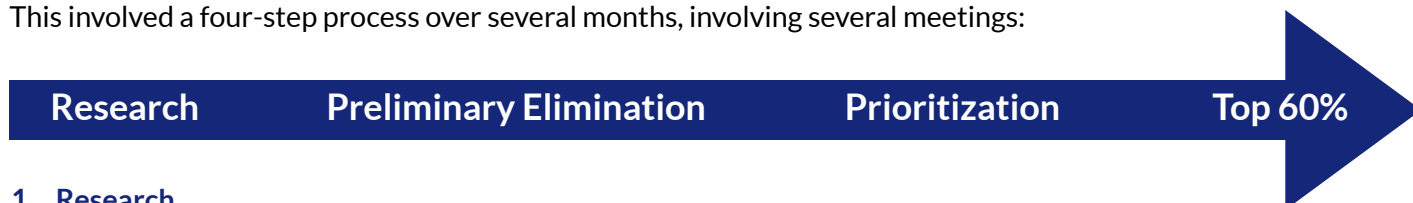
Area of Risk	Member	Organization(s)
<b>All Areas of Risk Broad Representation</b>	Brenda Jackson Samantha Kinoshameg	BANAC
	Chief Andrew Fletcher	South Simcoe Police Service
	Detachment Commander, Inspector Steve Ridout	Ontario Provincial Police
<b>Housing</b>	John Connell Lora D'Ambrosio	County of Simcoe – Housing and Social Services
<b>Mental Health and Addictions</b>	Dr. Valerie Grdisa Dalete Karst-Yaacov	Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) · Simcoe · York and South Simcoe
	Jim Harris	New Path
	Michelle Bergin	Simcoe County Catholic Family Services
	Susan Lalonde Rankin	Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care
	Carolyn Shoreman	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
<b>Employment</b>	Rob Sheppard	Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board
<b>Education</b>	TBA	TBA
<b>Job Creation</b>	Nancy Heuther	County of Simcoe – Economic Development
<b>Preventable Mortality: Social Connectedness</b>	David Jeffery	Chigamik Community Health Centre
<b>Access To Services</b>	Pam Hillier	211
	Roslyn Junke	United Way
	Jennifer Saunders Active Chair (changes annually)	Child, Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County
<b>Income</b>	Jamie Moran Wendy Hembruff	County of Simcoe – Ontario Works

# How We Determined our Areas of Risk

Before the Plan could be developed, it was essential to gather information and evidence to paint a clear picture of what is happening in the community to identify the local areas of risk.

An early Multi-Sector Data Working Group formed and participated in a comprehensive risk identification process using the Prioritization Matrix Tool, led by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU).

This involved a four-step process over several months, involving several meetings:



## 1. Research

- a. Review of the CSWB Planning Framework as a group
- b. Review of the data from the provincial Risk Tracking Database (RTD)
- c. Reviewed the document and indicator list prepared by Dr. Hugh Russel and Norm Taylor: New Directions in Community Safety, Consolidating Lessons Learned About Risk and Collaboration (2014)

## 2. Preliminary Elimination

- a. Cross-referenced indicators from the 2014 document with data available across a comprehensive data set to eliminate unavailable indicators
- b. Separated indicators by the organization having access to that data

## 3. Prioritization

- a. Established criteria for indicator inclusion (Actionable, Evidence-Based, Meaningful/Relevant, Practical, Timeliness, Easily Understood/Interpreted, Reliable)
- b. Employed a weighted scoring
- c. Selected indicators that made the top 60% (this resulted in 24 indicators)

## 4. Top 60% (24 indicators)

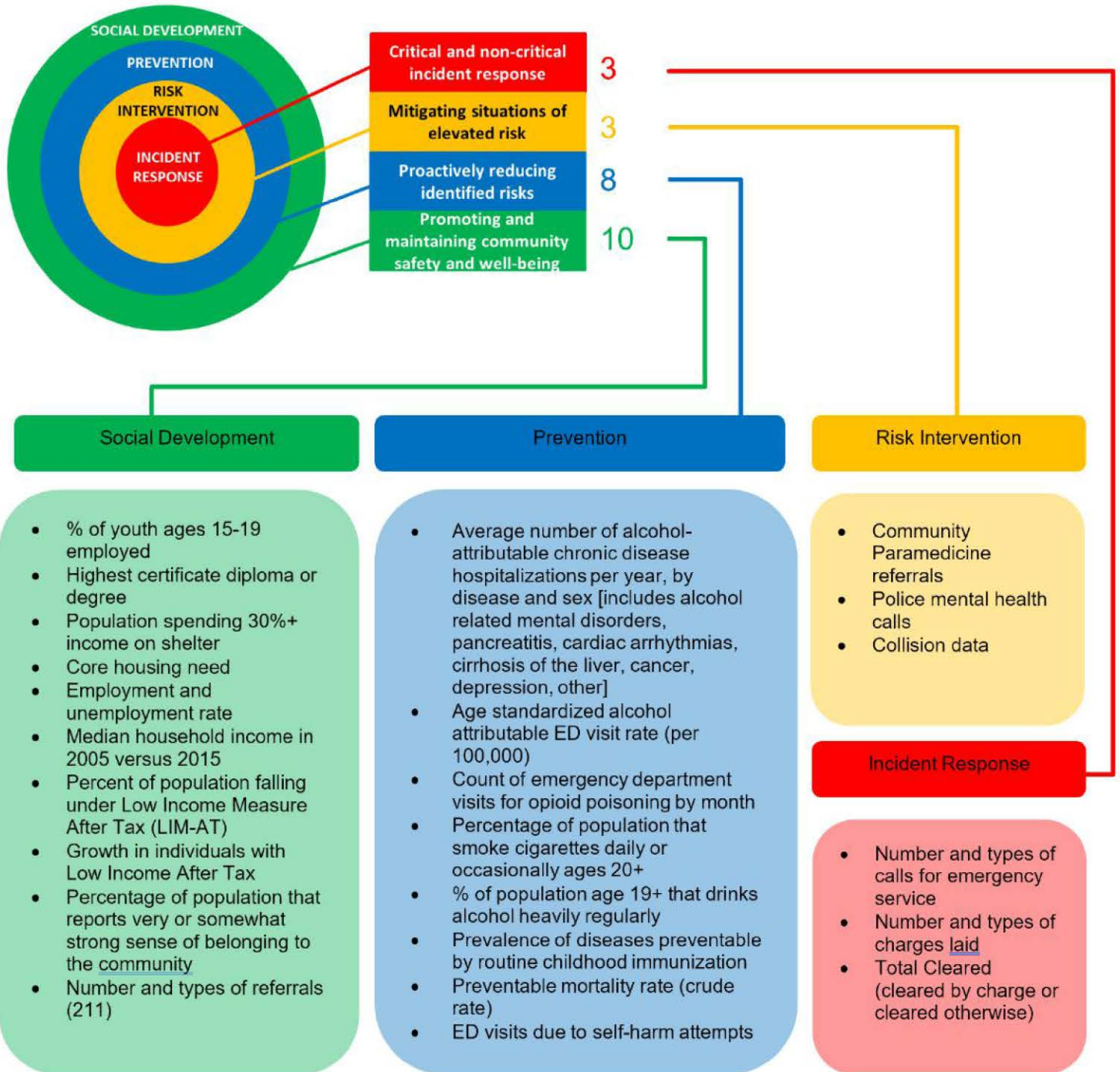
- a. Data was pulled at the GMG level for the indicators that appeared in the top 60% after weighted ranking/score
- b. Each indicator was presented (displayed) at the GMG level, the Simcoe County average, and the provincial average

The County of Simcoe	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit	Police Services	Additional Data Sources
Community Data Program (Statistics Canada) Simcoe County	*Only hospital data available from health unit and determined as relevant was used; no data direct from hospitals	South Simcoe Police Ontario Provincial Police	Community Connection Call Data (211) Canadian Index of Wellbeing (Couchiching only)

This data was then analyzed and reviewed by the local GMCC and key stakeholders to help determine areas of risk to move forward with in the first iteration of the local CSWB Plan.

# Phase 1 Indicator Framework

The 24 indicators were overlaid onto the CSWB Framework as an informal way of assessing if there was balance in the information and evidence gathering approach. It is important to note that individual indicators can appear in more than one domain. For purposes of this exercise, they appear in only one domain.





## PHASE 1


<b>Dates</b>	February 2021 – March 2021 (4 weeks)
<b>Via</b>	Online community survey (Due to COVID-19)
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To inform the community, on a larger scale, of the local CSWB Plan</li> <li>▪ To engage the residents of our community and seek their insights and feedback on the local CSWB areas of risk to help inform strategies moving forward</li> </ul>
<b>Method</b>	SurveyMonkey online survey (Appendix B)
<b>Format</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One demographic question (which municipality they reside in)</li> <li>▪ Multiple choice questions (one or more options from a list of answers)</li> <li>▪ Open-ended (free text) option for most questions (this provided qualitative data)</li> </ul>
<b>Those engaged</b>	<p>Residents of South Simcoe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Informally, many with lived-experience</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome(s)</b>	This engagement allowed us to refine our focus regarding specific areas of risk. Findings from these engagement sessions can be found in the ‘What We Heard’ section under each strategy.
<b>Response</b>	50 (total of 661 across all five GMGs)
<b>Outcomes</b>	This consultation validated our identified areas of risk as being a priority in our community. The analysis demonstrates a high level of engagement with the survey from those that completed the survey. Very positive response to free text option, with valuable information and insights collected. Responses and feedback from this survey helped inform strategies for each area of risk. A summary of findings (themes) from the survey responses can be found in the ‘What We Heard’ section under each strategy.
<b>Important</b>	<p>SURVEY ***Please note: The themes and feedback from the survey do not reflect everyone’s understanding and experience with the areas of risk. This survey was conducted online. Those with barriers to technology, the internet, poor literacy, poor digital literacy, and other factors may not have had the knowledge of, or ability to participate in the survey. Those living in institutions, those that are homeless, and others that are often the most marginalized groups in our community may also be voices that are not reflected in the results of this survey.</p>

# Stakeholder Consultation

## PHASE 1

<b>Dates</b>	August 2020 – December 2020
<b>Via</b>	Zoom (Due to COVID-19)
<b>Purpose</b>	To validate areas of risk, better understand work underway across the region, identify barriers, enablers, gaps and opportunities
<b>Method</b>	16 presentations to various groups and planning tables (with feedback sessions) Over 95 one-to-one key-informant interviews
<b>Those engaged</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Senior thought leaders across all eight identified risks</li><li>▪ Upper and or Middle management of health, community and social service organizations</li><li>▪ Municipal leaders</li><li>▪ Residents with lived-experience</li></ul>
<b>Outcome(s)</b>	This engagement allowed us to refine our focus regarding specific areas of risk. Findings from these engagement sessions are found in the 'What We Heard' section under each strategy
<b>NOTE:</b>	(2) large community stakeholder engagement sessions took place between Jan - Aug. 2018 which also helped inform our risks prior to the formal data driven process.





*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are mutually reinforcing principles.  
Those principles will guide our work.*

We recognize differences between people and acknowledge that these differences are a valued quality.

We respect individuality while promoting respect for others.

We recognize the importance of everyone feeling like they belong and are accepted for who they are in our community.

We respect that our residents enjoy different talents, beliefs, backgrounds and lifestyles that make up the threads of our community tapestry.



We have a shared vision of health and social equity for all our residents.

We aim to eliminate the barriers that prevent the full participation and enjoyment of life for all our residents.

We recognize *who* is in a conversation shapes the conversation that takes place.

We need people with a connection or proximity to the issues to ensure that our efforts are grounded in reality.

# Connecting our Work to the CSWB Framework

The areas of focus as identified in the CSWB Framework are:

- Inter-Sectoral Collaboration
- Information Sharing
- Performance Measurement

For each area of the eight areas of risk, we have adopted the above three focus areas as common priority areas. Strategic directions, goals and outcomes will be unique and specific to each area of risk. We believe that having common and consistent priorities will keep our efforts focused, strategic and support consistent messaging to help organizations align their strategic planning to support the Plan.

We commit to planning across all four domains of the framework and prioritize planning, time, and resources to enhance opportunities in the social development domain. These priorities will guide the work across each GMG CSWB Plan.

The strength of our Plan lies in:



**Improving inter-sectoral collaboration** – This is a very complex form of collaboration because it combines interprofessional with inter-organizational, spanning across many sectors in our community. The impact, if done well, yields great outcomes because professions and organizations work collaboratively by arranging their unique service offerings to fulfill the objective of the integrations. Those involved commit to going beyond the status quo and open themselves up to new and innovative ways to change the system to better the lives of our residents.



**Building capacity through information sharing, knowledge transfer and exchange** – Our community will find more efficient and effective ways to ensure those that need support know how and where to find it; residents and service providers alike. Our program planning, advocacy efforts, and service delivery will be rooted in evidence and best practice. We will formalize how we raise awareness of new knowledge and evidence as this will strengthen the connections and collaborations among partners and help us achieve a broader impact.



**Utilizing multi-sectoral data and performance measurement to inform system change** – We will focus on key impact metrics that will guide our inter-sectoral work. Each of the eight areas of risk will identify 3-5 impact metrics specific to that area of risk. Those metrics will form a community scorecard in which the data can be pulled at the regional or GMG level. The community scorecard, along with our indicator framework, will help us measure the impact of our CSWB efforts.

# The Eight Areas of Risk Being Addressed Across Simcoe County

## Mental Health and Addictions

We are committed to improving equity, access and quality of mental health and addiction (MHA) services across the continuum for all residents in Simcoe County.

## Income

We are committed to advancing income stability for our residents by addressing urgent needs in a dignified way while striving towards more sustainable solutions that focus on social inclusion and life stabilization supports.

## Housing

We are committed to addressing the need for housing that is affordable and attainable and to support people so that they remain housed.

## Access To Services

We are committed to identifying ways to improve access to services in our community by focusing on availability, accommodation, accessibility, and acceptability across organizations .

## Diversity

Inclusion



Equity

## Lived Experience

## Preventable Mortality: Social Connectedness / Safety

We are committed to improving health by nurturing social connectedness through opportunities to enhance social engagement and strengthen social relationships in our community.

## Education

We are committed to ensuring everyone in our community has a clear pathway to education regardless of their age, with a focus on futureproofing our local skilled trades and health care sectors.

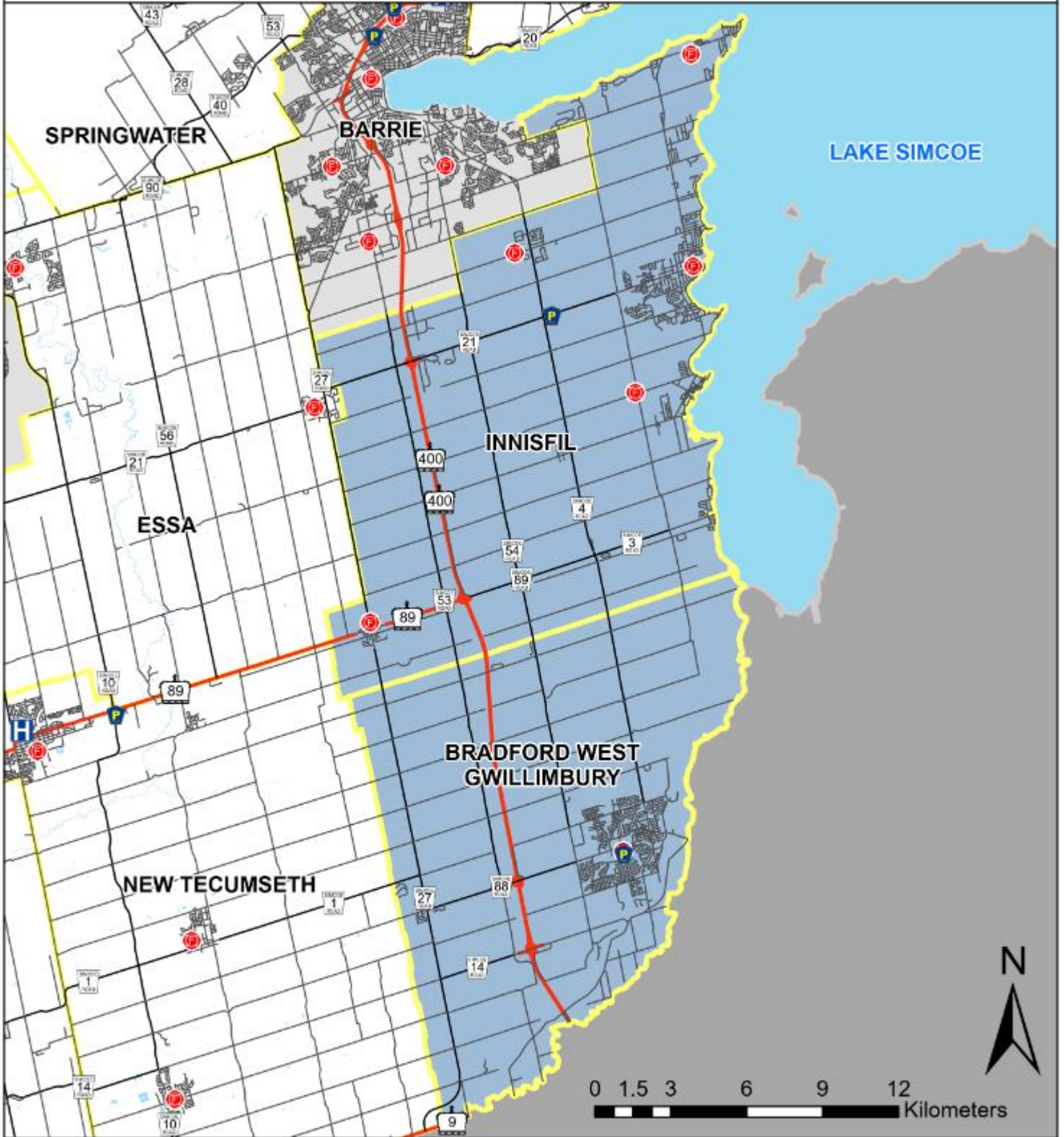
## Employment

We are committed to putting a plan in place to improve equity, access and quality of services that support employability and employment outcomes of our residents.

## Job Creation

We are committed to being a preferred destination for new business development as we continue to celebrate what we do best, while being open to new possibilities, new industries, and new partners.

# South Simcoe



- |                  |                    |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Hospital         | Municipal Border   | Provincial Highway |
| Private Hospital | Separated City     | County Road        |
| Police Station   | CFB Borden         | Local Road         |
| Firehall         | First Nations Land |                    |



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In our Plan, we have identified Education, Income, Housing and MHA as the four areas of focus for the first iteration of our CSWB Plan. We will also benefit from the planning in the other areas of risk happening across the County.

Our municipalities are ranked among the fastest growing communities in Canada. We take immense pride in our growth. We have a compliment of both urban and rural charm that appeals to both individuals and businesses alike. It is this mix of urban and rural than can prove to be an advantage and an opportunity for growth when looking at the multi-dimensional elements of safety and well-being at the individual and community level.

Granted, the somewhat rural nature of our community can have additional challenges that can influence our residents' ability to connect or access services, attain education, have stable digital connectivity, find employment locally, or arrange transportation to enable them to connect and thrive in the community. Our residents in our community also have stronger community ties, enjoy the benefits of nature, feel safer, have more trust among neighbours, and feel a connection to support local.

Combined, our residents have a lower education level (university diploma or degree at the bachelor level or above) which can influence job opportunities and employability to varying degrees across industries. Supporting pathways to education across the lifespan for all our residents is critical to individual prosperity and the success of our local industries.

Our employability directly impacts our income potential. We need to ensure that our residents have the infrastructure around them to support income stability. Some of our residents struggle on a daily basis.

Having stable income is essential in securing accommodation. As our community continues to grow, we strive to find ways to provide housing options that meet the needs of different levels of income earners. Finding housing that is affordable/attainable and being able to successfully stay housed strengthens the stability of individuals and families and the community as a whole.

Stable and resilient individuals and community is a protective factor for MHA. Even prior to the pandemic, MHA was a growing concern across all age groups in all communities, not just South Simcoe. The pandemic has exacerbated what was already a mounting issue. Focusing on MHA will support individual and community resiliency and prove to be an enabler for so many life-stabilization elements. Residents of South Simcoe need to have local voices planning together and advocating on their behalf at the regional level. Being part of two different Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) will require special attention with regards to service planning for our residents.

So much of what makes an individual safe and well, traces back to the social determinants of health. We have committed municipal, police, health and community partners working tirelessly to improve the lives of our residents. There is great work already underway. The CSWB Plan is our opportunity to build on what is working and work together in new and innovative ways. Our Plan will focus on building local capacity around health, housing and other socio-economic factors that contribute to safety and well-being for our residents and our community.



## Why it Matters

(note: Pre-COVID-19 data)

- 1 in 5 adult Canadians (21.3%) experiences a mental illness or addiction problem
- By 40 years of age, 1 in 2 Canadians have, or have had, a mental illness
- 70% of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence
- Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to experience mental illness and or substance use disorders than any other age group
- 34% of Ontario high-school students indicate a moderate-to-serious level of psychological distress (symptoms of anxiety and depression). 14% indicate a serious level of psychological distress.
- Canadians in the lowest income group are 3 to 4 times more likely than those in the highest income group to report poor to fair mental health
- Individuals with a mental illness are much less likely to be employed. Unemployment rates are as high as 70% to 90% for people with the most severe mental illnesses

Mental health is a state of well-being in which a person realizes his or her abilities (potential), can cope with the normal day-to-day stresses of life, can work productively, and can contribute to his or her community.<sup>1</sup>

Mental health means more than just the absence of mental illness. Optimizing One's mental health is not just about avoiding active mental illness but also includes seeking ways to support mental well-being on an ongoing basis. Improving mental health may consist of professional support and treatment, but it may also mean taking steps to independently improve emotional health.

At times that is easier said than done. In any given year, 1 in 5 adult Canadians (21.3%) experiences a mental illness or addiction problem. By 40 years of age, 1 in 2 Canadians has, or have had a mental illness. People living with mental illness are twice as likely as other Canadians to experience problematic substance use, and these individuals account for one-third of inpatient mental health admissions.<sup>2</sup>

Currently, Simcoe County residents have a higher age-standardized rate\* for mental illness-related hospital visits than the provincial average. There was also a 44% increase from 2011 to 2018.<sup>3</sup>

The term(s) *mental illness* and *addiction* refer to a wide range of disorders that affect mood, thinking and behaviour. Among all emergency department visits related to mental illness, substance-related visits (other than an acute overdose) and anxiety disorders were the most common reasons identified.<sup>4</sup>



\*Age-standardized hospitalization rate is defined as the number of hospital discharges, as recorded in the Discharge Abstract Database (DAD) due to a specific cause per 100,000 population that would occur if the population had the same age distribution as a reference population) for mental illness-related visits.



# Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario's Mental Health and Addiction System

## 4 Pillars:

- Improving quality
- Expanding existing services
- Implementing innovative solutions
- Improving access

## Risk factors for MHA include, but are not limited to:

- Having a family member with a history of mental health or substance use concerns
- Genetic factors
- Adverse childhood event(s)
- Abuse (emotional, physical, sexual)
- Neighbourhood poverty and or violence
- Racism
- Discrimination
- Social isolation (loneliness)

## Protective factors for MHA include, but are not limited to:

- Parental involvement
- Healthy lifestyle
- Access to education
- Employment / steady income
- Access to faith-based resources
- Social connectedness
- Strong attachment to family, school



MHA concerns are common. Many individuals who develop substance use disorders (SUD) are also diagnosed with mental health disorders, and vice versa. Mental health issues may prompt someone to use alcohol or drugs to feel better. For others, the substance use problem and mental health issue can start simultaneously, triggered by something. A mental health condition with addiction or substance use is known as a concurrent disorder.

Despite having a network of highly skilled MHA service providers, residents in our community with severe, persistent and unstable mental health issues may struggle to access adequate support to meet their needs. Although we have MHA services throughout the County, there are discrepancies related to equity, access and quality of core services. COVID-19 has pushed a system that was stretched too thin to begin with, to a breaking point. What does that look like? Even longer wait times for service, increase in addictions, overdoses, and death. People who did not have diagnosed mental health conditions before the pandemic are now in line for assistance due to being overwhelmed, lonely, anxious, depressed, and or addicted.

Although mental health and addiction issues can present at any point along the lifespan, there is particular interest and concern for children and youth. Half of Ontario parents report having had concerns about their child's level of anxiety, and one-third of Ontario parents have had a child miss school due to anxiety.<sup>5</sup> The government recognizes the crisis that communities are facing and is taking affirmative steps.

In March 2020, the Province of Ontario released Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario's Mental Health and Addiction System. Within the framework, there are (4) pillars – areas of focus that, when executed together, will support the delivery of the services people need, where and when they need them.

Aligning the CSWB MHA outcomes with the Roadmap to Wellness outcomes will have the most significant impact. We will be working towards common goals.

While strategies in this Plan look to better support those with existing MHA, prevention of illness and promoting positive mental health across the lifespan will also be an area of focus.

Interventions at the community level for both adults and children are critical. As with the other areas of risk, this will require an inter-sectoral, coordinated approach. We will build on to the existing work underway (see Appendix A)



Throughout the one-to-one and group engagement process of subject matter experts and local survey results from residents within our community, the following predominant themes emerged.

#### **Expand on what is working well**

Expand or grow services like peer support, youth hubs, virtual care, joint advocacy efforts, mobile services, partnerships, other.

#### **COVID-19 made things significantly worse**

Individuals and families as a whole are struggling more since the start of the pandemic. Self-reported positive mental health has declined. Substance use and addiction have gone up.

#### **MHA is linked to other areas of risk**

Those impacted by MHA issues are more vulnerable to housing instability, lower-income levels, unstable employment patterns, poor social connectedness, barriers to service, and lower educational attainment.

#### **Social isolation is on the rise**

Even before the pandemic, social isolation was impacting the lives of many residents. The pandemic's physical distancing has heightened loneliness and significantly impacted the mental health of many.

#### **Stigma persists**

We need more trauma-trained staff across services. Not all human service organizations are following harm reduction approaches to care/service.

#### **Equity, availability, access and quality of MHA services across the region vary**

There are still barriers to access and care for particular residents with MHA. There are medically, and socially complex residents in our community who also suffer from addictions and they are hard to connect to the level of care they need. Despite MHA services offered throughout the County, there are gaps in equity, timeliness, and quality of services.



**With a strong network of MHA providers in our community, we can now turn our attention to:**

- Identifying and putting a plan in place to improve equity, access and quality of services across Simcoe County
- Ensuring everyone in the community has information and access to the MHA resources they need
- Build capacity related to harm reduction
- Strategies and supporting those with MHA using a trauma-informed approach
- Measuring the impact of our inter-sectoral approach



### Strategic Direction

People will have access to MHA services and resources that are integrated, seamless, supportive and collaborative across sectors

### Strategic Goals

1. Map out the 'Comprehensive Continuum Framework for MHA Core Services' (e.g./ withdrawal management services) in each GMG
2. Use a maturity model to monitor progress around enhancing services across the GMGs
3. Increase client and family engagement strategies in each GMG

### Outcomes

- Sectors align strategy to support their role along the MHA Comprehensive Continuum Framework
- More equitable access and quality of MHA services offered throughout the County (in each GMG)
- Residents living with addictions report quality experience in each municipality
- Barriers to services are reduced
- Care closer to home
- Principles of harm reduction are integrated across the service continuum

## Strategic Priority

Build capacity through information sharing, knowledge transfer and exchange



## Strategic Direction

The knowledge and resources needed to support those with MHA in a safe and supportive way will be available to those with MHA, their families and those providing care and services

## Strategic Goals

1. Increase the knowledge, skills, understanding and capacity in each GMG to support those with MHA through:
  - harm reduction (HR) strategies
  - trauma-informed approach
2. Intersectoral commitment to strategies that build capacity for people to self-manage their mental well-being in terms of resources, technology, support, spaces, other
3. Promote positive mental health strategies that all employers can utilize to support their employees

## Outcomes

- Professional capacity in each GMG is enhanced
- People with MHA feel supported based on their individualized needs and continue to access services and supports
- Pathways for self-help and self-management of MHA are clear
- Early interventions prevent more intensive interventions and avoid ED visits and hospitalizations

## Strategic Priority

Utilize multisectoral data and performance measurement to inform system change



## Strategic Direction

Key impact metrics will guide collaborative inter-sectoral work

## Strategic Goals

1. Identify 3 -5 key metrics regarding outcomes (impact) of inter-sectoral efforts related to MHA that will contribute to an overarching County CSWB Indicator Framework and Data Set ,grouped to the desired level of geography (GMG).
2. Other data repositories and or secondary data sources by sector will be reviewed for relevance to CSWB.

## Outcomes

- We will better understand our community MHA needs through the ability to identify gaps, trends, opportunities and emerging threats
- CSWB Planning Table(s) and community partners will have access to local (GMG) data for planning purposes

### Strategies are in alignment with:

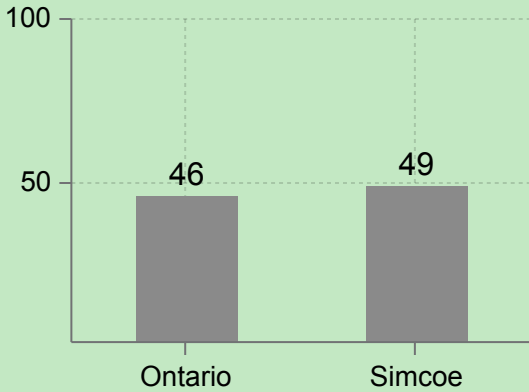
- Ontario Government - *Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario's Mental Health and Addiction System*
- BANAC - *An Indigenous Opioid Strategy and Action Plan for North Simcoe Muskoka (2018)*
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit - *Mental Health Promotion Strategy 2019-2022*
- Ontario Harm Reduction Network - *Connecting: A Guide to Using Harm Reduction Supplies as Engagement Tools*
- OHT for Specialized Populations: *MHA strategy*
- Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy (SMOS): *An Action Plan for Our Communities*
- Ontario's Leading MHA organizations- *'Everything is not ok' campaign (2021)*
- Children's Mental Health Ontario - *'Kids Can't Wait' report*
- Town of Innisfil - *Our Health Community Health and Wellness Strategy (2019)*

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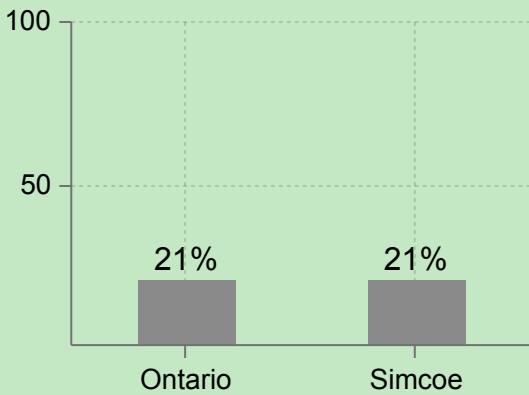
- <sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. “Mental Health: Strengthening our Response” (2018) Fact Sheet
- <sup>2</sup> “Mental Health and Substance Use.” Mental Health and Substance Use | Mental Health Commission of Canada. Accessed 2021. <http://http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/what-we-do/mental-health-and-substance-use>. .
- <sup>3</sup> Data source: National Ambulatory Care Reporting System 2011-2018, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, Data Extracted: January 2020
- <sup>4</sup> Data source: National Ambulatory Care Reporting System 2011-2018, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, Data Extracted: January 2020
- <sup>5</sup> “Children and Youth Mental Health Survey: Getting Help in Ontario.” Ipsos Public Affairs, 2017. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/CMHO-children-and-youth-mental-health-ontario>.

# Housing

## Households Spending Over 30% of Income on Rent and Utilities



## Households Spending Over 50% of Income on Rent and Utilities



Housing has traditionally operated on a continuum. This continuum is a linear progression from homelessness or housing need to homeownership. It visually depicts different segments of housing.<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that people do not always move along the continuum in a sequential straight line. Life events and changing housing needs can result in movement in different directions, potentially by-passing segments along the continuum.

Soaring prices for homebuyers has created gridlock in the continuum. It is estimated that some 80% of rental units that become available each year come from people becoming homeowners. With fewer people being able to afford to buy, fewer rental units free up, which has a trickle-down effect throughout the continuum. This rise in demand for rental housing creates a competitive market due to constraints on supply, which fuels the fire of increasing rental fees. For a minimum wage worker, both the average market rent and average asking rent exceed the Provincial and Federal governments' definitions of affordability, which define affordability as rental costs that do not exceed 30 percent of gross income. Those who were at one point able to afford rent may now find themselves seeking subsidized housing, precariously housed, and some ending up homeless. Emergency and temporary housing provisions (e.g. shelters) within the system also bear the burden.



**21%**  
of households  
are renters

## THE HOUSING CONTINUUM



Credit: CMHC



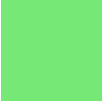
## Risk factors for housing instability include, but are not limited to:

- Gender (male)
- Indigenous Peoples are overrepresented
- Health / Mental Health and Addictions
- Low income / informal income
- Unemployment
- Lower education levels
- History of foster care
- Being forced to move frequently (3+ times in a 12-month period)
- History of incarceration
- Victims of domestic violence
- Housing status and poor housing conditions

## Protective factors for housing stability include, but are not limited to:

- Current or recent employment
- High school diploma
- Earned income
- Good coping skills
- Family support
- Absence of addiction or treatment for addiction
- Absence of incarceration history





To encourage a return to balance and flow along the continuum, the County of Simcoe and municipalities continue to work together to explore strategies to increase affordable housing inventory. Some methods being explored seek to diversify the type of housing available and make housing more attainable. Although there is no universal definition, the Provincial Policy Statement and the Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation ('CMHC') state that housing is affordable (attainable) when it accounts for no more than 30% of a household's gross income. The premise would be that a household could enter the local housing market before graduating or moving up to successively higher levels of housing. It is contextual to the unique circumstances that make up a community. The inventory of attainable housing would take into consideration a range of housing types and sizes. This would accommodate varying levels of income and changing household needs.

Attainable housing is non-subsidized and is affordable to those with workforce incomes. Municipal Councils have planning tools at their disposal and available for use as opportunities arise. Progress in this area will create movement in the system and can help re-establish flow along the continuum.

However, this type of housing is still out of reach for those among the most vulnerable in our communities. Co-existing factors such as medical and social complexities add to their vulnerability.

Those most at risk include, but are not limited to:<sup>2</sup>

- Those with tri-morbidity (e.g. physical health issues, mental health and/or addiction issues, and significant housing barriers)
- Indigenous Peoples
- People exiting institutions or facilities (hospitals, addictions, correctional, child protective sectors, other)
- LGBTQ
- Youth
- Seniors (age 60+)



**Housing First is usually based on 5 core principles:**

- Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements
- Consumer choice and self-determination
- Individual, recovery-oriented, and client-driven supports
- Harm Reduction
- Social and community integration



Despite the affordable housing crunch, we are in a good position to tackle these pinch points as a community and support those most vulnerable. Simcoe County's 10 Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy (2014-2024) addresses adequate, appropriate and affordable housing for all Simcoe County residents.<sup>3</sup> This strategy is a collaboration between the County of Simcoe, 18 lower-tier municipalities, community partners, non-profits and private sector partners working together in a coordinated effort recognizing the pivotal role that safe and affordable housing plays across the lifespan. Annual reports monitor and measure progress.

The County of Simcoe, as the Consolidated Municipal Services Manager (CMSM) as designated by the Province of Ontario, is well-positioned to plan, coordinate and deliver much-needed services such as:

- Social Housing
- Rent Supplements
- Housing Allowance
- Rent Geared to Income
- Affordable Home Ownership Program
- Affordable Housing Rental Development
- Housing Retention Program
- Ontario Renovates
- Secondary Suites and
- Homelessness System Supports

Safe, affordable, and stable housing is central to the overall well-being of a person. As a core determinant of personal health and well-being, lack of stable housing has immediate and long-term effects that influence a person's life.<sup>4</sup> Although the County of Simcoe has responsibility at the regional level for planning and funding, they do not alone deliver the comprehensive basket of direct supports that are often needed to help people stabilize and maintain their housing. Simcoe County has a strong network of providers that actively participate in the Housing First approach by delivering care or services to clients in need.<sup>5</sup>

The Housing First approach is used in communities to move those who are precariously housed, the homeless, or those in emergency shelters into more stable long-term housing with supports.

Under the Housing First model, there are three kinds of service supports identified:

1. Housing with support to help clients find housing, move in, and maintain their housing.
2. Clinical supports that provide or facilitate access to health and social care to clients to help them achieve housing stability and encourage well-being.
3. Complementary supports such as assistance with finding employment, volunteer work or accessing training. Supports like these are offered on a case-by-case basis to help clients improve their quality of life and integrate into the community and achieve self-sufficiency to the greatest extent possible.

However, even with a network of committed partner organizations, there is still a number of residents that return to homelessness, and the number of people that are precariously housed that would benefit from timely support and assistance continues to increase.



Throughout the one-to-one and group engagement process of subject matter experts and local survey results from residents within our community, the following predominant themes emerged.

**Affordable is not always affordable**

Many residents in our community do not have the income to support the increasing rental rates. Even rates that, by definition, are considered affordable are not affordable to some residents. Some find themselves deciding between buying food and paying housing costs. With demand for rentals outnumbering the supply of rentals, affordable rental is critically low. To a large part, solutions to this need to come from the Provincial and Federal governments.

**We have resources and tools**

We need to continue to find ways to connect and support efforts to increase housing inventory. We need to continually evaluate opportunities to use the resources and planning tools at our disposal. We need to explore new housing types and partnerships that make the most sense in our community.

**Housing is connected to other areas of risk**

With housing costs often being the largest monthly expense for most people, factors like education, employment, income, mental health, and addictions directly influence a person's ability to secure safe housing that they can afford. When housing prices are prohibitive, the economy suffers, which impacts labour supply in communities.

**Everyone needs a place to call home**

Some factors challenge a person's ability to secure housing. NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard) is real. Bias and discrimination influence the ability to secure housing for some residents. Ongoing public education, awareness and understanding are needed. There is good work being done in our community by organizations advocating for the rights of our residents. Housing as a right of each resident in society is recognized in principle but is hard to recognize operationally without adequate resources. However, COVID-19 showed that we could mobilize quickly around homelessness when we were given the resources to do it.

**Housing stability is key**

Securing housing is one thing; keeping someone housed is another thing. There is a degree of invisible homeless and precariously housed that are not captured in statistics. With so many factors at play in someone's life, residents need to be offered resources and supports to give them the best chance at successfully staying housed. This includes holding property owners accountable for unsafe and poor living conditions, supporting housing strategies of Indigenous communities, offering the right supports at the right time, expand resident and service provider awareness of available resources and supports, and ensuring supports are available for as long as they are needed. When someone is successful in maintaining their housing, it affords them opportunities to more fully contribute and engage in society.

**With a strong backbone system in place, we can now turn our attention to:**

- Continuing to collaborate and increase awareness of the tools and resources available to create new and more diversified housing inventory
- Optimizing the provision of the flexible supports and services that people need to successfully stay housed once they have secured housing



## Strategic Direction

The County of Simcoe, the South Simcoe GMG and community partners will help advance collective action to address stable and securing housing in South Simcoe

## Strategic Goals

1. Identify and draft a 'Comprehensive Continuum for Housing Stabilization Supports' framework (e.g. housing, clinical and complementary supports) to improve quality, equity, efficiency, and access
2. Map the Comprehensive Continuum for Housing Stabilization Supports in South Simcoe
3. Achieve a common understanding of defined partner roles and responsibilities regarding supports that positively influencing housing stability
4. Housing First principals guide the work

## Outcomes

- More residents are successful in retaining housing
- Strategies across sectors align to support their role along the Comprehensive Continuum for Housing Stabilization Supports framework
- More equitable access, consistency and quality of housing stabilization supports offered in South Simcoe
- Shared advocacy opportunities if resource constraints are identified

## Strategic Priority

Build capacity through information sharing, knowledge transfer and exchange



## Strategic Direction

The information and resources needed to plan for and support housing development and housing stability is organized and shared across sectors

## Strategic Goals

1. Increase the capacity in South Simcoe to best utilize available tools to support the development of attainable housing
2. Increase information sharing opportunities between County, Municipalities and Community partners
3. Determine the best process (pathways) for information sharing at the resident, and provider (partner) level
4. Align work with current federal, provincial, and local homelessness support access systems

## Outcomes

- Residents are more successful in securing and retaining housing
- Appropriate use of available resources and tools results in increased housing options and inventory
- Partners are informed and up-to-date across each sector
- Residents can make informed decisions

## Strategic Priority

Utilize multi-sectoral data and performance measurement to inform system change



## Strategic Direction

Multi-sectoral data and performance measurement will inform better ways to support housing stability

## Strategic Goals

Identify 3-5 key metrics regarding outcomes (impact) of inter-sectoral efforts related to housing stability that will contribute to the overarching county CSWB Indicator Framework and Data Set grouped to the desired level of geography (GMG) (Work with existing measurement data such Homelessness Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), 2020 enumeration data, other)

## Outcomes

- Multi-sectoral data will further help identify gaps, trends, opportunities and emerging threats to access to services
- Greater access to data for planning purposes

### Strategies are in alignment with:

- County of Simcoe - *10-Year Affordable Housing and Homeless Prevention Strategy*
- County of Simcoe - *Built for Zero Strategy*
- County of Simcoe - *Positive Aging Strategy (2018-2023)*
- BANAC - *Five-Year Community Strategic Plan (2019)*
- Government of Canada - *National 10 year Housing Strategy (2017)*
- Government of Canada - *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy*
- Government of Ontario - *More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan*
- The Homeless Hub - *Performance Measurement in a Housing First Context (2015)*



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- <sup>1</sup> “About-Affordable-Housing-in-Canada.” Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, March 31, 2018. of
- <sup>2</sup> “Reaching Home: Barrie-Simcoe Community Homelessness Plan 2019-2024.” Homeless Hub. Collaborative, 2019. [www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Finalized%20Community%20Plan%20-%20Barrie.pdf](http://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Finalized%20Community%20Plan%20-%20Barrie.pdf).
- <sup>3</sup> 10 Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy - Social Housing. County of Simcoe, n.d. <https://www.simcoe.ca/ourahhps>.
- <sup>4</sup> Swope, Carolyn B., and Diana Hernández. “Housing as a Determinant of Health Equity: A Conceptual Model.” *Social Science & Medicine*. Science Direct, September 25, 2019. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277953619305659>.
- <sup>5</sup> “Reaching Home: Barrie-Simcoe Community Homelessness Plan 2019-2024.” Homeless Hub. Collaborative, 2019. [www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Finalized%20Community%20Plan%20-%20Barrie.pdf](http://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Finalized%20Community%20Plan%20-%20Barrie.pdf).

# Income

## Why it Matters

- The 2018 Living Wage calculation for Simcoe County is: \$18.01
- Household food insecurity affects 1 in 8 households in Simcoe
- Precarious employment has increased by nearly 50% over the past two decades
- 47 percent of First Nations children live in poverty, more than two-and-a-half times the national rate
- People living with disabilities (both mental and physical) are twice as likely to live below the poverty line
- 1 in 5 children live in poverty
- In Canada, on average, women earned 87 cents for every dollar that men earned or \$4.13 less per hour in 2018<sup>1</sup>
- Lower-income is associated with an increased burden of diseases and higher mortality
- Structural unemployment is a type of unemployment that can last for many years and can be caused by changes in technology or shifting demographics
- Structural unemployment represents a long-term shift in how an economy functions, leading workers to become marginalized

Food Bank usage across Ontario was already increasing in the year leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was a 5.3 % increase in new visitors; one-third of those visitors were children. The overall increase in visits was up 7.3% from the previous year. Within the first four months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of new (first-time) food bank visitors increased by 26.5%. According to the Feed Ontario Annual Hunger Report (released in November 2020), lack of affordable housing, insufficient social assistance programs and growth in precarious employment (e.g. part-time and casual work) are the top three reasons people are visiting food banks. Black and Indigenous households are nearly three times more likely to be food insecure than non-racialized households. According to the Ontario Food Bank Survey, 48% of respondents are worried about facing eviction or defaulting on their mortgage in the next two to six months.

Approximately two-thirds of households that were food insecure pre-pandemic were in the workforce but unable to manage because their employment income was not sufficient to meet their needs.<sup>2</sup>

With housing costs becoming increasingly unaffordable, residents are forced to make troublesome decisions on whether they will pay accommodation costs or put food on the table. Residents should have enough money to be able to eat and pay rent in the same month.



**Risk factors for income insecurity include, but are not limited to:**

- Sex
- Racialized people
- Those impacted by colonialism
- Disabilities
- Institutionalization
- Exposure to violence
- Racism
- Discrimination
- Homophobia
- Transphobia
- Ableism
- Family Composition
- Lower education levels
- Immigration status
- Gender identity
- No, or unstable employment
- Language barriers
- Unstable/unaffordable housing
- Having overlapping oppressions

**Protective factors for income security include, but are not limited to:**

- Stable income
- Good health
- Digital literacy
- Literacy
- Higher education levels
- Affordable housing
- Social connectedness





Income itself is a social determinant of health. Other social determinants of health include our ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, education, employment, social inclusion/exclusion, disability, access to food, and housing. With adequate income, we can pay for affordable housing, pursue education and engage in healthy activities.

Poor people in Ontario pay for their low income with their health.<sup>3</sup> Publicly funded health care in Canada only covers specific services. Even if they are free, access to supports and services may be a challenge for those with low-income if transportation poses a barrier. For some, employee benefits make up the shortfall. Those with lower incomes do without simply because they can't afford them. When they have coverage, disadvantaged patients with limited financial resources use fewer preventative and outpatient services than those with higher incomes.<sup>4</sup>

Women face a higher burden of unpaid work, which can affect their employment stability. Women are often the parent in lone-parent families. Indigenous Persons, those with physical health or mental health issues, racialized persons, those with disabilities and immigrants are often among the lowest income earners.

Both single people and families can be considered low-income. According to the census data released by Statistics Canada as part of the 2016 census, the number of Simcoe County residents considered below Canada's low-income threshold doubled – and, in some municipalities, nearly tripled – between 2006 and 2016. Granted, South Simcoe is lower than the Simcoe County and provincial rate for Low Income After Tax (LIM-AT), but they are higher than both Simcoe County and the province in the prevalence of low-income (difference between years).<sup>5</sup> Between 2005 and 2015, the growth in individuals with LIM-AT was a higher growth rate for South Simcoe than for Simcoe County or the province.

“Poverty is a complex issue that may be understood as inadequate education, health, financial, physical and social resources needed to sustain positive well being. It may also be experienced as an absence of equity, choice and power, which negatively impacts one’s sense of belonging, citizenship and participation. As one aspect of poverty, income is recognized as the most important social determinant of health.”

The Simcoe County Poverty  
Reduction Task Group

In Ontario, we have Ontario’s two social assistance programs, the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW), that provide a considerable component of income security for residents. In addition to these two programs, other programs, benefits, supplements, and in-kind benefits that people receive based on qualifying criteria can help offset low-income. Dependence on the social assistance system can become entrenched over generations in families if their income impacts their children’s stable housing, education, physical, or mental health. In Simcoe County, it is important to note that the majority of social assistance recipients are individuals (single residents). Individuals receiving support do not benefit from many of the other programs, benefits or supplements that families would qualify for, helping offset monthly expenses. It is a real struggle for families but can be an even more significant challenge in some ways for single people that receive social assistance. This makes living on the fixed monthly amount next to impossible. Unfortunately, for both single people and families, supports and supplements only go so far.

People need to have their basic needs met in order to be able to fully participate in the community.

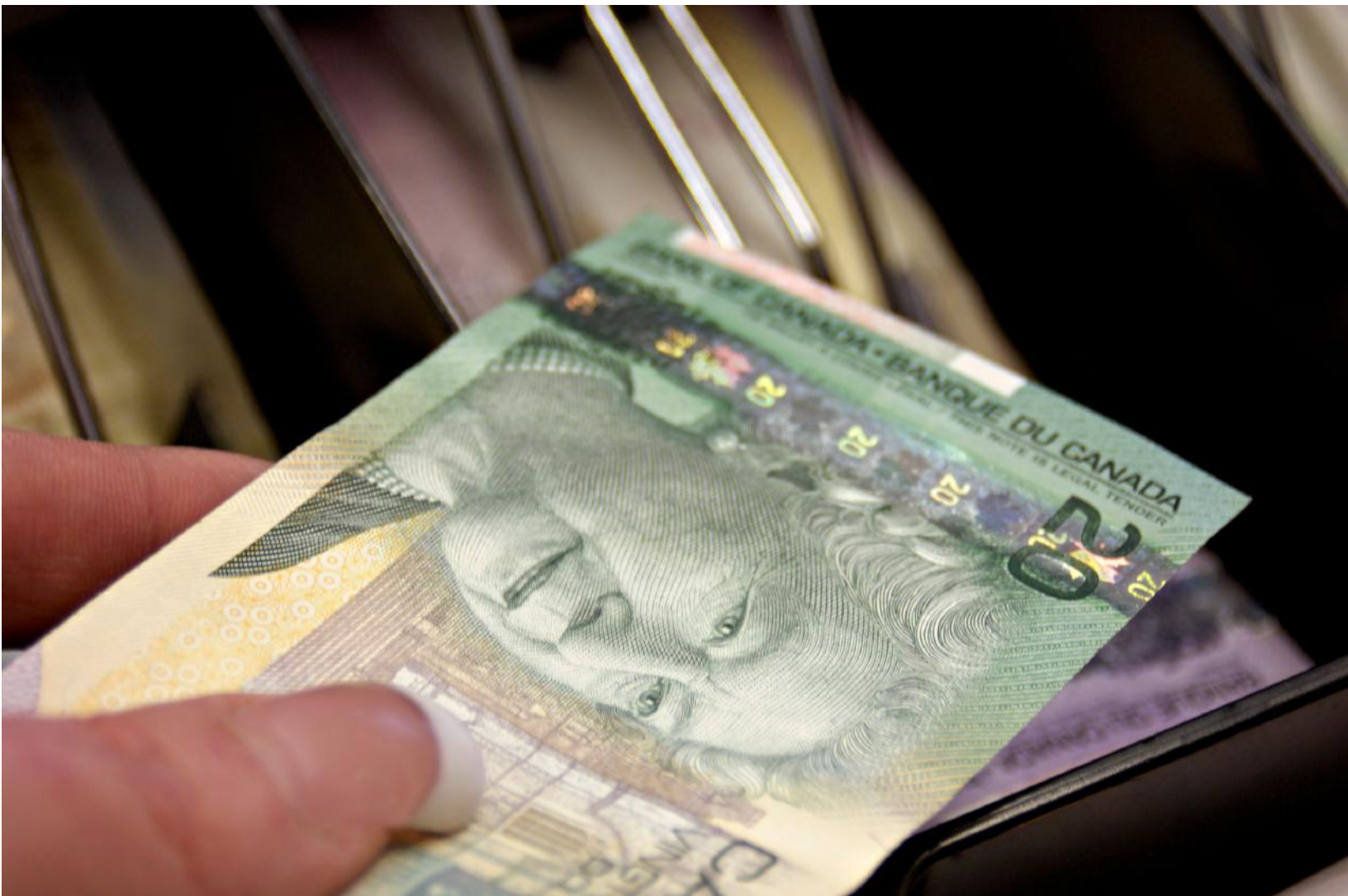


In Ontario, we have a minimum wage that all employers must pay. The current rate is \$14.25 per hour. Minimum wage will increase by \$0.10 per hour in October 2021. This rate is still nowhere near the Living Wage calculation for our county, which was re-assessed in 2018 at \$18.01. That calculation itself is three years old. A Living Wage is the hourly wage a worker needs to earn to cover their basic expenses and participate in their community.

A Living Wage allows a household to meet its basic needs, promotes social inclusion, supports healthy child development principles, and ensures families are not under severe financial stress. Separate from that is the concept of Basic Income. The Basic Income Canada Network states: “A basic income guarantee (BIG) ensures everyone an income sufficient to meet basic needs and live with dignity, regardless of work status.”

As part of the CSWB planning for South Simcoe, we need to be aware and responsive to changes in government policy around income. In the meantime, we must do what we can to advance the interest of our residents.

Inclusive business practices that address inclusion, strive for diversity, job stability, and fair and equitable wages will support our residents and the broader community.<sup>6</sup> Offering a Living Wage is a great place to start, but it is not the only place to start. Inclusive business practices bring other benefits to the employer, such as retention, reputation, competitive advantage, and risk management.<sup>7</sup>





The 'new economy' presents both challenges and opportunities for the residents in our community.<sup>8</sup> With new technologies opening up, new opportunities and production possibilities emerge. There are subsectors as well. These include the sharing economy, the streaming economy, the gig economy, cloud computing, big data, and artificial intelligence. Technology risks making some occupations obsolete or will require workers to upskill to stay relevant. Digital connectivity, digital literacy, and digital confidence will be essential. The numbers and kinds of jobs are changing, and low-income residents will be impacted the most.

An inter-sectoral approach with a focus on employability is something that we need to work on together. This approach means working with residents on life skills and personal development to help them become employable. The approach will also mean helping residents in our community stay up-to-date with changes and opportunities at the local and provincial levels so that they are not left out or left behind. We need to approach this in a way that honours and respects their individual experience, culture, including historical trauma and inter-generational poverty.

Throughout the one-to-one and group engagement process of subject matter experts and local survey results from residents within our community, the following predominant themes emerged.

#### **Income as a primary determinant of health**

Income is an enabler for residents to secure the basic needs, pursue education and benefit from social mobility. Income directly influences health outcomes. There are urgent needs that we need to address now. Residents can't stay housed if they don't stay employed and earn a reasonable income.

#### **Gap Between Income and Cost of Living**

Rates for social assistance have not been adjusted since 2018 while the cost of living has gone up. The minimum wage is not sufficient. Government policy has allowed housing (accommodation) prices to soar with limited means for people to keep pace financially.

#### **Policy Changes are Needed**

Policy changes (income, housing, other) from Provincial and Federal governments are needed to address systemic poverty.

#### **Inclusive Business Practices**

Underrepresented groups such as BIPOC, women, those from the LGBTQ2+ community and those with disabilities (visible and invisible) should be afforded equal opportunity to earn a fair and reasonable wage. The Living Wage is a conservative measure of income but would bring relief to individuals and families. The gig economy can be both an opportunity and can dismantle stable, full-time employment opportunities.

#### **Navigation**

Residents need assistance navigating the network of supports and services available (life stabilization, education, income, other).

**As a community of committed partners across all sectors, we will advance income stability for our lowest-income earning residents by:**

- Forging inter-sectoral collaborations that actively put a plan in place to address core urgent needs for our residents
- Bring awareness and action to increasing inclusive business practices in our community
- Equip residents with information, tools and skills needed to succeed in this economy
- Making it possible for residents to pay for food and housing in the same month
- Measuring the impact of our inter-sectoral approach





## Strategic Direction

Improve quality of life for residents through inter-sectoral efforts to advance poverty reduction and economic inclusion

## Strategic Goals

### Immediate to Short-term:

1. Identify, draft and map a 'Core Urgent Needs' Framework to identify local resources
2. Highest areas of risk related to urgent needs are addressed through a collaborative inter-sectoral approach
3. Achieve a common understanding of defined partner roles and responsibilities regarding support and services related to urgent needs in South Simcoe

### Mid-term to Long-term:

1. Improved collaboration between government, business and service providers on strategies to support a more inclusive economy
2. Identify the enablers and dependencies from within the community to support inclusive business practices

## Outcomes

- Strategies across sectors align
- Resources for urgent needs are available closer to home
- More equitable, timely, and consistent access to services that address urgent needs
- Community can work towards a shared values approach
- More residents are financially stable
- Shared advocacy opportunities

## Strategic Priority

Build capacity through information sharing, knowledge transfer and exchange



## Strategic Direction

Residents have the knowledge and resources needed to adapt to the changing economic trends

## Strategic Goals

### Immediate to Short-term:

1. Residents know where to go to access help in times of crisis
2. Increase knowledge, understanding and compassion to the impact that poverty has on individuals and community
3. Build on to opportunities that equip residents with tools needed in today's economy (e.g. digital access and connectivity, financial literacy skills, education, training, other)
4. Intersectoral commitment (resources, space, other) to help people stay current with life-stabilization opportunities as they come up (e.g. tax season, CERB/CRB, education programs, other)

### Mid-term to Long-term:

1. People have enough money to buy food and pay rent in the same month
2. Raise awareness of elements (e.g. inclusion policies, less reliant on non-standard employees, living wage, other) and benefits (e.g. labour supply, productivity, other) of inclusive business practices

## Outcomes

- Basic needs are met
- Residents are equipped to survive and thrive in the emerging new economy
- Improved financial stability
- More inclusive places of work
- Equitable wages
- More people benefit from life stabilization opportunities
- People will have both a home and food

## Strategic Priority

Utilize multisectoral data and performance measurement to inform system change



## Strategic Direction

Key impact metrics will guide collaborative inter-sectoral work to advance income security

## Strategic Goals

Identify 3-5 key metrics regarding outcomes (impact) of inter-sectoral efforts related to income/poverty that will contribute to an overarching County CSWB Indicator Framework and Data Set, grouped to the desired level of geography (GMG)

## Outcomes

- We will be better positioned to identify gaps, trends, opportunities and emerging threats related to the changing economy
- Community partners will have access to local (GMG) data for planning purposes

### Strategies are in alignment with:

- Government of Canada - *Opportunity for All: Canada's National Poverty Reduction Strategy*
- Statistics Canada - *Dimensions of Poverty Hub*
- Child Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County
  - *Poverty Reduction Task Group Strategic Plan 2018 - 2021*
  - *Making Choices Together: Community Engagement Report (2015)*
- County of Simcoe - *Simcoe County Food Security Framework (2019)*
- Ontario Living Wage Network - *Living Wage Framework*
- Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury - *Diversity and Inclusiveness Action Plan (2020)*
- Town of Innisfil - *COVID-19 Community Response and Recovery / Community Needs Assessment (2020)*

## References

- <sup>1</sup> “Women and Poverty in Canada: Learn the Facts Today.” Canadian Women's Foundation, March 24, 2021. <https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/womens-poverty/>.
- <sup>2</sup> Marc Fawcett-Atkinson | News, Food Insider | December 8th 2020. “Food Banks Aren't the Answer to Hunger, Researchers Say.” National Observer, January 7, 2021. <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2020/12/08/news/hunger-food-banks-poverty-stories-in-canadian-media>.
- <sup>3</sup> “Income and Health: Opportunities to Achieve Health Equity in Ontario.” Health Quality Ontario. Health Quality Ontario, 2016. <http://www.hqontario.ca/portals/0/documents/system-performance/health-equity-report-en.pdf>.
- <sup>4</sup> Goldman, Brian. “The Health Cost of Being Poor | CBC Radio.” CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, February 3, 2020. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/whitecoat/the-health-cost-of-being-poor-1.5449683>.
- <sup>5</sup> Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT), refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted by an equivalence scale to take economies of scale into account. This adjustment for different household sizes reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases (Statistics Canada, 2016)
- <sup>6</sup> “What Are the Benefits?” Living Wage Canada :: What Are the Benefits? Living Wage Canada, 2014. <http://livingwagecanada.ca/index.php/blog/what-are-benefits/>.
- <sup>7</sup> “Poverty and the New Economy: Promises and Challenges for Ontario.” Canadian Poverty Institute. Canadian Poverty Institute , 2019. <https://www.povertyinstitute.ca/research-projects/>.
- <sup>8</sup> New economy is a buzzword to describe new, high-growth industries that are on the cutting edge of technology and are believed to be the driving force of economic growth and productivity. (Investopedia 2020)

# Education

## Why it Matters

(NOTE: pre-COVID 19 data)

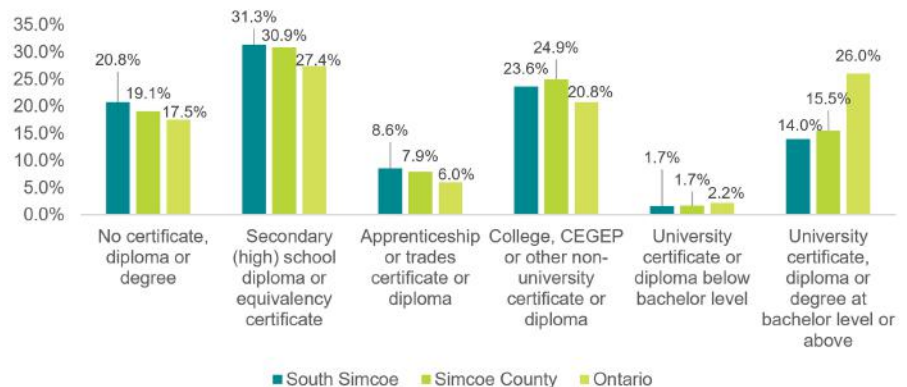
- In Simcoe Muskoka, a higher percentage of people who identified themselves as being Aboriginal reported having no certificate, diploma or degree (20% or 2010) as compared to the overall Simcoe Muskoka population (12% or 33, 445) in 2016 <sup>1</sup>
- Persons with early-onset disabilities are less likely to access post-secondary education than their non-disabled peers<sup>2</sup>
- 61% of employers said it was hard to hire a journeyman, 26% reported that it was very hard
- Median age of skilled trade workers for certain trades is between 50-55 years of age
- 81% of those in the apprenticeship field in Simcoe County are males
- Only 3% of apprenticeships are over the age of 45 in Simcoe County
- Most recent Statistics Canada survey found that about one out of every three adults in Ontario would benefit from literacy education
- Women make up a larger proportion of Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) learners at the local level (female 58%, males 42%), and provincial levels (61%)

Higher levels of education are associated with a range of positive outcomes which include better health and overall well-being, higher social trust, greater political interest, lower political cynicism and more tolerance of others.<sup>3</sup> There is intersectionality between education and the other CSWB areas of risk. Housing, MHA, employment, income, access to services, job creation and social connectedness all influence educational pathways for residents of our community.

Higher educational attainment can play a significant role in a resident's ability to secure meaningful employment by shaping the type of opportunities the resident may have. Education also increases the capacity for better decision-making regarding matters of health and increases opportunities for increasing social and personal resources which play a role in our mental well-being.<sup>4</sup> Education helps residents adapt to changing circumstances and new challenges. Education and employment influence the socio-economic mobility of residents.

Bradford West Gwillimbury demonstrates a larger percentage of the population with a University certificate, diploma or degree at the Bachelor level or above (Innisfil – 11.6%, BWG – 16.6) but fall below the Provincial average when combined.

Indicator: Highest Certificate Diploma or Degree



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016365

**Risk factors for lower education attainment include, but are not limited to:**

- Low income
- Historical or demographic characteristics of the student and their family
- Parents that did not complete post-secondary education
- Low educational expectations
- Misinformation about education
- Low early literacy and numeracy skills (before kindergarten)
- Ethnicity
- Adverse childhood event(s) / early childhood experience
- Poor attendance at school
- Poor academic performance
- Social disconnectedness
- Having to work to support oneself while in education

**Protective factors for higher education attainment include, but are not limited to:**

- Secure and stable income
- Positive self-esteem
- Parental involvement (youth)
- Academic support for learning
- Motivational support for learning
- Availability of educational resources





Despite efforts to promote equal access to education, residents in our community have unique circumstances and family situations that will influence their educational experiences and outcomes. There are also income and racial gaps in education. The legacy of the Resident School system has resulted in generations of Indigenous People who may have struggled with succeeding in the school system.

With a high school diploma typically no longer being enough to secure employment with a decent wage in today's economy, post-secondary education is highly encouraged. Often, youth are encouraged to pursue a path that involves studying at the university level. While there is nothing wrong with this course of education, it is important to note that it is expected that by 2021, one in five new jobs in Ontario is expected to be in trade-related occupations. There is a clear need and opportunity for our residents<sup>5</sup>.

This need is reflected in our community. Based on Statistic Canada 2016 census data, we can see that the top four industries in Simcoe County (by labour force), require a certain level of educational attainment:

1. Retail trade
2. Health care and social assistance
3. Manufacturing
4. Construction



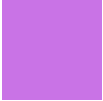
Based on the labour force by occupation (Statistic Canada 2016 census), the top four labour force categories in Simcoe County are:

1. Sales and Service occupations
2. Trades, transport & equipment operators and related occupations
3. Business, finance and administration □ occupations □
4. Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services

In South Simcoe, Agriculture and Food Processing is also a key industry. Innovations in sustainable agriculture are creating more need for skilled trade and there are not enough youth entering these career pathways to fulfill this demand.

While advancing educational attainment at any level is a positive step for anyone, pursuing education in a field or industry that is in-demand will provide more opportunities for employment.

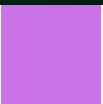
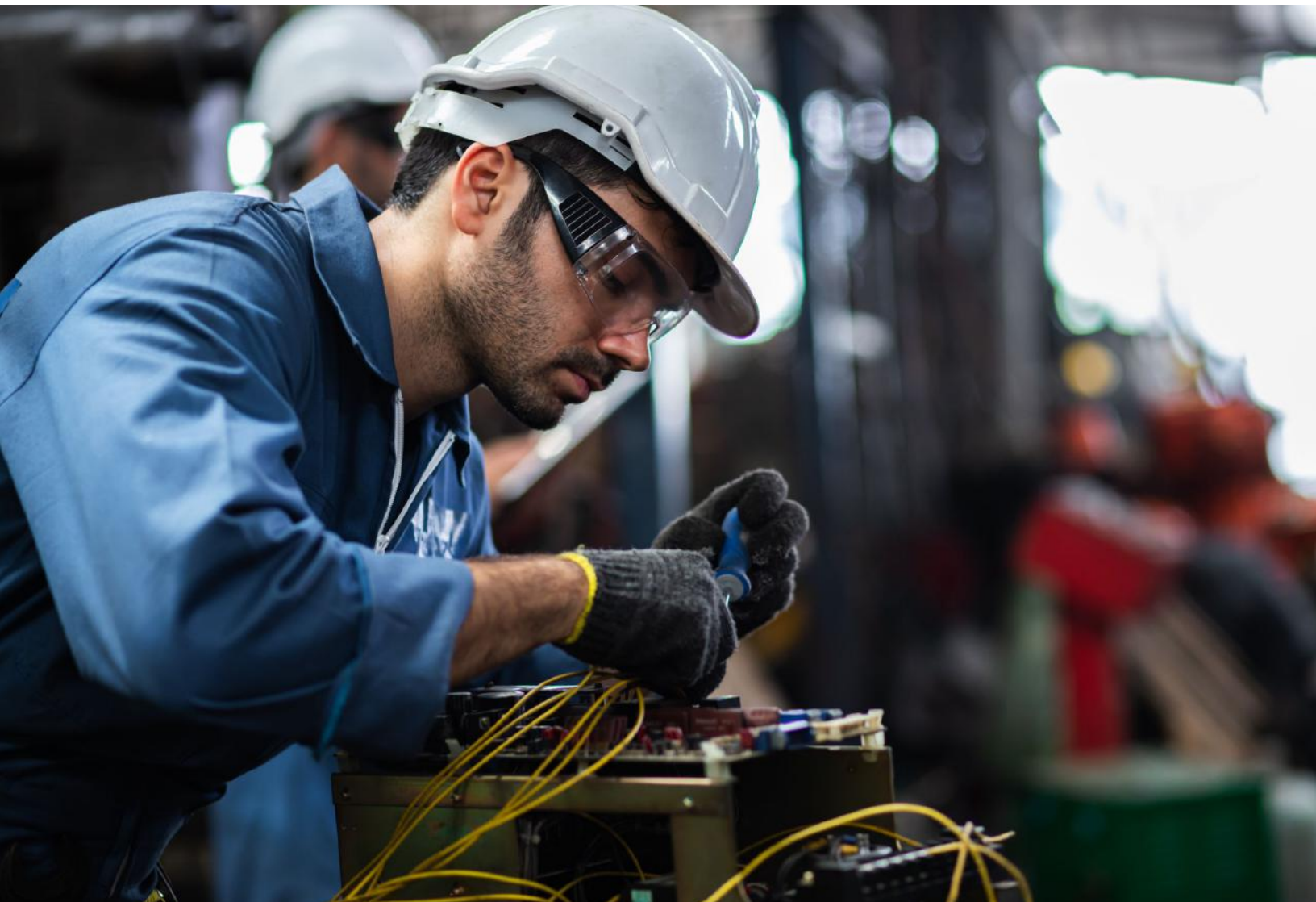




In Simcoe, skilled trades are at risk of not having the right supply and skill to support the local industries. There is a shortage now, but a larger shortage is anticipated with the average age of the current tradespeople and the less than required number of new ones entering the trades.<sup>6</sup>

New technology, combined with new competitive requirements, has increased both the depth and breadth of competencies need to do the job which has increased the demand for an upskilled workforce. In health care, a critical shortage in health care workers such as Personal Support Workers is already an issue locally but also provincially. Organizations in Simcoe County have identified this and are working together to improve opportunities for education in alignment with industry need. Their efforts would benefit from a broader more connected community approach.

In addition to educational attainment, employability skills (soft skills) are a critical element to the success of our residents in influencing hiring decisions and retaining their employment. These key workplace skills include teamwork, communication, personal management, problem-solving and critical thinking and professional development.



Throughout the one-to-one and group engagement process of subject matter experts and local survey results from residents within our community, the following predominant themes emerged.

**Retirement of baby-boomers and gap of experienced workers**

There is a gap of skilled workers in the age range of 35-55 years old. Although awareness and interest in youth are evident in a slight rise in youth apprenticeship numbers, it is not enough to backfill those that will be leaving the trades.

**Perceptions of skilled trades need to change as does how and who we market to**

Many people think of skilled trades the way they were decades ago. There needs to be a more current and accurate understanding and awareness of the trades today. There are more formalized systems in place to capture the attention and interest of youth than there are for adults. Women, racialized minorities, immigrants and Indigenous Persons, those with disabilities are underrepresented in the trades.

**We need to make the pathway to skilled trades easier**

Pursuing a career in the trades can be a lengthy process. There are access issues, structural, and procedural processes that can be barriers for some. There is more that can be done at the community level (e.g. science, technology, engineering, and math opportunities, tutoring, others) to support youth while they are in school to consider a career in the trades.

**Increased digitization requires a wider range of skills**

Technology is having a significant impact on the trades. Tradespeople need to acquire new skills in order to stay current with technology. The work has become more sophisticated in terms of the knowledge needed to operate it and the tools needed to service it. Overall employers see how automation may reduce the need for labour (to a small degree) but also recognize that this new technology will need technical personnel to operate and maintain it.

**Lessons learned from COVID-19**

Education moved online at a rapid speed. Digital connectivity and literacy are critical. Online learning doesn't appeal to all types of learners. We will need to further explore hybrid solutions that will offer different learning opportunities.

**Opportunities**

The educational attainment of some groups of people is underrepresented. Expand engagement of youth, women, Indigenous Persons, those with disabilities or barriered residents, to determine how best to support their educational aspirations.

**With current data and needs identified through the work of committed education and employment community partners, we can bolster existing strategy by:**

- Identifying and putting a plan in place to improve equity, access and quality of educational support services
- Looking beyond our traditional partners towards a true inter-sectoral approach to supporting education in our community
- Ensuring everyone in the community has information and access to the educational resources they need
- Support for existing strategies that build capacity related to apprenticeship, skilled trade, health care and soft skills training
- Measuring the impact of our inter-sectoral approach



## Strategic Direction

There are coordinated and supportive pathways to education for people looking to upskill, pursue a second career and/ or apprentice in a skilled trade

## Strategic Goals

1. Identify, draft and map an 'Inter-sectoral Pathways to Education' Framework
2. Use a maturity model to monitor progress around enhancing services that support people pursuing education
3. Increase the number of skilled trade people that train and remain in our community
4. Align training with employment opportunities
5. Breakdown barriers to education (e.g. language, literacy, discrimination)

## Outcomes

- Coordinated strategies across sectors
- Equitable opportunity for residents to pursue education
- United voice for advocacy
- Improved digital literacy
- Barriers to education are reduced



## Strategic Direction

The information and resources needed to promote and support education is available to residents, employers and those collaborating across sectors

## Strategic Goals

1. Inter-sectoral approach to increase the capacity in our community to support those looking to upskill, pursue a second career or apprentice in a skilled trade
2. Improve the perceived value of apprenticeships and careers in the trades for both the employer and the potential apprentice
3. Increase education outreach and engagement strategies with youth, women, those with disabilities, and Indigenous communities

## Outcomes

- Higher certification or qualification rates in the trades
- Labour - supply meets demand
- Stronger interest in the trades
- People of all ages have a clear path to education
- Stronger education outcomes for youth, women, those with disabilities and Indigenous people

## Strategic Priority

Utilize multi-sectoral data and performance measurement to inform system change



## Strategic Direction

Multi-sectoral data and performance measurement will inform better ways to help residents pursue education

## Strategic Goals

Identify 3 -5 key metrics regarding outcomes (impact) of inter-sectoral efforts related to education that will contribute to an overarching County CSWB Indicator Framework and Data Set, grouped to the desired level of geography (GMG)

## Outcomes

- Multi-sectoral data will further help identify gaps, trends, opportunities and emerging threats to education
- Greater access to data for planning purposes

### Strategies are in alignment with:

- Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board - *Report on In-Demand Skilled Trades in The County of Simcoe and The District of Muskoka*
- Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board - *Local Labour Market Plan, 2019*
- County of Simcoe - *Local Immigration Partnership: Community Settlement Strategy*
- Government of Ontario - *Making Ontario Open for Business Act (2018)*
- Government of Ontario - *Modernizing the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Act (2019)*

## References

- <sup>1</sup> “Determinants Of Health.” Health Stats: Determinants of Health. Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Accessed 2021. <http://www.simcoemuskokahealthstats.org/topics/determinants-of-health>.
- <sup>2</sup> “Skills Gaps, Underemployment, and Equity of Labour-Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Canada.” Public Policy Forum, October 25, 2020. <https://ppforum.ca/publications/barriers-to-employment-for-people-with-disabilities-in-canada/>.
- <sup>3</sup> “The Wellbeing Effect of Education.” AHRC. UK Research and Innovation, Economic and Social Research Council, 2014. <https://esrc.ukri.org/news-events-and-publications/evidence-briefings/the-wellbeing-effect-of-education/>.
- <sup>4</sup> Shankar, Janki, Eugene Ip, Ernest Khalema, Jennifer Couture, Shawn Tan, Rosslynn T Zulla, and Gavin Lam. “Education as a Social Determinant of Health: Issues Facing Indigenous and Visible Minority Students in Postsecondary Education in Western Canada.” *International journal of environmental research and public health*. MDPI, August 28, 2013. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3799536/>.
- <sup>5</sup> “Skilled Trades in Ontario Schools.” *ontario.ca*. Government of Ontario, 2019. <http://www.ontario.ca/page/skilled-trades-ontario-schools#section-1>.
- <sup>6</sup> “Report on In-Demand Skilled Trades In Simcoe County and The District Of Muskoka.” Simcoe Muskoka: Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board, 2020.

Our CSWB Plan has laid the groundwork and structure for our next steps.

The first step in all areas of risk is to identify and draft a framework or continuum. We recognize that people experience risks and threats to their safety and well-being at different points and in different ways. Having a firm understanding of the necessary supports and protective factors across each area of risk will help us tailor our approach based on the unique needs of our residents.

We will build our local CSWB Table, facilitating the formation of our Regional CSWB Steering Committee. Given that MHA is the one area of risk common to all CSWB Plans across Simcoe County, we commit to starting there.

We will work towards a Community CSWB Scorecard of indicators reflective of all eight areas of risk. We will coordinate with the Data Consortium to identify efficiencies with this process.

Our Advisory Body and those with lived experience will be our source of truth throughout this process that will keep us connected to what matters most and how best to accomplish it.

Our GMCC will continue in their current capacity. They will lead our local efforts and keep our Councils connected to our progress in a timely and meaningful way.

We will work as allies with our border communities, recognizing that the natural travel of residents in bordering communities may influence their care/service preferences which may differ from defined catchments of organizations and services.

Ensuring that our approach reflects cross-sector collaboration is critical. We will invest our time, efforts and resources into enablers with the farthest reach and that yield the most positive impacts across the interconnected areas of risk.

Over the next four years, we will move our CSWB planning forward, recognizing that there will likely be changes around us. We are experiencing a great deal of uncertainty as a result of the pandemic. We have factored this into our Plan. We can respond in an agile and coordinated manner despite any challenges we face. One thing will not change – our community needs us, and every single resident has the right to be safe and well.



# Engagement List



Adam Ballagh

Just Recovery Simcoe

Aleta Armstrong  
Director of Community Engagement, Inclusivity and Fundraising

Canadian Mental Health Association Simcoe County

Alison Brett  
Coordinator

Georgian College Career and Employment Community Services

Andrew Fletcher  
Chief of Police

South Simcoe Police Service

Andrew Robert  
Paramedic Chief

County of Simcoe

Andrew Tait  
A/Inspector

Huron West  
Ontario Provincial Police

Arfona Zwiers  
Director of Social Housing

County of Simcoe

Ashley Sweeney  
Team Leader

Agilec

Ashley Watson  
Business and Communications Coordinator

Township of Ramara

Blaine Parkin  
CAO

Town of New Tecumseth

Brenda Guarda  
Program Manager-Population Health Assessment, Surveillance and Evaluation

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Brenda Jackson  
Executive Director

BANAC

Brian Thomas  
Fire Chief (Retired)

Township of Tay

Dwight Peer  
Chief Superintendent, Commander, Central Region

Ontario Provincial Police

Cathy Lethbridge  
Principal of Well-Being

Simcoe County District School Board

Chris Archer  
Project Manager

Couchiching Family Health Team and Couchiching OHT

Chris Maecker  
Detachment Commander

Collingwood and The Town of Blue Mountains  
Ontario Provincial Police



# Engagement List



Claudia Swoboda-Geen Public Health Nurse, Substance Use and Injury Prevention Program	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
Colleen Healey-Dowdall CAO	Township of Essa
Colleen Simpson Manager of 911 and Emergency Planning	County of Simcoe
Dalete Karst-Yaacov Director of Services	Canadian Mental Health Association York and South Simcoe
David Denault CAO	Town of Midland
David Jeffery Executive Director	Chigamik Community Health Centre
Dean Collver Executive Director of Customer and Corporate Services	Town of Collingwood
Donna Hewitt Director, Corporate Services	Township of Oro-Medonte
Dr. Kim McIntosh Clinical Lead, Physician	Couchiching Ontario Health Team
Gail Michalenko Coordinator	SCATEH
Gayle Hall Chief Librarian / CEO	Simcoe County Library Co-operative
Geoff McKnight CAO	Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
George Vadeboncoeur CAO	Town of Wasaga Beach
Germaine Elliott Executive Director - Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin	BANAC
Gerry Croteau Executive Director	Gilbert Centre
Graeme Peters CEO-New Tecumseth Library	Town of New Tecumseth
Greg Bishop General Manager, Social and Community Services	County of Simcoe
Gosia Puzio Manager, Social Media	Ontario Provincial Police

# Engagement List



Haley Peek Consultant	Canadian Mental Health Association
Heather Klein-Gebbinck Executive Director	South Georgian Bay Community Health Centre
Howard Courtney Pastor	Innisfil Community Church
Jaelen Josiah Recreation: Youth Advisory Council	Township of Tiny
Jamie Moran Director of Ontario Works	County of Simcoe
Jane Sinclair General Manager, Health and Emergency Services	County of Simcoe
Jeff Schmidt CAO	Township of Springwater
Jenn Fleury Housing Support Worker	Contact Community Services: Housing Resource Centre
Jenn Rae Executive Director of the Innisfil Community Foundation	Town of Innisfil
Jennifer Murley Community Engagement Coordinator	Town of Innisfil
Jennifer Parker Coordinator, Community Well-Being and Inclusion	Town of Collingwood
Jim Harris Manager of Planning and System Integration	New Path Youth & Family Services
Jim Smyth Superintendent, Director of Operations	Ontario Provincial Police
John Connell Implementation Manager - Social Housing	County of Simcoe
John Pinsent CAO	Town of Ramara
Joseph Evans Detachment Commander	Southern Georgian Bay Ontario Provincial Police
Katy Viccary Media Relations	Ontario Provincial Police, Central

# Engagement List



Kirsten Bulligan Staff Sgt.	Nottawasaga Detachment Ontario Provincial Police
Kristine Preston Assistant Clerk/Executive Director Orillia Police Services Board	City of Orillia
Laura Wark CEO, Library Services	Essa Library
Laurie Kennard CAO	Township of Severn
Laurie Straughan Supports and Services Manager	Empower Simcoe
Lindsay Bryant Human Resource Specialist	Township of Tay
Lynn Davies Executive Director	Couchiching Family Health Team
Lynne Cheliak Director of Clinical Services	Canadian Mental Health Association Simcoe County
Mark Aiken Chief Administrative Officer	County of Simcoe
Maxine Johnson Director, Programs and Services	Empower Simcoe
Melanie Marchand Coordinator, Police Degree Program	Georgian College Career and Employment Community Services
Melissa Bramham Executive Director	Contact Community Services
Melissa Hurst Co-founder	Simcoe Moms for Opioid Awareness
Merideth Morrison Manager of LTC and Paramedic Services	County of Simcoe
Michelle Bergin Executive Director	Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County
Mike McEachern Executive Director	FOCUS Employment Services
Mike McWilliams Fire Chief	Town of Wasaga Beach

# Engagement List



Monika Hollander Brief Service Worker	WENDAT Community Programs
Nancy Heuther Economic Development Manager	County of Simcoe
Nancy Sutherland Registered Nurse, Volunteer	The Lighthouse
Nathan Sykes CEO	The Guesthouse Shelter
Pam Hillier Executive Director	Community Connections / 211
Paul Pentikainen Senior Planner	Town of Innisfil
Peter Leon Corporate Communications Coordinator	Barrie Police Service
Phillip Brown Detachment Commander	Huron West Ontario Provincial Police
Rebecca Holloway Resource and Information Specialist	Georgian College Career and Employment Community Services
Rhonda Bunn CAO	Township of Adjala-Tosorontio
Rob Sheppard Project Facilitator	Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board
Roree Payment Fire Chief	Township of Clearview
Rosslyn Junke Director, Community Impact	United Way of Simcoe County
Sandra Easson-Bruno Director	North Simcoe Specialized Geriatric Services Specialized Geriatric Services
Sandra Lee Manager, Local Immigration Partnership	County of Simcoe
Sandy Foster Wellness Catalyst	Town of Innisfil
Sonya Skinner CAO	Town of Collingwood

# Engagement List



Stacey Cooper  
Clerk / Deputy CAO

Town of Penetanguishene

Stewart Strathearn  
Mayor

Town of Midland

Steve Ridout  
Detachment Commander

Nottawasaga  
Ontario Provincial Police

Sue Sgambati  
Corporate Communications Coordinator

South Simcoe Police Service

Sue Walton  
Director of Legislative Services / Clerk

Township of Tiny

Susan Baues  
Library Manager, Collections

Town of Innisfil

Susan Laycock  
Executive Director

Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development  
Board

Tej Parmar  
Director of Services

Canadian Mental Health Association  
York and South Simcoe

Tim Leitch  
Director, Public Works

Tiny Township

Dr. Valerie Grdisa  
CEO

Canadian Mental Health Association Simcoe  
County

Veronica Eaton  
Detachment Commander

Couchiching  
Ontario Provincial Police

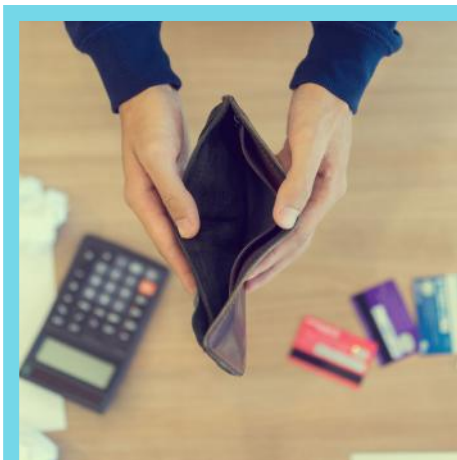
Wendy Hembruff  
Manager of Ontario Works

County of Simcoe

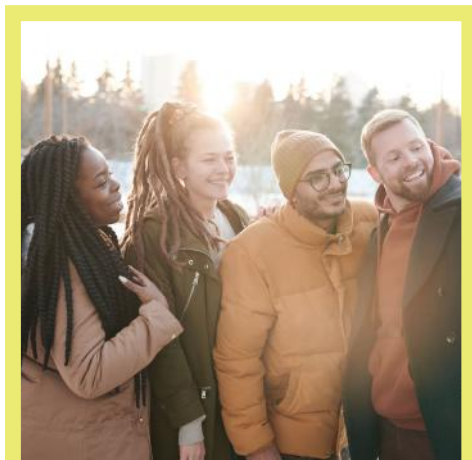
Thank you to Child, Youth and Family Coalition of Simcoe County, Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy (SMOS), the various Community Roundtables, Situation Tables, Municipal Councils, Age Friendly Committees, Ontario Health Team Working Groups, and SCATEH for invitations to present and discuss community safety and well-being issues and actions needed.

# Appendix A

Inter-Sectoral Work Underway  
in Simcoe County



*We recognize that there are collaborative efforts already underway and inter-sectoral collaboration in itself is not new. We have an abundance of evidence of this in our own community.*



**NOTE:** The information on the following pages is not an exhaustive list.

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Mental Health and Addictions

### **Clinical Care Coordination and Integration** (OHT for Specialized Populations) □

Current focus: People with MHA conditions, starting with Child and Youth and Indigenous populations □

**Specialized Geriatric Services Clinical Design Strategy** (North Simcoe Muskoka Specialized Geriatric Services)  
NSM Specialized Geriatric Services are hospital and community-based health care services supporting frail older adults and their caregivers. A team of health care professionals supports the assessment, diagnosis and initial management of issues commonly seen in older adults with frailty. Team members include geriatricians, geriatric psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and pharmacists. The North Simcoe Specialized Geriatric Services is also working on timely research and response to confinement syndrome

### **Seniors Social Prescribing Program** (Community Connections)

Addressing social isolation in Seniors

### **Integrated Inter-Sectoral Transitional Age Youth Services** (Various Partners)

Youth Hubs throughout the County

**Mobile Withdrawal Management and Stabilizations Program** (CMHA and Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin Primary Care) program and services for rural and urban Indigenous populations

### **Mobile Police / Mental Health Crisis Team** (Local Police: South Simcoe / OPP and Mental Health Partners)

Mobile response team consisting of a police officer and mental health professional also known as C.O.A.S.T, M.C.I.T or M.H.S.T throughout the region (different GMGs call it by a different name)

### **'An Action Plan for Our Communities'** (Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy \*SMOS)

Multi-sector partnership known as SMOS which is chaired by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU). SMOS is championing a collaborative opioid strategy for Simcoe Muskoka

Foundational Pillars:

1. Data and Evaluation
2. Lived Experience

Action Pillars:

1. Prevention
2. Treatment / Clinical Practice
3. Harm Reduction
4. Enforcement
5. Emergency Management



# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Mental Health and Addictions

### **Indigenous Opioid Strategy** (regional Indigenous partner organizations)

Culturally grounded prevention, education, anti-stigma and harm reduction strategies, mobilized and supported by local Indigenous communities

### **Situation Tables** (Community Partnership)

Situation Tables have been established in various communities throughout the County. Situation Tables (also known as Hubs) help front line staff from the public safety, health, and social service sectors to identify vulnerable people that are at acutely elevated risk and collaboratively and rapidly connect them to services before they experience a negative or traumatic event

### **COMPASS** (Child, Youth and Family Coalition of Simcoe County)

COMPASS (Community Partners with Schools) is a network of community school teams across Simcoe County that link schools (elementary and secondary) with local providers of community supports and services including child and youth mental health, parenting supports, child protection, health, youth justice, community recreation and more. COMPASS teams help schools enhance student learning, support healthy child/youth development and reduce social, emotional or behavioural challenges within schools

### **Integrated Psychogeriatric Outreach Program (IPOP) – LOFT**

The Integrated Psycho-geriatric Outreach Program (IPOP) provides comprehensive psychogeriatric assessments by a community clinician consulting with a psychiatrist or geriatrician in the client's home. This program looks to promote the health, well-being, safety and independence of older adults living in the community with mental health and dementia-related concerns

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Income

### Ontario Works: Financial and Employment Assistance (County of Simcoe)

#### Benefits:

- Basic Needs
- Shelter Allowance
- Employment Related Expenses
- Medical Travel and Transportation Costs
- Special Diet Allowance
- Child Care Expenses
- Drug Card
- Adult Emergency Dental
- Eyeglasses
- Earnings exemption after 3 months of continuous eligibility
- Extended employment health benefits

#### Programs:

- Self-employment assistance
- Basic Education and Training programs
- Learning, Earning and Parenting program
- Community Participation
- Job Readiness Workshops
- Apprenticeship Development
- Addiction Services Program

### Poverty Reduction Task Group (Child Youth and Family Services Coalition)

The PRTG supports poverty reduction initiatives by providing leadership, advocacy to increase access to and address the barriers to the social determinants that families and individuals of low-income experience. They develop and support initiatives at the local and county level

### Bridges Out of Poverty, Getting Ahead, Circles (County + SCDSB)

Bridges Out of Poverty provides a family of concepts and workshops to help employers, community organizations, social service agencies, and individuals address and reduce poverty in a comprehensive way. Bridges brings people from all sectors and economic classes together to improve job retention rates, build resources, improve outcomes, and support those who are moving out of poverty

### No Money for Food is Cent\$less (Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit)

No Money for Food is ... Cent\$less is a campaign that aims to increase awareness and advocacy for income solutions that will help everyone to buy enough food to feed themselves and their families

### Simcoe County Food Council (Community partners)

The County of Simcoe in partnership with various stakeholders has created a community-based Simcoe County Food Council (SCFC) to enhance community food security and decrease food insecurity in the region. The Council's vision is for a "sustainable, equitable and secure local food system in Simcoe County that recognizes food as a human right."

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Income

### **Urgent Needs Fund (United Way Simcoe Muskoka)**

The Urgent Needs Fund offers emergency financial assistance with prompt, one-time grants to address basic needs like groceries, clothing, transportation, health and wellness expenses and more, and has been expanded to assist those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Urgent Needs Fund cannot address housing payments or arrears. The Urgent Needs Fund was designed to help fill that gap by providing timely, modest grants once community resources had been exhausted

### **Interactive Low-Income Map (Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit)**

There are pockets of areas within each municipality that have higher percentages of their populations living in low-income. This map uses dissemination areas (DA) – a standard geography with populations of 400-700 to show the variation in the prevalence of low-income (after-tax). The data is grouped into quintiles (5 income levels containing approximately 20% of the population). The DAs are ranked from lowest to highest income and rolled up into the 5 income quintile groups. The income data is from the 2016 Census

### **Community Link (Transportation) (Community partners)**

The Community Transportation Link, or CT Link, is a network of community-based transportation service providers developing a web-based Portal that they will use to identify opportunities to pool transportation resources between agencies. The CT Link will improve mobility options for people using community-based transportation services, such as seniors, people living with disabilities and/or medical concerns, and people on fixed incomes, by increasing their transportation opportunities. Self-bookings are now available for CT Link clients

### **Free and low-cost Meals (www.foodinsimcoecounty.ca)**

This is an online resource that lets people know where free and low-cost meals can be found in their community. It will indicate the date, time, and location of the meals available

### **Local data (Enumeration, Food Security, Living Wage, Local Immigration Partnership) (County of Simcoe and various partners)**

Various organizations and groups throughout Simcoe County work to gather local data to use that will inform planning and service delivery across programs that address poverty

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Housing

### **10 Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy** (County of Simcoe and Municipalities)

Strategic Opportunities:

1. Establish strong leadership and governance
2. Achieve affordable housing target
3. Protect existing public assets
4. Planning for the public good – Planning Policy and instruments to support affordable housing
5. Create an integrated model for housing and supports

### **Social Housing** (County of Simcoe)

Various Housing and Supports: Social Housing, Rent Supplements, Housing Allowance, Rent Geared to Income, Special Needs Housing, Home Ownership Program, Housing Retention Program, Ontario Renovates, Secondary Suites

### **BFZ Simcoe** (Community partnership)

Goal is to reach functional zero by December 31, 2024

Efforts centre around two initiatives:

1. Coordinated Access System: a community-wide strategy to help prevent homelessness and match individuals and families experiencing homelessness to housing and support resources
2. By-name List (BNL): the BNL helps community partners know every person experiencing homelessness by name, understand their unique needs, and then prioritize them for the most appropriate and available housing and supports

### **Simcoe County Alliance To End Homelessness** (SCATEH) (Local Movement)

SCATEH is a local movement to prevent and end homelessness in Simcoe County, through coordinated strategies, advocacy, and awareness

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Social Connectedness / Safety

### **Seniors Isolation Project** (Community Connections and community partners)

The aim of the project is twofold:

- 1) to measurably reduce social isolation among seniors, and
- 2) to build our community's capacity to identify, reach, and connect isolated seniors—preventing isolation in the future

### **Age-Friendly Resources and Helpful Links** (County of Simcoe)

The County of Simcoe website, under Age-Friendly Community, has resources and links related to accessing help, social inclusion and locations of Active Living Centres in Simcoe

### **LGBTQ Youth and Family Programming** (Gilbert Centre)

The Gilbert Centre runs a program called, QT Youth Connection which is a drop-in and social space for Queer, Trans, Intersex, Questioning and Non-Binary youth. Groups take place in Barrie, Orillia, Midland, Bradford, and Stayner and are a place for youth to connect with each other and to community

### **Older LGBTQ Adult Programs** (The Gilbert Centre)

The program contributes to the knowledge base of better understanding of the needs and wishes of the LGBTQ older adults in our region, to create safer spaces to socialize, educate, and connect communities. The program offers drop in programs, educational seminars, inter-generational programming and collaborates with the Safer Spaces program to support senior serving organizations and long term care facilitates to become inclusive to older LGBTQ adults

### **Local Immigration Partnership** (County of Simcoe, community partners)

The Simcoe County Local Immigration Partnership (SCLIP) is a community partnership focused on the development of settlement strategies for newcomers. These strategies will bring together and support service delivery to newcomers in Simcoe County while promoting positive relationships, opportunity, and use of local resources effectively

### **Peer to Peer Support** (Community MHA partners)

Peer support is created through a trusting, equal and empowering recovery-oriented relationship between two individuals who share a similar experience. This service works with individuals to support their recovery socially, emotionally and practically to empower them in their day-to-day lives

### **Indigenous Friendship Centres -**

Friendship Centres are multi-purpose organizations that provide a variety of programs and services. However, their core mission continues to be the administration and provision of health and social programming to Aboriginal people regardless of their status or legal definition

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Job Creation

### **Economic Development Strategy** (County of Simcoe)

5-year Economic Development Strategy 2021-2025 Goals:

- Simcoe County will be recognized as a premier destination for investment in Ontario
- Through an excellent quality of life, education and careers, Simcoe County attracts and retains talent to support the needs of its thriving business community
- Businesses stay and grow in the region, supported by a strong and innovative business development environment
- The County of Simcoe's Economic Development Office is a leader in facilitating and building effective and collaborative relationships that create a strong ecosystem for regional economic development
- Advocate for and support the delivery of infrastructure to meet the needs of a competitive business community

### **Small Business Centres** \*SBECs

A resource helping local enterprising people start and grow their businesses to meet their entrepreneurial aspirations. Part of the provincial Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs (ONE), the Centres provide support to new and existing businesses offering free one-on-one consultations, business plan reviews, seminars, networking opportunities and more

### **Community Futures Development Corporations** \*CFDCs, (Government of Canada)

A resource that offers a wide variety of programs and services supporting community economic development and small business growth. In particular, they provide:

- Business loans for small and medium-sized businesses and social enterprises
- Business counselling services
- Access to community and business information
- Support for community-based projects
- Strategic community planning and socio-economic development

### **Agriculture and Agri-Food BR&E Study** (Community Partners)

Regional partners undertook a significant study of the area's agriculture and agri-food sector to build regional and local Action Plans. A BR&E Study is an analysis of the current business climate in an area or sector based on standardized interviews with businesses. The survey results are then compiled and analyzed to look for trends, opportunities, challenges and provide baseline information. The goal is to then use the results of the BR&E to develop Action Plans to address identified opportunities and challenges

### **Henry Bernick Entrepreneur Centre**

The Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre (HBEC) is a resource for entrepreneurs at various stages, across all industry sectors. With the support of Georgian College and the Ontario Centres of Excellence, HBEC helps students and community based entrepreneurs validate their business ideas and grow existing businesses by connecting them with the tools they need to be successful, including mentorship, funding, training and networking

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Job Creation

### **ventureLAB**

ventureLAB is the non-profit Regional Innovation Centre (RIC). It is a member of the ONE network that supports Simcoe County, Muskoka and York Region. ventureLAB helps entrepreneurs bring their innovations to market, by offering a unique combination of mentoring, partnering and connecting, tailored to the unique needs of each business. ventureLAB offers the BUILD training program, 1:1 advisory services, workshops, conferences, investor meetings and other special events

### **Ontario Centres of Excellence**

Ontario Centres of Excellence (OCE) drives the development of Ontario's economy by helping create new jobs, products, services, technologies and businesses. In partnership with industry, OCE co-invests to commercialize innovation originating in the province's publicly funded colleges, universities and research hospitals. Another expanding focus for OCE is the development of the next generation of innovators through entrepreneurship fellowships and programs for students and youth across Ontario.

The OCE program suite covers three key areas: Industry-Academic R&D Collaboration, Commercialization, and Entrepreneurship. Other key OCE initiatives are the IBM High Performance Computing Initiative and Colleges Ontario Network for Industry Innovation (CONII)

### **Concierge**

Concierge is a single access point to funding, expertise, facilities, and global opportunities for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) seeking to grow through innovation. The only service of its kind in Canada, it offers free, one-on-one assistance from expert advisors who provide customized guidance in selecting the most relevant programs and services to help you grow your business

### **Local Chamber of Commerce** \*Located throughout Simcoe County

These are local organizations of businesses whose goal is to further the interests of businesses. Business owners in towns and cities form these local societies to advocate on behalf of the business community. There are 14 throughout Simcoe County

### **Municipal Studies, Surveys and Plans** (across municipalities)

Economic Development Strategy Plans, Official Plans, Growth Strategy Plans, Multi-Modal Active Transportation Master Plan (TMP), Transportation Studies, other

### **Local Commercial and Industrial Developments**

Small, medium and large scale developments underway across the County

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Employment

### **Employment Ontario Service Sites** \*Located across Simcoe County (Government of Ontario)

Help for job seekers, workers and employers with advice, grants and other services around public and private sector employment

### **Georgian College Centre for Career and Employment Services** (funded by Employment Ontario)

Service for employers, services for job seekers, services for youth seeking employment, and newcomer employment services

### **Community Development Corporations** \*various locations throughout Simcoe County (supported by Government of Canada)

Business coaching and guidance, professional growth opportunities, loans, pathways to employment

### **'workinsimcoecounty.ca' consolidated site**

The 'Work in Simcoe County' portal uses an automated fetching tool to aggregate job listings from over 20 popular job boards and career sites, such as Indeed, Workopolis, job bank, Employment Ontario job boards throughout Simcoe County and more. The new user-friendly online tool also includes features, such as the ability to map job opportunities across Simcoe County. It provides important information on accessing Employment Ontario offices and childcare facilities

This site is a one-stop shop and includes training, recruiting and funding resources for job seekers and employers alike, and will alleviate local employers from having to enter their job postings on multiple sites, as well as job seekers having to search a variety of platforms for work opportunities within the County

### **Express Entry** \*online immigration application system (Government of Canada)

Express Entry is an online system that the Government of Canada uses to manage applications for permanent residence from skilled workers

### **Credential Recognition Services** \*academic and professional (Welcome Centre for Immigrant Services: Mobile Unit)

For academic credentials outside of Canada, they are often referred to as "international credentials" or "foreign credentials." To be licensed with a professional association or to study in Canada, the credentials completed outside of Canada may need to be evaluated

### **Build ON** (YMCA, funded by by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada)

Build ON is a pre-arrival service funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Build ON provides specialized information and orientation about the skilled trades, engineering and construction sectors to new immigrants approved to immigrate to Ontario, Canada. There is no cost to participate



# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Education

### **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship (OYAP)** (School Boards)

OYAP is a high school program that allows students to try a variety of apprenticeship-based careers in skilled trades, starting in Grade 11 or Grade 12 through the Cooperative Education program

### **Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)** (School Boards)

Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM) are bundles of 8-10 courses that allow Grade 11 and 12 students to focus their learning on a specific economic sector while getting their high school diploma. SHSMs provide students with an opportunity to focus their learning and gain valuable experience for all post-secondary opportunities. Students will also earn industry-recognized certifications, which builds confidence in their skills and links their studies with the world beyond high school and future careers

### **Georgian College Centre for Career and Employment Services** (funded by Employment Ontario)

Apprenticeship, education and training to support employment

### **Indigenous Services and Access Programs**

Indigenous Resource Centres are located at the Barrie, Midland, Orillia and Owen Sound campuses. The centres provide students with a culturally supportive and comfortable environment where they can study, socialize, and access a wide range of resources. The staff support students, whether academically, personally or spiritually. The resource centres are home to the visiting Elder and Niwijiagan peer mentor programs, Getsijig (Indigenous education counsellor) and Indigenous student advisors

### **Employment Ontario Service Sites**

Assist in facilitating apprenticeships by working closely with employers and clients

### **Online Resources** (Ontario Ministry of Labour Training and Skills Development \*MLTSD)

### **Literacy Basic Skills** (Simcoe Muskoka Literacy Network)

Programs and services that support literacy basic skills (LBS)

### **The Learning Centres** \*located across the county (Simcoe County District School Board)

Help for high school students and adults to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (O.S.S.D)

Adult and continuing education, ESL, literacy and Personal Support Worker program

### **Soft Skills Solutions**© (Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board)

Free for participants. 25-30 hours of employability skills training taught by certified SSS instructors. Certificate issued upon completion. In-demand skills such as Workplace Communication, Teamwork, Personal Management, Problem Solving and Critical Thinking, Professional and Skills Advancement

# Inter-Sectoral Work Already Underway Across Simcoe County

## Education

### **Welcome Centre Immigrant Services, Mobile Unit** (Welcome Centre Immigration Services)

e-Learning language classes and enhanced language training

### **Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada \*LINC** (Bradford Immigrant and Community Services BICS)

This program offers free Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes to persons who are 18 years of age or older who are Permanent Residents, Convention Refugees or have 'approval in principle' to remain in Canada. You are not eligible for these classes if you are a Canadian citizen, Refugee Claimant, or a Temporary Resident (such as foreign student, foreign worker or visitor). Language assessment test must be taken before starting classes, done by appointment only, held at the BWG Library or at any CLARS Assessment Centres available in other areas □

### **Newcomer Services, Newcomer Settlement Program** (YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka)

English instruction: □

YMCA Immigrant Services ensures eligible newcomers to Canada receive appropriate English language training and settlement services including assessment of needs, orientation, information and referral, and labour market information in order to feel welcomed in the community and to participate socially, culturally and economically. These services are supported by Citizenship and Immigration Canada

### **Academic and Career Entrance Services**

College and Career Preparation, Literacy and Basic Skills Program (Georgian College, Barrie Campus)  
Adult Education Centre (Collège Boréal, Barrie)

### **FAST** \*Foundational Assessment for Skilled Trades (Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board)

Support for those who may want to strengthen their knowledge and understanding before entering apprenticeship training

## Access To Services

### **211** (Community Connections)

211 connects people to the right information and services, strengthen Simcoe County's health and human services, and helps residents become more engaged with their communities. 211 can be accessed, by calling, clicking (online), chatting (online) or texting

### **Each organization**

Access to services is currently addressed through individual organizations and entities and the respective services that they provide. The organizations, groups and initiatives mentioned throughout this Plan are a great place to start. For fast and focused assistance, connect with 211

# Appendix B

Local CSWB Survey

## South Simcoe CSWB Plan: Input on Priority Area(s)

### 1. South Simcoe CSWB Plan: Input on Priority Area(s)

The Town of Innisfil and the Town of Bradford West-Gwillimbury are partnering to develop a South Simcoe Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan.

Throughout the County of Simcoe, eight (8) community safety and well-being priority areas (areas of risk) have been identified. After a comprehensive prioritization process that was informed by current data, the South Simcoe CSWB Plan will focus on the following four (4) areas of risk:

1. Mental Health and Addictions
2. Attainable Housing
3. Education (with a focus on skilled trade)
4. Income Security

We are looking for your assistance in advising us on what you believe, or have experienced to be, any challenges, obstacles or gaps in addressing the above issues.

We welcome your thoughts or ideas on how best to create solutions to the above areas of risk.

#### NOTE:

The residents of South Simcoe will benefit from the local CSWB planning efforts and, indirectly, from the planning efforts throughout the County around the other areas of risk as there will be opportunities to leverage the collective wisdom and learning.

By participating in this survey, you agree to the collection of your answers and the use of information from your responses to inform community safety and well-being planning. This information may be shared with the County of Simcoe and Avail Consulting to support broader community safety and well-being planning. Your personal information will not be attached to your responses and only overall results, without individual identifying information, will be shared in the final South Simcoe CSWB Plan. The South Simcoe CSWB Plan will be made available to the general public and posted on the respective municipal websites.

You may exit the survey at any time if you change your mind about participation. Only completed surveys will be counted in the final results.

#### 1. Where do you live?

- Town of Innisfil
- Town of Bradford West-Gwillimbury

2. What do you believe, or have experienced to be, any challenges, obstacles or gaps in people accessing and receiving support for mental health and/or addiction issues? (Please select all that apply)

- Stigma (when those with mental health and/or addiction issues are viewed in a negative way)
- Poor integration between health and mental health services
- Not enough 24/7 services (inadequate after-hours services)
- Poverty (cannot afford to pay for certain for-fee services)
- Transportation (difficulty getting to and from appointments)
- Other (please specify)

3. Do you have any thoughts, recommendations or ideas that would help people access and receive support for mental health and/or addiction issues?

- No
- Yes (please specify)

4. Would you be open to new types of housing in your neighbourhood as a way to address the housing shortage? (e.g. Single Detached Dwelling Units, Additional Dwelling Units (Accessory), Townhomes, Semi-Detached Dwellings Units, Low Rise Apartments (six stories or less), Duplexes)

- Yes
- No

Comments

5. Do you have any thoughts, recommendations, or ideas that would help address the housing shortage?

- No
- Yes (please specify)

6. What do you believe, or have experienced to be, any challenges, obstacles or gaps in people training for and seeking employment in skilled trade positions in our area?

Note: skilled trades generally fall within 4 main categories: Construction, Transportation, Manufacturing, Service

- I do not know of any
- Challenges, obstacles or gaps:

7. Do you have any thoughts, recommendations, or ideas that would help people train for and secure employment in skilled trades in our area?

Note: skilled trades generally fall within 4 main categories: Construction, Transportation, Manufacturing, Service

- No
- Yes (please specify)

8. Have you had to choose between paying bills and buying food in the last 12 months?

- No
- Yes

9. According to the Ministry of the Solicitor General, CSWB is defined as:

*The ideal state of a sustainable community where everyone is safe, has a sense of belonging, opportunities to participate, and where individuals and families are able to meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression.*

Based on the above definition, if you had a question or concern regarding your personal needs or community needs, where would you look for the information?

- Phonebook
- Internet
- Newspaper
- Local social media pages
- I do not know where to look

Other (please specify)

10. 211 (Community Connection) is a free local directory that can help you find information on local resources (programs and services) in relation to many topics. You can access 211 online, by phone or via text. Were you aware of 211 before the completion of this survey?

- Yes
- No

11. What do you feel is the best method to spread awareness on the availability of 211, especially in relation to information on how to access services and supports for mental health, addictions, housing, job creation, or employment needs?

- Phone
- Local News / Radio
- Mailout Flyers
- Advertisements in local businesses or health care settings
- Local Social media pages
- An active 211 link on a variety of service provider websites

Other (please specify)

12. Do you have any other comments or suggestions that would help make your community a safer and more vibrant place to live?

- No
- Yes (please specify)



13. Do you want to be part of the solution? If you would like to participate in a future Community Safety and Well-Being Working Group, enter your email address here:

No, thank you.

Yes, I would like to be part of future CSWB planning. My email address is:

*Thank you for taking the time to respond to our survey.*

# End Notes

## Disclaimer

The purpose of this document is to outline information that came to the attention of the consultant during Phase 1 of the Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) planning process and to offer comments and recommendations for consideration by the South Simcoe Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee . The work has consisted of the inquiry, observation, comparison, and analysis of information provided by various Advisory Body member organizations and other third-party individuals and entities.

## Third Party Reliance

Outside of a responsibility to the County of Simcoe and the respective municipalities identified in this Plan, Karie Warnar and Avail Consulting Inc. do not undertake responsibility in any way from reliance placed by a third party on this document. Any reliance placed is that party's sole responsibility. Any third party accessing the document acknowledges that it may not place reliance on the results and finding contained in this document. The South Simcoe Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee, in collaboration and consultation with the Local CSWB Table, Steering Committee and Advisory Body are responsible for the decision to act on information that is contained in this document.

## Limitation

This document has been prepared by Karie Warnar, of Avail Consulting Inc. for use by the municipalities identified in this Plan. Such work does not constitute an audit. Accordingly, we express no opinion on financial matters, internal control, or other information. The author neither warrants nor represents that the information contained in this report is accurate, complete, sufficient or appropriate for use by any person or entity other than the South Simcoe Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee, and the author hereby expressly disclaim any and all responsibility or liability to any person or entity other than the South Simcoe Geographical Municipal Coordinating Committee in connection with their use of this report for future Phases of the CSWB planning process.

Phase 1 - Plan Development  
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Karie Warnar

