



Hamilton

# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	December 5, 2024
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Community Safety and Well-Being Progress Report (HSC24050)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Rachelle Ihekwoaba 905-978-2680
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## COUNCIL DIRECTION

N/A

## INFORMATION

The purpose of this information report is to provide a progress report of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (“the Plan”), current resourcing and the 2025 Plan Revision currently under way. The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is provincially legislated for municipalities across Ontario and aims to ensure residents feel safe, have a sense of belonging and can meet their needs for education, healthcare, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression. In Hamilton, the Plan is guided by the System Leadership Table comprised of partners from the health, social service, and public safety sectors. The table is co-chaired by the City of Hamilton and Hamilton Police Services.

## Key Milestones and Developments

In June 2021, Hamilton City Council approved the first Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (HSC19032(a)), committing 1 FTE Senior Project Manager in resourcing to oversee its implementation. The Plan was developed during the pandemic.

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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In November 2022, staff led a critical re-set post-pandemic, re-engaged and expanded membership for the System Leadership Table and developed an implementation plan. A Community Partner Workshop informed the 2023-24 Community Safety and Well-Being Implementation Plan, which focuses on six key initiatives:

- Establish a Situation Table
- Advance community-driven solutions
- Expand affordable housing and homelessness supports
- Advocate for living wages and basic income
- Develop a Community Safety and Well-Being data strategy

The work was largely focused on convening community partners and stakeholders to improve coordination and collaboration, leverage existing efforts and report progress on shared goals.

In August 2022, Hamilton received approval for \$3.98 million from Public Safety Canada's Building Safer Communities Fund (HSC22041), over three years, providing critical and welcome resources to support Hamilton's efforts to prevent youth involvement in gun and gang violence. The Building Safer Communities Multi-Year Plan (HSC23033) aligns with many of the goals of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and has provided critical resources. The federal funding has provided financial support for important community-led initiatives, including a grant program to foster youth-community connections, support youth exiting gangs, and improve system coordination; as well as the Gender Based Safety Audits. In addition to funding community organizations to lead key initiatives, the federal funding enabled the City to onboard two temporary project managers in May 2024 to support prevention focused initiatives until November 2025 and March 2026 respectively. To resource growing initiatives, internal one-time funding has been used in 2024 to hire another Senior Project Manager to further support the Plan. This role is available temporarily from January to December 2024.

The four Project Managers form the backbone of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The Manager of Community Strategies, within the Children's and Community Services Division, provides part time oversight to the Plan and its team, in addition to overseeing the Early Years Community Plan and Youth Strategy teams. Integrating these strategies has strengthened coordination, fostered collaboration, and reduced overlap among partners working to address community needs.

### **Current Focus and Initiatives**

The staff team plays a pivotal role as the backbone support for Hamilton's Plan. The team's responsibilities include mobilizing resources, fostering partnerships, facilitating cross-sectoral discussions, and ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned in their efforts to achieve shared goals. The staff team serves as the central coordination point for

these efforts, ensuring that partner organizations' activities are aligned, overseeing data collection and analysis to track progress, and managing funding opportunities to maximize the effective use of resources. This collaborative approach is critical for achieving sustainable outcomes in community safety and well-being.

Central to the Plan's implementation is the leadership provided through the Community Safety and Well-Being System Leadership Table, which meets bi-monthly to provide strategic direction and guidance. Guided by this table, the staff team has successfully delivered Hamilton's first multi-year grant program through the Building Safer Communities Fund. This program funds nine initiatives designed to address the root causes of gun and gang violence in Hamilton. The team oversees contract management, financial reporting, evaluation, training and system coordination for the sector.

The System Leadership Table has also supported the development of Hamilton's first Situation Table (HSC24006). Facilitated by the staff team, partners identified critical gaps in Hamilton and determined the focus area to be children aged 8-14 years and their families. The Situation Table brings together nearly 20 partners on a weekly basis to provide wraparound services to children and families at heightened risk. This initiative is one of the key outcomes of the Plan and represents a major step forward in coordinated, community-driven service delivery.

The staff team is also working on developing a phased data strategy in partnership with Muflehun<sup>1</sup> and 25 community partners. This strategy will be instrumental in tracking progress in the six priority areas identified in the Plan and will play a central role in informing the next iteration of the plan. By using data to evaluate outcomes and inform decision-making, the team aims to ensure that the Plan remains responsive to the evolving needs of the community.

Community Safety and Well-Being is embarking on new initiatives aimed at supporting community-driven solutions, such as Gender-Based Safety Audits. These audits empower community members to lead the process while the staff team works collaboratively with multiple City of Hamilton departments to plan, coordinate, and implement the initiative. This approach ensures that community voices are central to identifying safety concerns and crafting effective solutions. In addition, there is a renewed focus on strengthening contract management to better align funding agreements with Community Safety and Well-Being priorities and outcomes. This includes strategic partnerships with organizations such as Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre, and Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, ensuring that funding is directed toward initiatives that address the city's most pressing social and safety needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Muflehun is a resource centre that supports the development of data-driven program development. Funded Public Safety Canada, Muflehun is leading various data-driven projects across Canada to address various safety concerns.

In May 2024, the City's Hate Prevention and Mitigation Initiative transitioned to the Community Strategies team ensuring it aligns with the broader objectives of the Plan. This work aims to reduce hate and intolerance within the community and further enhance the city's commitment to inclusion and safety for all residents. In this role, the staff team is also responsible for coordinating response to hate incidents across City departments and with community partners.

Staff have also worked to support motions, including work with the Women's Abuse Working Group and recommendations to support the gender-based violence sector, and the Toronto Community Crisis Service Model, as well as engaged community stakeholders in provincial and federal funding applications, including Ontario STANDS, and the Public Safety Canada grant.

The staff team's current efforts are also focused on a variety of interconnected priorities that are essential to the ongoing success of the plan. A key area of focus is building and strengthening relationships with community partners, and as such, the staff team is actively engaged in multiple community tables to foster collaboration and ensure alignment across different sectors. More specifically, the staff team partners with a wide range of committees, including the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council, Women's Abuse Working Group, Anti-Hate Coalition, and Mohawk College Challenge 2025. Other key groups involved are Hamilton's Child & Youth Network, the Greater Hamilton Health Network Partnership Council, and the Mental Health & Addictions Secretariat. Additionally, the staff team is engaged in internal committees such as the Internal Downtown West Harbour Coordination Committee and the Community Strategies and Initiatives Table. Lastly, the team is the lead support to Community Safety and Well-Being work groups such as Data Strategy, Hamilton C.A.R.E.S. Situation Table, and the Building Safer Communities Collaborative. These committees and partnerships work collaboratively to address the diverse needs of the community and ensure effective coordination across strategies.

### **Plan Revision through Data and Community Insights**

In April 2024, the legislative framework governing Community Safety and Well-Being plans in Ontario was updated, requiring municipalities to submit revised plans by July 1, 2025. This revision presents an opportunity for the City to further refine the plan and shape future priorities and initiatives. The staff team is therefore not only focused on immediate outcomes but also on positioning Hamilton's Plan for long-term success and sustainability.

The Plan Revision involves a multi-phased approach to ensure it is evidence-based, inclusive, and responsive to community needs. A Municipal Scan and Asset Map are being developed to learn from other municipalities and identify local community strengths. A Data Strategy working group, comprised of senior leadership

representatives, is reviewing data on Hamilton's risk and protective factors to inform the revised plan. Community engagement, running from June to December 2024, will involve targeted outreach to underserved groups, general public engagement, and focus group discussions with stakeholders. In February 2025, data from both the engagement process and data strategy will be analyzed and validated to refine priorities and inform governance. The process will culminate in a final report in May 2025, summarizing findings and providing actionable recommendations to address identified community priorities.

The staff team continues to work with the community to understand and prioritize new requests to address growing community needs through the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and will need to prioritize current commitments rather than taking on new work until the Plan revision is complete and goals can be matched to available resources. If a change in direction results from the revision, which moves the Plan from its current focus of coordinating and collaboration to one of implementing initiatives and addressing local issues, additional permanent resources will be required to maintain momentum and continue aligning priorities and achieve outcomes. In Q1 2025, a communications update will be provided to Council highlighting early analysis based on data and community engagement efforts. The System Leadership Table will provide a full report back to Council in Q2 2025 on the recommended revisions to the plan and resources required in the next phase.

### **Conclusion**

As Hamilton's Plan progresses, it is crucial to have the right resources in place to sustain its success. The Community Safety and Well-Being staff team provides essential coordination, ensuring community-driven solutions are integrated and progress is monitored.

The revised Plan, due in July 2025, will evaluate the current strategy and guide future resource allocation. In the meantime, continued support from Council and the community is appreciated and vital to keep Hamilton's commitment to safety and well-being on track.

### **APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

None