



City of Hamilton Report for Consideration

To: Mayor and Members
Emergency and Community Services Committees
Date: May 22, 2025
Report No: HSC25012
Subject/Title: 2025-2029 Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
Ward(s) Affected: (City Wide)

Recommendations

- 1) That the 2025-2029 Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan **BE APPROVED**;
- 2) That staff **BE DIRECTED** to submit the 2025-2029 CSWB Plan to the Ministry of the Solicitor General by July 1, 2025, as presented; and
- 3) That staff **BE DIRECTED** to report back on progress of the CSWB Plan to the Emergency and Community Services Committee in Q2 2026 and annually thereafter.

Key Facts

- Under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, municipalities must submit the revised plans to the Ministry of the Solicitor General by July 1, 2025, for work that covers 2025-2029.
- The revision process aligned with the provincial framework and was informed by extensive community engagement, a municipal scan, and supporting data analysis.
- The revision process confirmed the continued relevance of the six original priorities including: hate incidents, substance use, violence, housing and homelessness, mental health and stigma, and access to income.
- The revision process also considered emerging community issues which led to the identification of three integrated focus areas: system capacity, equitable access and service availability, and community safety.
- The System Advisory Leadership Table (SALT), co-chaired by the City of Hamilton and Hamilton Police Services, provided strategic guidance through the

review of engagement findings and data, with a commitment to strengthening its governance structure to support implementation going forward.

- Next steps include strengthening the governance model, building tools for data and decisions, and starting action planning with a community workshop in Fall 2025.

Financial Considerations

Not applicable

Background

Mandated under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, Ontario municipalities must develop and implement CSWB plans that focus on addressing root causes of community safety challenges. Hamilton's first CSWB Plan was approved by Council in June 2021 (HSC19032(b)) and identified six priorities: hate incidents, substance use, violence, housing and homelessness, mental health and stigma, and access to income.

Since the approval, significant progress has been made in advancing community safety and well-being through collaborative efforts across sectors. Highlights include:

- Launched Hamilton Community Assistance and Resource Engagement System (C.A.R.E.S.) Situation Table – The city's first multisectoral risk intervention table to support youth and families with coordinated services.
- Delivered Building Safer Communities Grant Program – Funded initiatives to prevent youth gun and gang violence.
- Advanced Gender-Based Violence Prevention – Declared Gender-Based Violence an epidemic and funded initiatives through the Woman Abuse Working Group.
- Completed Gender-Based Safety Audit – Partnered with YWCA Hamilton to identify safety improvements for women and gender-diverse individuals.
- Implemented Anti-Hate Initiatives – Launched community reporting tools and education campaigns to address hate and racism.
- Expanded Housing and Shelter Supports – Added over 270 shelter beds and launched a Tenant Support Team for eviction prevention.
- Strengthened Mental Health Coordination – Completed a system review and secured leadership to improve mental health response.

As of April 2024, municipalities were required to revise their CSWB plans to reflect evolving needs and submit an updated version to the Ministry of the Solicitor General by July 1, 2025. The revision process involved extensive engagement with community members, partners, and an analysis of local and national data trends to ensure the plan remains relevant and effective.

Analysis

The revision process followed a structured, data-driven approach incorporating various engagement and research methods:

- **Community Engagement:** Conversations with action tables, service providers, community agencies, and the public. A public survey through Engage Hamilton gathered broad feedback from nearly 1,000 residents, while targeted, agency-led engagement was conducted with equity-deserving groups and individuals with lived experience. Creative activities also captured youth perspectives on safety and belonging.
- **Asset Map:** Identified City-led and community-led strategies, networks, and planning tables that support safety and well-being outcomes, highlighting opportunities to strengthen alignment, coordination, and collective impact across systems.
- **Municipal Scan:** Reviewed CSWB Plans from Ottawa, Windsor, Toronto, York Region, and Edmonton to identify best practices, emerging trends, and lessons learned - particularly around governance models, funding sources, and implementation approaches.
- **Data Strategy:** The City collaborated with Muflehun, a Public Safety Canada-funded data resource centre, to analyze Hamilton's risk factors, service gaps, and demographic trends to ensure an evidence-based approach to priority setting. This work was further supported by local data sources, including Hamilton's Community Health Status Report 2024, developed by Hamilton Public Health Services.
- **System Advisory Leadership Table Review:** The System Advisory Leadership Table (SALT), comprised of representatives from key sectors including health, education, social services, policing, and housing, reviewed engagement findings and shaped the strategic direction of the revised plan.

What We Heard, Learned, and Insights:

Engagement and data review confirm that all six priorities – hate incidents, substance use, violence, housing and homelessness, mental health and stigma, and access to income – remain relevant, with increased urgency and stronger connections. Emerging concerns such as social isolation, food insecurity, encampments, and public safety were also identified. Voices from people with lived experience and service providers emphasized the need for stronger coordination, more equitable access to services, and better integration between City-led and community-driven efforts. These insights directly informed the focus areas outlined below:

1. **System Capacity** – Strengthening alignment within the City of Hamilton and across community-led strategies to improve coordination, reduce duplication, and mobilize shared resources more effectively.
2. **Equitable Access and Availability to Services** – Reducing barriers to critical services such as housing, food insecurity mental health support, and crisis intervention.

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3. **Community Safety** – Addressing issues related to violence, discrimination, and social cohesion to foster inclusive, safe public spaces.

Capacity and Resource Challenges

The need in the community is greater than the available resources, and there is no provincial funding to support the implementation of this plan. While we appreciate the Public Safety Canada funding (ending March 2026), it's important to work together to identify available resources, as there will be no more funding.

The CSWB staff team currently operates with limited permanent staffing (0.5 FTE Manager and 1.0 FTE Senior Project Manager), focusing on core functions:

- Co-chairing and supporting the CSWB System Advisory Leadership Table
- Leading 1–2 multi-sector initiatives each year, as directed by Council and the Leadership Table
- Reporting annually to Council and meeting provincial requirements
- Participating in community tables related to CSWB priorities.

The current work is primarily funded by Public Safety Canada, which has helped launch initiatives like Hamilton's first multi-year grant program, the Hamilton C.A.R.E.S. Situation Table, and system-wide training in anti-oppression and trauma-informed care.

Looking ahead, without ongoing funding or more staff, the team's ability to maintain momentum, meet reporting needs, and support gender-based violence and hate prevention initiatives will be impacted.

Next Steps – Action Planning:

After submitting the 2025-2029 CSWB Plan to the Ministry of the Solicitor General, an action planning workshop will be held in Fall 2025. The workshop will focus on setting clear actions, performance measures, and strategies to support the plan's three focus areas. The team is exploring partnerships to align the workshop with other community initiatives, such as Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. The process will be guided by collaboration across sectors. Staff will report back on progress of the 2025-2029 CSWB Plan to the Emergency and Community Services Committee in Q2 2026 and annually thereafter.

Alternatives

Increased investment would strengthen multi-sector collaboration, enhance community engagement, and accelerate action across priority areas, including gender-based violence and hate response.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

The revised CSWB Plan directly supports several 2022–2026 Council Strategic Priorities by addressing root causes of social issues, improving system coordination, and strengthening community well-being:

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- **Safe & Thriving Neighborhoods:** The Plan supports the creation of safer, more inclusive communities by addressing core social determinants such as housing, mental health, substance use, and income security. Through coordinated strategies and system-wide collaboration, it aims to reduce violence, hate incidents, and social isolation while fostering community belonging and public safety in shared spaces.
 - **Responsiveness & Transparency:** The Plan prioritizes inclusive engagement and transparent decision-making. It reflects insights gathered from residents, community organizations, and equity-deserving groups through surveys, partner-led consultations, and creative engagement with children. It also sets the foundation for clear governance and public reporting structures to track progress, demonstrate accountability, and adapt strategies in response to evolving needs.
 - **Sustainable Economic & Ecological Development:** The CSWB Plan promotes long-term system transformation by advocating for collaborative resource planning, equity-based funding, and strategic alignment of City and community initiatives. This includes supporting sustainable service delivery models and reducing fragmentation in the human services system, which contributes to overall economic resilience and reduced strain on emergency and crisis response systems.

Previous Reports Submitted

- HSC19032(a) Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Approval 2021
- HSC23015 Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Annual Report 2023
- HSC24015 Community Safety and Well-Being Annual Report May 2024
- HSC24050 Community Safety and Well-Being Progress Report December 2024

Consultation

The 2025-2029 CSWB Plan was developed in consultation with the following internal and external partners:

City of Hamilton Departments and Divisions	Healthy and Safe Communities Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Relations Division • Housing Services Division • Public Health Services Division • Children's and Community Services Division • Transit (HSR) Division • Economic Development Division • Housing Secretariat Division
Provincial and Federal Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Solicitor General • Public Safety Canada

Community Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way Halton and Hamilton • Hamilton Police Services • BGC Hamilton-Halton • Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara • City School by Mohawk College • Eva Rothwell Centre • Good Shepherd Centres • Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction • Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre • Interval House of Hamilton • Mishka Social Services • Neighbour to Neighbour Centre • Niwasa Kendaaswin Teg • YWCA Hamilton
Committees and Networks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamilton's Child and Youth Network • Age Friendly Collaborative • Building Safer Communities Collaborative • Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council • Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction • HamOnt Youth Steering Committee
Committees and Networks (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Homelessness Action Plan • Seniors at Risk Collaborative • Street Youth Planning Collaborative • Frontline Advisory Committee • Woman Abuse Working Group

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: 2025-2029 Hamilton's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

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