

COVER LETTER: FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The text of this Draft Plan has been prepared for consideration by the City of Barrie's Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee.

Once approved by the Advisory Committee, this text will be proofed for typos, omissions, and grammatical errors, and then laid out by a designer. This cover letter will also be removed.

Committee Members should note that:

Language in Action 5 (social service campus) may be adjusted once partners are confirmed

Cosmetic changes may be made to Actions 6 (Mental Health Collaborations) , 7 (Volunteering), and 11 (Trauma-Informed Trainings)

Modest adjustments may also be made to Action 13 (homelessness).

This Draft Plan is based on Actions originally proposed by the Barrie Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Working Group in early 2020.

Working Group Members Represent:

- Barrie Food Bank
- Barrie Native Friendship Centre
- Barrie Police Service
- David Busby Centre
- Canadian Mental Health Association, Simcoe County
- Downtown Barrie Business Association
- Empower Simcoe
- Georgian College
- Loft Community Services
- Mackenzie Health
- Salvation Army Bayside Mission Centre
- Simcoe County District School Board
- Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board

- Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions

This Draft Plan has also been informed by significant consultation with community members and organizational representatives.

This Draft Plan was prepared by consultants from MASS LBP, a firm that specializes in public engagement and collaborative policy development. MASS LBP also facilitated the activities of the Working Group. This process was overseen by the Barrie Police Service.

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OUR SHARED PLAN FOR A SAFER BARRIE

THE CITY OF BARRIE'S FIRST COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING PLAN 2021-2024

[[Section Break]]

[Introductory Letters, as appropriate]

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Shared Plan for a Safer Barrie involves 15 new actions, endorsed by City Council and led by a variety of local organizations, that will be launched over the next four years.

These new actions were chosen because they respond to major factors that undermine safety and well-being in Barrie, and because local organizations committed to work together and with the City of Barrie to make them a reality.

Each action builds off the many services and initiatives that already make Barrie a safe and thriving community, and each can be achieved without significant new resources.

The 15 actions address a diverse set of issues that underpin community safety and wellbeing in Barrie.

Actions grouped under the Plan's *Working Together* theme facilitate improved coordination and collaboration amongst the many organizations who support safety and well-being in our city: an annual community safety event will draw together all those involved to assess progress, the *Collaborate Barrie* Situation Table will be refreshed, a Community Justice Centre and a Community Service Campus will be explored, and new police-mental health collaborations will be advanced.

Actions grouped under the Plan's *Connected Communities* theme focus on strengthening resident-to-resident relationships. By encouraging greater volunteerism and more inclusive community practices, these actions will give all Barrie residents a way to help build a city that is safe, welcoming, and resilient.

Actions grouped under the Plan's *Safety is for Everyone* theme focus on the needs of vulnerable residents. This involves convening the Barrie Anti- Racism Taskforce, making further efforts to reduce the toll of drug-related harms, overdoses, and deaths; helping services in Barrie welcome and respond to the needs of those who have been traumatized in the past; and improving coordination of efforts related to affordable housing and homelessness.

Finally, the Plan's *Prepared and Protected* theme focuses on emerging risks — specifically pandemics, which are now front-of-mind given the

many harms associated with the recent spread of COVID-19 — as well as online risks, which are growing and constantly changing.

Over the course of 2020, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, many have contributed their time to help identify, shape, and plan out how to implement these actions. The City is grateful for their guidance and commitment to building a safe and thriving Barrie for all.

From now on, the City of Barrie will have an official Community Safety and Well-Being Plan in place. In four years time, the City will again work with partners to develop a new Plan that responds to emerging issues and carries forward our shared progress.

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OUR SHARED PLAN FOR A SAFER BARRIE

A Safer Barrie by Working Together

1. The City of Barrie and Barrie Police Service will work with partners to launch an Annual Community Safety and Well-Being Forum to review our progress and strengthen working relationships
2. The signatories of the new Barrie Health Accord will undertake a community-wide planning process that will lead to coordinated and sustainable investments in improving determinants of health
3. The Barrie Police Service and partners will strengthen the 'Collaborate Barrie' Situation Table as a way to improve responses to situations where an individual is at significant risk of harm
4. Barrie Police Service will work with partners to develop a proposal and build community support for a community justice centre in Barrie
5. The Barrie Police Service and partners will work towards creating a community service campus where individuals can access a range of health and social services from multiple providers
6. The Barrie Police Service and CMHA Simcoe County will work together to identify and implement actions that increase access to the mental health services that have the greatest impact on community safety

Connected Communities are Safe Communities

7. Barrie Public Library and partners will strengthen community by spearheading a coordinated effort to increase the number of active volunteers in Barrie
8. Georgian College and partners will launch a Barrie Inclusion Network that helps coordinates efforts to involve every resident in creating a safe and welcoming Barrie

Safety is for Everyone

9. The Barrie Mayor's Office and the Barrie Police Service will convene the Barrie Anti-Racism Taskforce, which will help guide anti-racism action throughout Barrie
10. Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit will work with partners in Barrie to reduce harms from drug use by increasing access to naloxone,

advancing plans for other harm reduction services, and creating an updated Simcoe Muskoka Drug Strategy

11. The Women and Children's Shelter of Barrie, Barrie Public Library, and partners will expand training about how to provide trauma-informed services
12. The City of Barrie will consult CSWB Plan partners about how best to improve community safety when the City updates the 10-year Affordable Housing Strategy.
13. The County of Simcoe and the City of Barrie will help advance collective action to address homelessness in Barrie and surrounding areas by reviewing processes for information sharing, consultation, priority setting, and coordination amongst relevant partners from multiple sectors.

Prepared and Protected

14. Barrie Police Service and partners will work to protect at-risk residents from online risks and phone scams.
15. The City of Barrie and partners will develop an updated City of Barrie Pandemic Plan so that organizations in Barrie are well prepared to work together in the event of a future pandemic.

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ACTION PARTNERS

15 organizations have committed to help implement one or more of the Plan's 15 Actions. Others are welcome and encouraged to get involved — implementing this Plan will take many hands.

Barrie Association of Volunteer Administrators

Barrie Native Friendship Centre

Barrie Police Service

Barrie Probation and Parole Services

Barrie Public Library

Canadian Mental Health Association Simcoe County

City of Barrie

County of Simcoe

Downtown Barrie Business Association

Georgian College

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre

Salvation Army Barrie Bayside Mission Centre

Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Women and Children's Shelter of Barrie

+ You! Interested in supporting one or more of the Plan's 15 Actions? Contact the lead organization for more information.

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CONTRIBUTORS TO THE PLAN

Many contributed their time and expertise to shaping this plan.

The City of Barrie Community Safety and Well-Being Committee oversaw the development of this Plan. The members were:

- Chief Kimberly Greenwood, Barrie Police
- Councillor Gary Harvey, Barrie City Council
- Councillor Natalie Harris, Barrie City Council
- Deputy Chief Ken Weatherill, Barrie Police
- Dr. Jim Shaver & Dr. Brain Irving - Royal Victoria Hospital
- Gary Ferguson, Barrie Police Services Board
- John Clarke, Children, Youth, and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County
- Meaghan Chambers - Elizabeth Fry Society Youth Justice
- Mia Brown, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Roman Calvano, Georgian College
- Sara Peddle, Simcoe County Alliance To End Homelessness (SCATEH)

The vision for these 15 Actions was shaped by a number of other organizations, whose representatives participated in one or more of the eight small group meetings held in Winter 2020, and in subsequent interviews throughout 2020. These organizations include:

- Alzheimer's Society of Simcoe Muskoka
- Barrie Association of Volunteer Administrators
- Barrie Community Health Links
- Barrie and District Association of Realtors
- Barrie Food Bank
- Barrie Families Unite
- Barrie Native Friendship Centre
- Barrie Police Service
- Barrie Probation and Parole Services
- Barrie Public Library
- David Busby Centre
- Canadian Association of Retired Persons, Simcoe County
- Canadian Mental Health Association Simcoe County
- Checkered Door/Careers for Inclusion
- County of Simcoe, 911 Emergency Planning
- County of Simcoe, Local Immigration Partnership
- County of Simcoe, Social & Community Services
- Downtown Barrie Business Association
- Elizabeth Fry Centre of Simcoe Muskoka
- Empower Simcoe
- Ethnic Mosaic Alliance
- Georgian College
- Gilbert Centre
- Hospice Simcoe
- John Howard Society of Simcoe Muskoka
- Loft Community Services
- Mackenzie Health
- Prevention of Senior Abuse Network

- Salvation Army Barrie
Bayside Mission Centre
- Simcoe County Alliance to
End Homelessness
- Simcoe County Catholic
District School Board
- Simcoe County District
School Board
- Simcoe Muskoka District
Health Unit
- Simcoe Muskoka Family
Connexions
- Simcoe Terrace
- Solutions Ink
- United Way Simcoe
Muskoka
- Women and Children's
Shelter of Barrie
- YMCA Simcoe Muskoka

In addition, over 250 people who live and/or work in Barrie completed an online survey in late 2019 that helped identify community safety and well-being priorities, and collected many ideas that helped shape this plan.

Thank you to everyone who supported the development of this Plan.

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PURPOSE AND PROCESS

Creating Barrie's First Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

What is a Community Safety and Well-being Plan? Why did Barrie develop one?

Community Safety and Well-being Plans are what result when municipalities, police, local organizations, and residents discuss and then commit to working together in new ways in order to create a safer, healthier city.

The Ontario Government now requires municipalities to prepare and adopt Community Safety and Well-Being Plans. Barrie will now develop and adopt such a plan every four years.

The Plan sets out the results of conversations amongst the City of Barrie, the Barrie Police, local organizations, and residents themselves. The Plan outlines what new actions will be launched over the next four years, and how we expect these actions to make Barrie even safer.

When 2025 approaches, the City of Barrie will begin a new round of community safety and well-being conversations, in order to assess progress, identify priorities, and develop new initiatives.

What is meant by community safety and well-being?

A safe community is one where harms to its members are prevented whenever possible, and where harms that cannot be prevented are reduced and healed as effectively as possible.

Safety and well-being are interlinked. When people are well, they are more able to prevent, reduce, and heal from harms. And when communities are safe, it is easier for people in them to thrive.

What are different approaches to improving community safety and well-being?

Safety and well-being can be improved in a variety of ways, and everyone can play a role.

Broadly, there are four approaches. All four approaches are necessary, and must be balanced appropriately. Developing a Community Safety and Well-being Plan is an opportunity to identify whether there are ways to rebalance these four approaches in order to ultimately create a safer and healthier community.

Incident response focuses on what happens when an urgent incident occurs — and often involves police, fire, emergency medical services, child welfare, or others who work to contain and reduce the harm from that incident.

Risk intervention focuses on stopping a harm from occurring, right before it happens. Risk intervention often involves connecting an individual who is at an elevated risk of harming themselves or others with an intensive health or social service that works to quickly stabilize the situation.

Harm Prevention involves any policy, program, or initiative that identifies an underlying risk that contributes to harm in the community, and seeks to address that underlying risk in order to prevent or reduce that harm. For example: speed limits and seat belts are a harm prevention tool focused on the risks of motor vehicle accidents; vaccines are a harm prevention tool focused on the risks of infectious diseases; and emergency shelters are a harm prevention service focused on the risks of homelessness.

Social Development involves improving people's general social conditions so that individuals, families, and communities are better equipped to address risks and avoid harms. Social development builds up strong protective factors that help keep people safe - such as good health, education, stable housing, sufficient income, a sense of purpose, and a strong social network. Social development is thus a broad category of institutions, policies, programs, and initiatives that contribute to human well-being but do not fall into the first three approaches.

How was Barrie's first Community Safety and Well-being Plan developed?

1. Summer 2019: Council appoints Community Safety and Well-being Committee.
2. Fall 2019: 250 residents complete Community Safety and Well-being survey posted on City of Barrie website.
3. Winter 2020: Over 60 individuals — including committee members, representatives from a broad cross section of local organizations, and local community members — attend at least one of eight small group meetings to help identify risk factors and develop draft actions for the CSWB Plan.
4. Spring 2020: Process delayed by COVID-19 public health emergency.
5. Summer 2020: Draft Actions reviewed and tentatively endorsed by Community Safety and Well-being Committee.
6. Summer 2020: Organizations approached to lead and support the implementation of each action. 15 Plan Partners are identified for 15 Actions.
7. Summer & Fall 2020: Plan partners refine actions and clarify anticipated outcomes.
8. Fall 2020: Community Safety and Well-being Plan drafted
9. Fall 2020: Community Safety and Well-being Plan approved by Committee and sent to City Council
10. Winter 2021: Community Safety and Well-being Plan approved by City Council (*Anticipated*)

[Make a timeline visual out of the above]

For a list of those involved, see pages [x-x].

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BARRIE TODAY

Today, Barrie is a vibrant, safe and growing city.

Over the last 30 years, Barrie's population has more than doubled, from near 60,000 in the early 1990s to a population of approximately 150,000 people today. By 2031, Barrie's population is anticipated to reach 210,000, and to top 250,000 by 2041.

Crime in Barrie is low. Out of Canada's 35 major metropolitan areas, Barrie has the fifth lowest Crime Severity Index¹ — only Québec City, Sherbrooke, Saguenay, and Trois-Rivières are safer from crime.

Economically, Barrie is on-par, if not slightly better off, than the Ontario average. In 2016, median after tax-income for a household in Barrie was 68,019, slightly higher than the Ontario average of \$65,285. 12.2% of households in Barrie were living in poverty as measured by the after-tax low income measure — slightly less than the Ontario average of 14.4%

Demographically, Barrie has a significantly smaller proportion of racialized people when compared to Ontario as whole, as well as a smaller proportion of people born outside Canada. In 2016, 10% of Barrie residents were racialized and 13% were born outside Canada, while 30% of Ontario's population is made up of racialized residents and 29% are immigrants. Nearly 4% of Barrie's residents identify as Indigenous, a higher proportion than the 3% for Ontario as a whole. And 13% of Barrie's residents were born outside of Canada.

Barrie residents benefit from a thriving business community and a range of local health, social, and community services.

Despite Barrie's many successes, there exist conditions in our city that contribute to poorer community safety and well-being and put residents at greater risk of harm. Addressing the most serious of these risk factors is the focus of Barrie's Community Safety and Well-being Plan.

¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/201029/t003a-eng.htm>

Risk Factors in Barrie

Risk factors are conditions that contribute to poorer community safety and well-being — they are conditions that put people at greater risk of harm. By identifying important risk factors in Barrie, we were able to better focus the development of actions for Barrie's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

In order to identify important risk factors for Barrie, a range of statistics were gathered and presented to the Community Safety and Well-Being Committee as well as representatives of a range of local organizations.

Public input was also gathered via an online survey.

Building from the statistics and public input gathered, local organizations and members of the Community Safety and Well-Being Committee discussed, identified, and refined the final set of risk factors presented here.

The risk factors that emerged from these conversations have been grouped into four categories: fragile conditions, services under stress, holding together, emerging threats

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IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING RISK FACTORS

FRAGILE CONDITIONS

Opioid use & other addictions

Mental illness

Homelessness

Lack of appropriate affordable housing

Poverty and food insecurity

Low paid and precarious employment

Lived experience of trauma

SERVICES UNDER STRESS

Fragmented services

Funding issues

Caregiver and service provider burnout

Working in silos

HOLDING TOGETHER

Social isolation

Weak community bonds

Discrimination

Limited public transit and mobility options

EMERGING THREATS

Pandemics

Youth vaping

Vulnerability to online risks and financial scams

Human trafficking and organized crime

Risk Factor are described on pages [x-x]

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[SIDEBAR PAGE] COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

OVERALL, WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING PRIORITIES IN BARRIE?

1. Crime Prevention
2. Housing and Homelessness
3. Mental Health
4. Substance misuse and addictions
5. Personal and overall community security and safety
6. Affordable Housing
7. Poverty, income, & food security
8. Access to services & coordination between services
9. Traffic safety & injury prevention
10. human trafficking
11. Support for at risk youth
12. Community belonging, racism, and homophobia
13. Opportunities for employment and employment skills development
14. Aging in Place & Age Friendly Initiatives
15. Healthy childhood development
16. Accessibility for persons with disabilities
17. Other

From 261 responses where each respondent was able to select up to 5 priorities from a list of options. Some survey options have been combined for ease of review.

WHAT DOES COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING MEAN TO YOU?

- A community that provides a safe and healthy environment for people of all ages
- Having access to a reliable support network
- Feeling safe at all times during the day and night, including downtown
- Fair and equal access to all services
- Being able to participate in the community without fear
- City working together with community partners to improve quality of life
- Low crime rates
- Higher police presence

Summary of key themes from 198 open-text responses

WHAT IDEAS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING PLAN TO ENHANCE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING IN BARRIE?

- Organizations working together not in silos
- Breaking down barriers and stigmas
- Provide proper support for vulnerable populations
- Improving the downtown image
- Improve solutions for substance abuse issues
- More advisory groups
- Making support services more accessible

Summary of key themes from 182 open-text responses to online survey

*Online survey was open to the public on Barrie.ca from 1 October 2019 to 6 March 2020
[Section Break]*

FRAGILE CONDITIONS

Certain basic life circumstances put particular Barrie residents at greater risk of avoidable harm, and sometimes contribute to situations where individuals risk the safety and well-being of others. Seven risk factors have been categorized as ‘fragile conditions’.

Opioid use and other addictions

Addiction is among the most serious causes of avoidable harm in Barrie. Unsafe opioid use is particularly dangerous. Despite the efforts of many, Barrie residents continue to die from opioids at twice the rate as in the rest of Ontario. 2020 is on track to set new records for opioid deaths in Simcoe Muskoka — in the first two-thirds of the year, there were almost as many opioid deaths as in all of 2019, and more than in all of 2018. Substance abuse also contributes to safety concerns after bars close in the downtown core, and to continued incidence of traffic offences related to driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

Mental illness

In Barrie, as in other communities across Canada, those living with severe, persistent and unstable mental health issues are sometimes unable to access sufficient and appropriate services and supports. Increased demand for services are in part a result of increased awareness and reduced stigma concerning mental illness. While most seeking help can get access to some level of service relatively quickly, underfunding means many are not able to receive the right level of care in the right place. As a consequence of a lack of sufficient and appropriate services and supports, people’s wellbeing is compromised and their overall functioning declines, and in some instances their behaviours contribute to situations that trigger police intervention and reduce community safety for themselves or others. In this way, insufficient mental health care contributes to reduced individual well-being and reduced community safety in Barrie.

Homelessness

Being homeless puts people at high risk of harm, undermines their individual well-being, and reduces community safety. Homelessness significantly increases a person’s risk of dying, makes it difficult to maintain their physical health, exacerbates social isolation, makes it incredibly difficult to address mental illness and addictions, and contributes to contact with the criminal justice system. Data gathered in 2018 suggests there are over 300 people living in homelessness at

any one time in Barrie - some sleeping in one of Barrie's 185 homeless shelter beds; others on the streets. Barrie's Indigenous population is particularly hard-hit by homelessness. Nearly one in three of Barrie's homeless are Indigenous, meaning that Indigenous people are eight times more likely to be homeless than the average resident. COVID-19 has accentuated these challenges further. Already inadequate emergency shelter capacity has had to be significantly reduced in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While the conversion of motels into temporary accommodations, along with other new initiatives, have created additional capacity, demand continues to outstrip supply. Sufficient affordable transitional and supportive housing is essential part of the solution to homelessness. This type of housing provides the stability and support necessary to address the underlying needs of the chronically homeless.

Lack of Appropriate Affordable Housing

Access to appropriate affordable housing is fundamental to individual, family, and community well-being, and is an important contributor to long-term community safety. High housing costs means those on low incomes are forced to cut back their spending on the essentials that contribute to their family's long-term health and well-being. Long work hours required to cover housing costs means less time to care for children and other dependents. Children growing up in unstable housing are less likely to succeed in school and more likely to have chronic health conditions. Stress can contribute to increased mental illness and substance use. Rising housing costs in Barrie and surrounding areas have made housing increasingly unaffordable for those living on low incomes. This has contributed to a growing waitlist for social housing. In 2018, the centralized waitlist for Simcoe County's 2,882 rent-geared-to-income units grew 23% to 3,907 households. In the same year, only 182 households were successfully housed from this waitlist.

Poverty and food insecurity

When someone has sufficient income to cover essentials like safe housing and healthy food, that individual is much more likely to be able to stay safe and well, and to be able to help create a safer environment for their family and neighbours. Unfortunately, poverty is growing in Barrie: from 2006-2016, there was a 45% increase in poverty. By 2016, 12% of residents were low-income.² Food insecurity appears to be increasing

²As calculated by the after-tax low income measure 2016 Statistics Canada. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/pag>

as well. Pre-pandemic, the Barrie Food Bank has been seeing growing levels of need. While in the past it has served about 33,000 people per year, that number increased in 2019 to 36,000. Usage increased again early in the pandemic, and then fell following the introduction of the temporary Canadian Emergency Response Benefit.

Low paid and precarious employment

A stable job that pays a sufficient income is an important way to remain out of poverty and be able to cover the cost of essentials like safe housing and healthy food. While minimum wage as of September 2020 is \$14.25/hour, a living wage for Simcoe County has been calculated at \$18/hour³. In Ontario, more than 15% of workers are paid minimum wage⁴ — suggesting a significant proportion of workers in Barrie earn less than a living wage. And while there is no official definition of precarious employment, there is general agreement that this type of work is on the rise, leaving more and more workers without benefits and at high risk of significant and unpredictable drops in their income.

Lived experience of trauma

Many of Barrie's most marginalized individuals have personal and family histories that involve significant trauma, such as incidences of intimate partner violence or child abuse. Past traumas, left untreated, contribute to increased risk of harm for those who have experienced it. Trauma can affect our ability to regulate emotions and navigate relationships, long into the future. People carrying trauma can often feel shame, helplessness, powerlessness and intense fear. Experiences of trauma can intensify or lead to the use of substances as a means to cope with that trauma. Mental health difficulties can worsen. And trauma may influence an individual's behavior towards people in their immediate circle, first responders, service providers, and general bystanders in the community. Behavior that is driven by the trauma they have experienced can impact the health of their personal relationships as well as their interactions within the community. And the effects of trauma on our bodies and our behaviors can end up passing trauma from parent to child — creating intergenerational traumas, which are experienced with particular severity within racialized and Indigenous communities.

e.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMACA&Code1=568&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&SearchText=Barrie&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=568&TABID=1&type=0

³ Simcoe County Poverty Reduction Working Group

⁴ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-004-m/75-004-m2019003-eng.htm>

SERVICES UNDER STRESS

Sufficient and well-coordinated public, health, social, and community services help to prevent harms to community members and support people's well-being. Four identified risk factors identify ways that services are currently under stress in Barrie, contributing to preventable harms and reduced well-being.

Fragmented services

Residents of Barrie who are in need of community services often require more than a single support. And over time, a Barrie resident's service needs may change, either as they transition into a new life stage or as certain urgent matters are addressed. Yet in Barrie, social services are sometimes provided in a fragmented way, and without sufficient support when an individual transitions from one life stage to another. Individual organizations have, valuably, each developed expertise in a particular area. But their services are provided in separate locations, and sometimes without appropriate coordination or transition with other services that the individual may require. Individuals who are seeking multiple services must travel to different locations, at different times, to get their needs met. Individuals may not be made aware of the availability of other services they may benefit from. And the challenges of transitioning from one trusted service in a particular location to another new service provider elsewhere may result in people becoming disconnected from the services they require. Ultimately, this fragmentation puts people at greater risk of harm and reduces their overall well-being.

Funding issues

A lack of funding for various services and supports means many community organizations struggle to respond effectively to the level of need in Barrie. Growing demand for a range of services, inflation, and a pattern of significant provincial funding cuts that are only partially offset by subsequent funding increases all combine to create this situation. Residents of Barrie are left unable to access the services and supports they need — including, for example, developmental disability supports, newcomer supports, mental health care, and housing supports — which contributes to a wide range of situations where residents end up experiencing preventable harms.

Caregiver and service provider burnout

Underfunding of services in the face of growing demand has contributed to significant stress for front-line service providers and family caregivers in Barrie in a variety of sectors, including those with developmental disabilities, those with mental illnesses and substance use issues, and those experiencing homelessness. These individuals, struggling to meet the needs of their clients, end up undercutting their own physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Ultimately this leads to a long-term decline in the ability of these individuals to provide effective care to the Barrie residents who are most at risk of preventable harms.

Working in silos

Many organizations across a wide range of sectors contribute to community safety and well-being in Barrie, including those focused on education, business, public health, health care, housing, the Indigenous community, newcomers, emergency response, corrections, and social services. Challenges to community safety and well-being that are evident in one sector often originate in another sector, and are exacerbated by conditions in yet another. When organizations in Barrie focus too narrowly on what is occurring within their particular sector, Barrie collectively misses opportunities to efficiently and effectively improve community safety and well-being together.

HOLDING TOGETHER

The strength of our connections as residents to each other is an important contributor to a safe and healthy city for all. Four identified risk factors focus on ways that these connections are not as strong and plentiful as they could be, and as a result, how a lack of healthy connection contributes to avoidable harms and reduced well-being.

Social isolation

The impact of social isolation and loneliness on health and well-being is increasingly recognized as a factor that contributes to poorer health. Recent research has demonstrated that social isolation is associated with increased risk of mortality on par with or greater than more traditional risk factors such as alcohol use, smoking and obesity⁵ In Barrie and across Canada, social isolation is of particular concern

⁵

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2020003/article/00003-eng.htm>

amongst older adults, especially those living alone, on low-incomes, or with mobility challenges. A lack of access to homecare, long waits for hip, knee, and cataract surgeries at RVH, and long waits for supported living facilities all contributes to social isolation in Barrie, which in turn reduces health and increases mortality.

Weak Community Bonds

Many who participated in shaping this CSWB Plan described how the pace of growth and change in Barrie is straining the city's sense of connection and community — a sense of community that residents desire. Not only is our connection to others in our community an important aspect of individual well-being, these connections are also mechanisms through which we build understanding and trust for each other. Stronger community bonds means we are more likely to offer help (or find help) when challenges arise, and more likely to take actions that keep each other safe. Where there are weak and lacking community bonds, there is a greater chance that Barrie residents will experience avoidable harms.

Discrimination

Unfortunately, Barrie residents, as in communities across our country and around the world, continue to experience discrimination, intolerance, and racism. Discrimination occurs when prejudiced systems of belief and action, often unacknowledged, assign value and allocate opportunity and outcomes based on false distinctions between categories of people, unfairly privileging some individuals and groups over others. The result of historic and continuing systems of discrimination is wide-ranging, leading, on average, to reduced well-being and less safety for certain groups of people, including racialized people, Indigenous people, immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, women, older people, people of certain religions, people with disabilities, people with a mental illness, and people living with an addiction.

Limited public transit and mobility options

For those who do not own or cannot drive a car — due to age, disability, or income — limited public transit and limited availability of paratransit contributes to social isolation and makes it more difficult for people to access goods, services, and supports that they need. This undermines individual well-being and the strength of community bonds.

EMERGING THREATS

Four emerging threats were identified as risk factors that deserve greater attention by Barrie residents.

Pandemics

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to everyone's attention the significant consequences of dangerous new diseases. Pandemics are a direct threat to our lives and our health, and the actions that are taken to address pandemics can also undermine long-term well-being, as they can have negative consequences on, for example, our economy, people's incomes, educational outcomes for children and youth, substance abuse, and social isolation. Being well prepared to respond to future pandemics is an important way to protect the long-term safety and well-being of Barrie residents.

Youth Vaping

Youth vaping is on the rise in Barrie and across Canada. One in five grade 7-12 students in Canada vape. Many youth and young adults who have never smoked cigarettes are trying vapes. There is a real concern that many of these non-smokers will become addicted to the nicotine found in e-cigarettes. While the health effects of vaping are not yet fully understood, we know nicotine is addictive and damages developing brains, and emerging research suggests vaping is a potential gateway to cigarette use for youth. Vaping is an emerging threat to the long-term safety of young people.

Vulnerability to online risks and financial scams

Many organizations in Barrie recognize that scams and other internet and phone threats are growing challenges to the safety and well-being of Barrie residents, yet they report that these issues are not currently receiving the attention they deserve. While these threats all exploit our internet and phone lines, they come in a diversity of forms. Adults, especially newcomers and seniors, as well as businesses, are at growing risk of financial scams and fraud. Over the last decade in Canada, police-reported fraud has increased 64%.⁶ Research suggests that in Canada, nearly one in five young people has experienced cyberbullying or cyberstalking in the last five years⁷. Child luring for the purposes of child pornography is also a significant concern for vulnerable youth — In Canada, police-reported child pornography crimes increased 233%

⁶ Statistics Canada:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00010-eng.htm>

⁷ Statistics Canada:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/161219/dq161219a-eng.htm>

from 2006-2016⁸. Lastly, there is also growing concern related to the amount and quality of screen time that children experience. Research suggests screen time generally has negative developmental impacts on young children, and too much poor-quality screen time for older children can decrease physical and mental health. The diversity and evolving nature of online and phone threats leaves many in Barrie struggling to keep up.

Human trafficking & organized crime

Barrie, along with other small southern Ontario cities, are potential areas of expansion for criminal organizations based in the GTA that are active in the drug trade and in human trafficking. Barrie's location on Highway 400, and the availability of adjacent hotels and motels, make it an attractive location for human trafficking and other organized crime activities. In 2016 human trafficking charges in Barrie in were more than double the national rate. These activities harm vulnerable individuals and contribute to criminal activity in and around Barrie.

[Section break]

⁸Statistics Canada:
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/54842-eng.htm>

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

15 Actions to Address Risks and Improve Safety and Well-Being in Barrie from 2021-2024

The 15 Actions that make up Barrie's Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan were developed through a series of conversations amongst a broad cross section of local organizations over the course of the better part of 2020.

These conversations took stock of the identified risk factors and sought to identify and refine new actions that:

- (a) complemented and built off existing services and initiatives that are already making important contributions to the safety and well-being of Barrie residents;
- (b) Could be undertaken by local organizations, working in partnership, within the constraints of existing resources, with the endorsement and support of the City of Barrie; and
- (c) Promised to make meaningful contributions to community safety and well-being in Barrie.

Ultimately, these 15 new actions are included in Barrie's Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan because local organizations committed to work together and with the City of Barrie to make them a reality.

These 15 actions are organized into four Action Areas:

- A Safer Barrie by Working Together
- Connected Communities are Safe Communities
- Safety is for Everyone
- Prepared and Protected

The following section describes the rationale for, steps involved in, and anticipated outcomes of each of the 15 actions.

[Page break]

OUR SHARED PLAN FOR A SAFER BARRIE: OVERVIEW

A Safer Barrie by Working Together

1. The City of Barrie and Barrie Police Service will work with partners to launch an Annual Community Safety and Well-Being Forum to review our progress and strengthen working relationships
2. The signatories of the new Barrie Health Accord will undertake a community-wide planning process that will lead to coordinated and sustainable investments in improving determinants of health
3. The Barrie Police Service and partners will strengthen the 'Collaborate Barrie' Situation Table as a way to improve responses to situations where an individual is at significant risk of harm
4. Barrie Police Service will work with partners to develop a proposal and build community support for a community justice centre in Barrie
5. The Barrie Police Service and partners will work towards creating a community service campus where individuals can access a range of health and social services from multiple providers
6. The Barrie Police Service and CMHA Simcoe County will work together to identify and implement actions that increase access to the mental health services that have the greatest impact on community safety

Connected Communities are Safe Communities

7. Barrie Public Library and partners will strengthen community by spearheading a coordinated effort to increase the number of active volunteers in Barrie
8. Georgian College and partners will launch a Barrie Inclusion Network that helps coordinates efforts to involve every resident in creating a safe and welcoming Barrie

Safety is for Everyone

9. The Barrie Mayor's Office and the Barrie Police Service will convene the Barrie Anti-Racism Taskforce, which will help guide anti-racism action throughout Barrie

10. Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit will work with partners in Barrie to reduce harms from drug use by increasing access to naloxone, advancing plans for other harm reduction services, and creating an updated Simcoe Muskoka Drug Strategy
11. The Women and Children's Shelter of Barrie, Barrie Public Library, and partners will expand training about how to provide trauma-informed services
12. The City of Barrie will consult CSWB Plan partners about how best to improve community safety when the City updates the 10-year Affordable Housing Strategy.
13. The County of Simcoe and the City of Barrie will help advance collective action to address homelessness in Barrie and surrounding areas by reviewing processes for information sharing, consultation, priority setting, and coordination amongst relevant partners from multiple sectors.

Prepared and Protected

14. Barrie Police Service and partners will work to protect at-risk residents from online risks and phone scams.
15. The City of Barrie and partners will develop an updated City of Barrie Pandemic Plan so that organizations in Barrie are well prepared to work together in the event of a future pandemic.

Action Area 1: A Safer Barrie by Working Together

Six new actions focus on building a safer Barrie by working together more effectively.

Broadly speaking, these actions focus primarily on risk factors in the *Services Under Stress* category.

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Action 1: The City of Barrie and Barrie Police Service will work with partners to launch an Annual Community Safety and Well-Being Forum to review our progress and strengthen working relationships

Priority Risk: Fragmented Services, Working in Silos

Additional Risks Addressed: All

Rationale:

In order for this CSWB Plan to be successful, leads and partners working on different Actions will need to stay connected and coordinated. Ultimately, the strength of working relationships, and the collective sense of shared mission and momentum, will be a major reason why this CSWB Plan succeeds or struggles to achieve its aims.

It will be especially important to regularly bring together leaders from across relevant sectors — civil servants, business, public health and health care, Indigenous services, police, corrections, education, and social service providers — as well as community and resident leaders.

An annual City-run Forum, online or in-person can bring together these individuals. Such an event would provide an opportunity to draw together the partners involved in all 15 actions in the CSWB Plan, along with others who are committed to improving safety and well-being in Barrie. The structure and content of the event could change year-to-year, but would likely involve:

- A 'refresher' presentation on Barrie's CSWB Plan
- Progress updates on each action item, as well as opportunities for action leads to gather advice regarding next steps
- Discussions about new emerging concerns not addressed in the CSWB Plan
- Opportunities for learning and professional development
- Celebrations of successes and achievements

By holding this event on an annual basis, the City of Barrie signals its commitment to supporting all partners and community leaders in their efforts, fosters a sense of shared ownership, and helps to ensure that progress is made on all the actions in the CSWB Plan. This event will also help kick-start the process of revising the CSWB in four years time.

Action Lead: City of Barrie

Action Partners: Barrie Native Friendship Centre, Downtown Barrie Business Association, Barrie Police Service.

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the lead and partners will:

- Each year, work together to organize a community safety and well-being event that brings together the partners involved in all 15 actions in the CSWB Plan, along with others who are committed to improving safety and well-being in Barrie, either in-person or online
- Use these annual events to support the successful implementation of the Barrie Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
- Use the annual event in the final year of the current plan to support the development of a revised Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will organize and host the Community Safety and Well-being Event on an annual basis, with the support of partners.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Participation at annual events from all the partners involved in all 15 actions in the CSWB Plan
- Participation at annual events of others others who have an important role helping to improve safety and well-being in Barrie
- Greater knowledge of the ways that different organizations are contributing to community safety, and of opportunities for collaboration
- A strong sense of collective ownership and shared responsibility for the implementation of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan

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Action 2: The signatories of the new Barrie Health Accord will undertake a community-wide planning process that will lead to coordinated and sustainable investments in improving determinants of health

Priority Risk: Funding Issues, Working in Silos

Additional Risks Addressed: Fragmented services, social isolation, weak community bonds, discrimination, limited mobility and public transit, opioid use and other addictions, homelessness, mental illness, lack of appropriate affordable housing, low paid and precarious employment, poverty and food insecurity, youth vaping

Rationale:

There are a number of large local organizations that, despite working in different sectors, share significant responsibilities for health and well-being in Barrie. These include The City of Barrie, County of Simcoe, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH), Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU), and the Barrie Police Service. These five organizations have budgets that collectively amount to \$1.2 billion.

Sustainable progress on community health, safety, and well-being in Barrie is more likely when these large local organizations, who share similar goals, work in a coordinated fashion over the long-term to target root causes and more efficiently deploy resources. The Barrie Health Accord — an agreement amongst these five organizations to collaborate — lays the foundation for more consistent coordination towards this shared goal.

There is likely to be a need for continued investment in certain aspects of acute care and emergency services in order to respond to the needs of the growing population of Barrie and surrounding areas. While necessary downstream investments are pursued — including, for example an expansion of RVH — it is important that these organizations also look for ways to shift towards making more significant upstream investments in community health, well-being, and safety that can ultimately reduce our collective reliance on downstream acute care and emergency services. The Barrie Health Accord is intended to ensure co-leads are all focused in a coordinated and collaborative way on identifying root causes and developing solutions that contribute to a healthy community.

The Barrie Health Accord, signed on October 26, 2020, marks the first agreement of its type in Canada, bringing local government, public

health, a hospital, and a police service together to coordinate upstream health investments in a strategic, sustainable way.

Action co-leads: City of Barrie, Barrie Police Service, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre, County of Simcoe, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the co-leads will:

- work together in a collaborative, coordinated effort to make sustainable investments in the determinants of health
- participate in a community-wide planning process to co-ordinate these investments
- Jointly develop project priorities
- Pursue these project priorities across our organizations
- Set measurable outcome metrics
- Transparently report outcome metrics to the community

Anticipated role for the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will advance this initiative as a co-lead alongside the other signatories of the Barrie Health Accord.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Creation of community informed project priorities, adopted by the co-leads, that guide coordinated investments in determinants of health
- Actions taken by co-leads, individually and together, to pursue these priorities
- Measurable outcome metrics established
- Reporting of outcomes to community

Action 3: The Barrie Police Service and partners will strengthen the ‘Collaborate Barrie’ Situation Table as a way to improve responses to situations where an individual is at risk of harm

Priority Risk: Fragmented services

Additional Risks Addressed: Opioid use and other addictions; Homelessness; Mental illness; Lived experience of trauma; Social isolation

Rationale:

Collaborate Barrie is a Situation Table — a twice-weekly meeting where representatives from emergency response and human service organizations coordinate interventions that address new crisis situations where an individual is at imminent risk of harm and victimization. These situations — called situations of acutely elevated risk (AER) — are varied, but often involve individuals who may have some combination of significant addictions, mental illness, cognitive impairments, past traumas, contact with the criminal justice system, situations of family violence, and insecure housing. In response to a situation of acutely elevated risk, organizations with the right skills and relationships take actions, within 48 hours, that prevent escalation and reduce key risk factors at play in the individual’s situation.

Collaborate Barrie launched in 2015 and has a track record of successfully mobilizing and coordinating existing resources in order to reduce harms to Barrie residents. But in order to maintain and increase its effectiveness, Collaborate Barrie needs to ensure all the relevant organizations are consistently present and active. Collaborate Barrie’s practices and procedures may also need to be refreshed in order to ensure all relevant organizations maintain a high level of commitment.

There are also a significant number of situations in Barrie where individuals are not yet imminently at risk of harm (and thus do not qualify as situations to be reviewed by the Collaborate Barrie Situation Table), but whose situations merit fast, proactive and collaborative risk mitigation. Addressing these situations in a collaborative manner would help coordinate services, prevent harm, and improve well-being among Barrie’s most vulnerable. A sister table designed to address these situations should be explored.

By including, in Barrie’s CSWB Plan, an official commitment to expanding the use and membership of tables like Collaborate Barrie,

the City of Barrie re-affirms its strong support for this type of upstream community safety initiative.

Action Lead: Barrie Police Service

Action Partners: Barrie Probation and Parole Office; Salvation Army Barrie Bayside Mission Centre

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the lead and partners will:

- Refresh membership and practices at the Collaborate Barrie Situation Table to sustain and increase its effectiveness in responding to situations of acutely elevated risk
- Explore ways to create a Preventative Table — a Situation Table-like model that coordinates responses aimed at preventing individuals from entering into situations of acutely elevated risk

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will ensure consistent participation of appropriate City representatives at Collaborate Barrie and any sister preventative table that is created.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Expanded membership in Collaborate Barrie
- Improved attendance at Collaborate Barrie meetings
- Increased number of organizations regularly involved in responses to situations of Acutely Elevated Risk
- Completion of assessment of possible designs of, and level of organizational commitment to, a Preventative Table
- Launch of Preventative Table if deemed feasible and sufficient level of organizational commitment achieved

[Page break]

Action 4: Barrie Police Service will work with partners to develop a proposal and build community support for a community justice centre in Barrie

Priority Risk: Fragmented services, working in silos

Additional Risks Addressed: Mental illness; Poverty; Opioid use & other addictions; Lived experienter of trauma; Human trafficking, gang activity & organized crime

Rationale:

When someone commits a crime in Barrie, there are often underlying factors that have contributed to their actions — including homelessness, drug addiction, mental illness, poverty, past traumas, and historical marginalization. Those working in the criminal justice system — police, lawyers, judges, prisons, probation officers — struggle to respond to these underlying factors in a satisfactory way. Many of those charged with a crime experience a revolving door justice system, where their case is legally resolved but the underlying root causes remain unaddressed, leading, in time, to a subsequent arrest. Not only is this a poor outcome for the accused individual, other community members, especially in more visibly crime-prone areas like Barrie's downtown, often notice that the response of the criminal justice system does not seem to prevent people from re-committing crimes. When this occurs, these community members may begin to lose confidence in the effectiveness of the local criminal justice system.

In response to these challenges, those working in Barrie's criminal justice system are increasingly collaborating with those working outside of it — with youth services, Indigenous organizations, addictions and mental health care providers, and social housing providers, for example. Yet these collaborations are often inconsistent. For one, they lack an appropriate facility that fosters collaboration between the courts with social services. They also often lack an organized and coordinated approach that responds to the whole journey experienced by a person charged with a crime as they travel through the criminal justice system.

Creating a Community Justice Centre is a promising way to address these gaps — an approach that is currently being explored by the Ontario Government through the Ministry of the Attorney General's Justice Centre Project. These centres move criminal courtrooms out of traditional courthouses, bringing them together under one roof with community services and community space, with the goal of responding

more collaboratively and holistically to the needs of the accused, victims, and the community at large.

While Community Justice Centres exist around the world, each is different, as they are the product of collaborative planning and resource sharing amongst multiple local organizations and levels of government.

The first step in Barrie is to collaboratively develop a vision and proposal for a community justice centre. Such a document would describe the over-representation of certain groups within the criminal justice system in Barrie, such as racialized and Indigenous people, coordination gaps and that a Barrie Community Justice Centre would aim to address that could help improve outcomes, the consequences of leaving these gaps unaddressed, the local resources that have been promised to the centre, and the necessary commitments and financial support that would be required from the courts and from other levels of government.

By including, in Barrie's CSWB Plan, an official commitment to begin exploring the creation of a Community Justice Centre, the City of Barrie will kick-start the development of a proposal that would be the basis for seeking necessary funds, commitments, and approvals to create a such a centre in Barrie.

Action Lead: Barrie Police Service

Action Partners: Barrie Probation and Parole Office; Salvation Army Barrie Bayside Mission Centre; Downtown Barrie Business Association

Anticipated Steps:

- Work with a range of partners to examine domestic and international justice centre models and identify relevant inspirations for Barrie
- Identify the relevant challenges at the intersection of criminal justice and social services that a Barrie Community Justice Centre would seek to address
- Identify pre-existing resources that could be brought together to create a justice centre, as well as potential additional resource requirements
- Develop proposal with, and build support amongst, a diverse cross-section of Barrie

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will play a constructive role helping to develop the proposal alongside other partners, explore and consider what role it might play in the operation of a Justice Centre, and consider what in-kind resources it might be able to commit to the creation and operation of this facility, in combination with commitments from other partners.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- A collaboratively developed and publicly supported proposal for a Barrie Community Justice Centre
- Strengthened relationships amongst partners in Barrie working at the intersection of criminal justice and community services

[Page break]

Action 5: The Barrie Police Service and partners will work towards creating a community service campus where individuals can access a range of health and social services from multiple providers.

Priority Risks: Fragmented Services, Social Isolation

Additional Risks Addressed: Working in silos, weak community bonds, limited mobility and public transit

Rationale:

Residents of Barrie who are in need of community services often require more than a single support. Someone in need of a community food pantry likely also has health care needs and may benefit from employment support. Someone experiencing a mental illness may also be experiencing social isolation. Someone with a cognitive impairment or developmental disability may also have an addiction issue. Someone in need of legal aid may also need parenting services.

Furthermore, over time, a Barrie resident's service needs may change. When progress is achieved on an urgent matter — the resolution of a legal matter, the management of an addiction, access to social assistance — an opportunity opens up to address underlying conditions that contributed to their situation in the first place.

Yet in Barrie, social services are sometimes provided in a fragmented way. Individual organizations have, valuably, each developed expertise in a particular area. But their services are provided in separate locations, and sometimes without appropriate coordination or transition with other services that the individual may require. Individuals who are seeking multiple services must travel to different locations, at different times, to get their needs met. Individuals may not be made aware of the availability of other services they may benefit from. And the challenges of transitioning from one trusted service in a particular location to another new service provider elsewhere may result in people becoming disconnected from the services they require.

A shared community service campus could offer a number of potential community safety and well-being benefits. First, it makes it easier and more convenient for individuals in need of multiple services to find and access them. Co-location of different organizations can also help encourage greater collaboration and coordination amongst the organizations themselves, leading to a more integrated service experience with smoother transitions from one service to another. The creation of new community spaces also provides an opportunity to build a stronger sense of community, address social isolation, and foster

greater empathy across differences, as it brings together a range of Barrie residents who use the space for different purposes.

Action Lead: Barrie Police Service

Action Partners: In Progress

Anticipated Steps:

- Identify and gather likely partner organizations
- Build agreement regarding the most important goals for a social service campus amongst likely partner organizations
- Assess resource availability amongst likely partners and identify potential sources of funding
- Explore examples from other jurisdictions in order to inform a social service campus model
- If there is sufficient alignment between goals and likely funding, develop operational and financial model
- Seek out necessary financial commitments and establish partnership agreements required to move into design phase

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Exploration of social service campus concept amongst a range of partner organisations
- Development of an operational and financial model amongst interested partners

[Page break]

Action 6: The Barrie Police Service and CMHA Simcoe County will work together to increase access to the mental health and addictions services that have the greatest impact on community safety

(NOTE: SOME COSMETIC CHANGES MAY STILL BE MADE TO THE LANGUAGE FOR THIS ACTION ITEM)

Priority Risk: Mental Illness, Opioid use and other addictions

Additional Risks Addressed: Funding issues, Working in silos, Lived experience of trauma; Homelessness; Poverty; Caregiver and service provider burn-out.

Rationale:

In Barrie, as in other communities across Canada, those living with severe, persistent and unstable mental health and addictions issues are sometimes unable to access sufficient and appropriate services and supports. While most seeking help can get access to some level of service relatively quickly, underfunding means many are not able to receive the right level of care in the right place. This is often true for more acute and complex populations requiring specialized and mobile services.

As a consequence of a lack of sufficient and appropriate services and supports, people's wellbeing is compromised and their overall functioning declines. In some instances, their behaviours contribute to situations that trigger police intervention and reduce community safety for themselves or others.

So far, inter-organizational collaborations in Barrie between police and mental health and addictions service providers have focused on improved incident response and risk mitigation. For example: The Community Outreach and Support Team (COAST) is comprised of a non-uniformed police officer with a Canadian Mental Health Association worker who work collaboratively to attend and respond appropriately to people in crisis. COAST has been operating on a permanent basis since January 2019, following several demonstration projects that showed its value and impact.

The Collaborate Barrie Situation Table is another relevant risk intervention collaboration. The table is a twice-weekly meeting hosted by the Barrie Police Service where representatives from emergency response and human service organizations coordinate interventions

that address new crisis situations where an individual is at imminent risk of harm and victimization.

The success of these existing collaborations between police and mental health and addictions service providers can provide a platform for enhancing existing services, and expanding and introducing new services, that improve coordination and response to people in crisis. Building on this momentum can also contribute to more proactive and early intervention strategies that improve access to the appropriate services and prevent community safety issues from occurring.

These efforts will have significant advantages for people in crisis or needing urgent mental health and addictions services. First, they seek to identify and address the factors contributing to the individual's presentation, and so could be more successful in supporting long-term wellbeing. Also, upstream investments in mental health and addiction services will decrease other system expenditures such as emergency response costs due to fewer 911 calls and fewer paramedic, fire, and police encounters. If these savings can be realized, there may be opportunities to reallocate funds and resources to other initiatives or needs that improve community safety while achieving better value.

The Barrie Police Service and CMHA Simcoe County are committed to sharing data, insights and expertise, research capacity, and resources, and working together to identify and implement ways to increase access to the mental health and addiction services that have the greatest impact on community safety.

Action co-Leads: The Barrie Police Service and CMHA Simcoe County

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the co-leads will:

- Develop an inventory of the breadth and depth of mental health and addictions services and supports and clearly identify the formal and informal relationships and partnerships that promote community safety in Barrie
- Use available data to identify the gaps in mental health and addiction services and supports that impact community safety, as well as emergency response costs
- Review existing collaborations to identify how best to build from our successes
- Consider different ways that action co-leads can enhance existing services and collaborations, and how co-leads could develop and implement new evidence-based approaches that build upon our previous successes

- Provide regular updates to the Barrie Police Service Board, the CMHA Simcoe County Branch Board, and the Annual Community Safety Forum

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will share data if needed, and welcome opportunities to be involved in collaborations where there is a suitable role for the City.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Strengthened relationships between organizations working at the intersection of community safety and mental health and addictions
- Better understanding amongst CSWB partners of the breadth and depth of mental health and addictions services and supports in Barrie and how they promote community safety
- Findings concerning impact of mental health care gaps on community safety and emergency response costs in Barrie produced and shared
- Promising ways to address key gaps identified
- Best effort attempts made by partners to implement promising ways to address key gaps, which result in improved access to appropriate care and reductions in emergency response costs

[Section Break]

Action Area 2: Connected Communities are Safe Communities

Two new actions focus on strengthening our connections with each other as Barrie residents, as a way to build a safer, healthier Barrie.

Broadly speaking, these actions focus on risk factors in the *Holding Together* category.

[page break]

Action 7: Barrie Public Library and partners will strengthen community in Barrie by leading a city-wide effort to increase the number of active volunteers

(NOTE: SOME COSMETIC CHANGES MAY STILL BE MADE TO THE LANGUAGE FOR THIS ACTION ITEM)

Priority Risk: Weak community bonds

Additional Risks Addressed: Social isolation; discrimination ; Caregiver and service provider burnout; Funding issues.

Rationale: Volunteering is a critical part of creating a safe and thriving city. Not only does volunteering have an immediate and tangible benefit to the mission of a local non-profit or community initiative, it also connects us to others who we wouldn't necessarily come to know in our day-to-day lives. By strengthening and diversifying the web of connections we each have, volunteering helps create a community where we understand and trust each other more, one where we are more likely to offer help and receive help when challenges arise, and one where social isolation is not left to fester. Volunteering thus ultimately creates a city that is safer, healthier, happier, and more prosperous.

Many who participated in shaping this CSWB Plan described how the pace of growth and change in Barrie is straining the city's sense of connection and community — a sense of community that residents desire. More community building initiatives are needed.

One clear community building gap in Barrie is that there is no organization or initiative focused on growing volunteerism in Barrie. In fact, Barrie is one of the few cities in Canada — small, medium, or large — that does not have a non-profit volunteer centre that focuses on promoting and supporting volunteerism.

There are, however, several organizations and groups that are, independently, taking some limited steps in this direction. Information Barrie, a service of the Barrie Library, currently maintains a database of volunteer opportunities, which is updated on an annual basis. United Way Simcoe Muskoka organizes 'Days of Caring' where United Way recruits volunteers for a day, often by having employers offer employees time during work hours to do so. United Way then organizes volunteers in order to provide support to local organizations for the day. The Barrie Association of Volunteer Administrators (BAVA) is a mutual help group formed amongst volunteer administrators from various non-profit organizations to help them play their roles effectively. And, recently, Barrie Families Unite, a facebook group numbering over

10,000 members, was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that exists as a place for Barrie residents to ask for, offer up, and coordinate help with fellow neighbours related to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown. These and other initiatives could be brought together and coordinated in order to more effectively promote volunteerism in Barrie.

This Action may explore, but does not necessarily entail, the creation of a volunteer centre in Barrie. Instead, it involves gathering interested parties together who will set a goal to increase the number of active volunteers over the course of this four-year Community Safety and Well-being Plan and roll out strategies and structures for reaching that goal. This will likely include seeking out guidance from organizations like the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network, Volunteer Canada, and Spark Ontario (an organization focused on finding and promoting nontraditional volunteering opportunities). It may also involve seeking out funding to pay a part-time project coordinator.

By including this volunteer promotion effort in Barrie's CSWB Plan, the City of Barrie acknowledges the importance of volunteering as a means to greater community safety and well-being and agrees to be an official supporter of the initiative. The City will help to promote the initiative and seek to offer appropriate in-kind support, once the specific strategies and tactics have been determined.

Action Lead: Barrie Public Library

Action Partners: Georgian College, Salvation Army Barrie Bayside Mission Centre, Barrie Association of Volunteer Administrators

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the lead and partners will:

- Build a coalition of organizations and individuals seeking to strengthen community resiliency and promote community participation by mobilizing volunteers
- Set a goal: measure the baseline of filled volunteer positions currently in Barrie, determine the number of additional volunteers that could reasonably be recruited in the next four years, and establish a way to track towards that goal
- Develop strategies and tools to achieve the goal, including, for example, creating fundraising campaign-style communications regarding progress towards the goal, building off neighbourhood self-help efforts in response to COVID-19, involving Georgian College computer science and communications students to use digital solutions that help encourage and facilitate volunteering amongst students and throughout the community; connecting participants from

United Way Days of Caring with more long term volunteer positions; and working towards the creation of a volunteer centre in Barrie.

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City is an official supporter of the initiative. The City will help to promote the initiative and seek to offer appropriate in-kind support, once the specific strategies and tactics have been determined.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Ongoing measurement of the number of active volunteers in Barrie
- Experimentation with, and lessons learned from, coordinated volunteerism promotion strategies
- An increased number of active volunteers in Barrie

[Page break]

Action 8: Georgian College and partners will launch a Barrie Inclusion Network that helps coordinate efforts to involve every resident in creating a safe and welcoming Barrie

Priority Risk: discrimination

Additional Risks Addressed: Weak community bonds; Social isolation

Rationale:

Each Barrie resident has the power to make Barrie feel more or less safe. In each interaction with another, each and every Barrie resident contributes to the experience of safety and welcome that other residents feel.

In Barrie, as in communities everywhere, social environments feel safer, on balance, for certain groups, and less safe for others. Someone who is, for example, racialized, an immigrant, LGBTQ+, a woman, an Indigenous person, living with a disability, a mental illness, or homelessness — these individuals are, on balance, more likely to feel unsafe. Unfortunately, Barrie residents, as in communities across our country and around the world, continue to experience discrimination, intolerance, and racism.

In order to build a more inclusive city, we must find ways to help all Barrie residents understand what behaviour is inclusive and what behaviour is unacceptable. We must also help people build greater empathy for, understanding of, and respect for those who are different. When we lack understanding, we are more likely to take actions that lessen the safety and well-being of others. When we understand each other, we are better able to take actions that make everyone feel included in our city.

There are a number of separate initiatives in and around Barrie that encourage residents to play their part making Barrie more inclusive — including, for example, the awareness raising work of Barrie Pride, Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness (SCATEH), the Gilbert Centre, the Barrie Native Friendship Centre, the Ethnic Mosaic Alliance, Deaf Access Simcoe Muskoka, the Barrie Public Library, the Women's Advocacy Council, Black History Month celebrations organized by the City of Barrie, and the County of Simcoe's #It Starts campaign. The City of Barrie has also recently created a new Anti-Racism Taskforce.

However these separate efforts have no formal mechanism for connecting and coordinating their work in Barrie. The goal of the Barrie

Inclusion Network is to help these various initiatives stay well connected to each other so that each can support the others as effectively as possible, and so that together these groups can make a greater impact together than they might separately.

As a baseline, the Barrie Inclusion Network would facilitate regular information sharing amongst members. The Network might also choose to select a shared annual inclusion theme that each member could seek to emphasize alongside their existing focus area. On occasion, when a threat to inclusion in Barrie intensifies or when public awareness about a particular inclusion issue becomes heightened, the Network would also seek to develop shared messaging and to undertake coordinated advocacy efforts in order to better reach and help inform residents across Barrie about how they can make a positive contribution to the current moment.

By including this action in Barrie's CSWB Plan, the City of Barrie is helping to spur the creation of an official, City-sanctioned, collaborative network that helps to link up existing community inclusion initiatives so that they ultimately achieve greater collective impact together than they would achieve apart.

Action Lead: Georgian College

Action Partners: Barrie Native Friendship Centre, SCATEH, City of Barrie Accessibility and Diversity Advisor.

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the lead and partners will:

- Establish methods of regular communication and frequency of member meetings for the network
- Recruit organizations and initiatives as members of the Barrie Inclusion Network
- Encourage each members to provide regular updates to the network about priorities and activities
- Discuss and decide with members whether it is worth establishing an annual theme, and whether there should be occasions when all members seek together to amplify a particular message
- Based on successes and challenges, network members identify lessons learned and develop revised methods for recruitment, communication, and collaborative action

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will officially support the Barrie Inclusion Network, involve Barrie's Accessibility and

Diversity Advisor in the Network's activities, and see that relevant City-led activities and initiatives are integrated into the Network's efforts.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Recruitment of members into the Network
- Greater information sharing and mutual support amongst network members
- Increased visibility of inclusionary messages in Barrie
- Increased opportunities for residents to build empathy and respect across difference

[Section Break]

Action Area 3: Safety is For Everyone

Five new actions focus on improving safety and well-being for Barrie's most vulnerable residents.

Broadly speaking, these actions focus on risk factors in the *Fragile Conditions* category.

[page break]

Action 9: The Barrie Mayor's Office and the Barrie Police Service will convene the Barrie Anti-Racism Taskforce, which will help guide anti-racism action throughout Barrie.

Priority Risks: Discrimination

Additional Risks Addressed: Many

Rationale:

Racism in Barrie, and across Canada has resulted in the overrepresentation of Black, Indigenous, and people of colour amongst the most marginalized. Racism in Canada has led, for example, to the overrepresentation of Black and Indigenous people amongst those living in poverty, amongst those killed in encounters with police, amongst those who are incarcerated, and amongst those who are homeless. Racism puts racialized people in Barrie and across Canada at a higher risk of a wide range of avoidable harms.

Racism is a system of belief and action, often unacknowledged, that assigns value and allocates opportunity and outcomes based on skin color. It unfairly privileges some individuals and groups over others. Racism has shaped, and operates through, all of our social institutions, to one degree or another.

Progress towards racial justice requires continuous examination of, and changes in, every part of community life.

By convening the Barrie Anti-Racism Taskforce, the Mayor's Office and the Barrie Police Service are creating a new avenue through which shared examination of racism in Barrie can occur, understanding can be increased, priorities can be identified, and collective action can be guided.

Action co-leads: The Barrie Mayor's Office and the Barrie Police Service

Action Partners: Members of the Anti-Racism Taskforce

Anticipated Steps: The co-leads and partners will work together to:

- Complete the appointment of members to the taskforce
- Develop a Taskforce workplan
- Execute the Taskforce's workplan

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Organizations and institutions are held responsible by the Taskforce and the public for implementing anti-racism initiatives
- Organizational policies are influenced by the advice of the Taskforce so that they align with best practices
- Public involvement in anti-racist action increases due to increased awareness about racism in Barrie

[Page break]

Action 10: Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit will work with partners in Barrie to reduce harms from drug use by increasing access to naloxone, advancing plans for other harm reduction services, and creating an updated Simcoe Muskoka Drug Strategy

Priority Risk Addressed via this Action: Addictions and Opioid Use

Additional Risks Addressed via this Action: Lived experience of trauma; mental illness; homelessness; poverty; human trafficking, gang activity, and organized crime; funding issues; fragmented services; social isolation; discrimination ; caregiver and service provider burn out.

Rationale:

Addiction is among the most serious causes of avoidable harm in Barrie.

Unsafe opioid use is particularly dangerous. Despite the efforts of many, Barrie residents continue to die from opioids at twice the rate as in the rest of Ontario. Rates of opioid related emergency room visits are also more than twice the provincial average (see pop out box). And fatal drug overdoses are on the rise across Canada amid COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Some of the unintended negative impacts of the pandemic and pandemic response include: an increase in substance use in response to stress, a risk of using substances alone due to physical distancing measures, a disruption in the ways that people access their substances, poor quality of substances available, decreased availability to some treatment and harm reduction services in the community, and a reluctance to attend the emergency department in the early stages of the pandemic. For Simcoe Muskoka, preliminary data indicate that there have been 83 confirmed/probable opioid deaths in the first 8-months of 2020 – almost as many as all of 2019, and more than what was observed in all of 2018.

While many of the major levers for addressing addictions lie in provincial health policy and federal drug policy, Barrie City Council has sought to address the threat of opioids to community safety and well-being, and has identified the opioid crisis as a strategic priority in the City's 2018-2022 strategic plan. The City of Barrie has been a supporter, through the County of Simcoe, of the Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy, which was developed in 2017 and launched in 2018. In October 2019, the City committed to 18 new actions developed to support the implementation of the Strategy, including piloting the installation of naloxone kits at city-owned properties. The City also continues to press the provincial government to increase funding for

addictions focused health care providers and to expand treatment options.

Barrie's CSWB Plan recognizes the importance of increased harm reduction services in Barrie, including greater access to naloxone kits, as well as the creation of other evidence-based harm reduction services. Harm reduction services are essential because they meet people where they are at with their substance use and help keep them alive. Harm reduction services also help facilitate access to treatment and other social and health services, and can help reduce or end drug use altogether.

As of late 2020, regional partners are in the early stages of developing an update to the Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy, which will seek to address new gaps that have emerged, while taking into account progress made to date in a range of areas — including prevention, harm reduction, treatment, enforcement, and emergency management. While the updated Strategy will maintain a focus on opioids, it is anticipated that it may also respond to risks posed by other drugs. The CSWB Plan reaffirms that the City of Barrie will support the creation and implementation of an updated regional drug strategy. One way to support this work is to contribute funding for a regional drug strategy coordinator, as several municipalities in Ontario have done. The City commits to giving careful consideration to such a request.

*[POP OUT BOX] In 2019, Barrie had one of the highest rates of opioid overdose related emergency room visits in Ontario — 182.2 per 100,000 residents; more than double the provincial rate of 71.8. . Between 2017 and 2019, the crude rate of opioid-related deaths varied across Simcoe Muskoka. Barrie's opioid mortality rate is significantly higher than the comparable provincial average. Barrie also accounted for 45% of all opioid deaths in Simcoe County, while having 28% of the population.⁹
[End Pop out box]*

Action Lead: Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Action Partners: CMHA Simcoe County

⁹ Simcoe Muskoka HealthSTATs.
<https://www.simcoemuskokahealthstats.org/topics/alcohol-drugs/drugs/opioids>

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the lead and partners will:

- Work together in Barrie, and with partners in the County of Simcoe and District of Muskoka, to develop and implement a new regional drug strategy that builds off the work completed under the Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy, expands access to necessary treatments, and reduces avoidable harms from drug use
- Bring forward a request to the City of Barrie to contribute funding, along with other municipal partners, for a Drug Strategy Coordinator position for the region
- Through an expanding network of distribution partners, continue to increase and enhance access to naloxone, along with necessary training and educational materials.
- Through the leadership of SMDHU and CMHA Simcoe County, continue to work towards the creation of other evidence-based harm reduction services that serve the needs of Barrie's vulnerable residents.

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will:

- support the creation and implementation of the updated regional drug strategy and consider, at the appropriate time, contributing funding to support a regional drug strategy coordinator position
- communicate with SMDHU and CMHA Simcoe County about the creation of other evidence-based harm reduction services
- continue to bring attention to the toll of dangerous drug use, call for additional provincial resources, and help develop and implement shared solutions that protect vulnerable Barrie residents

Anticipated Outcomes:

- New regional drug strategy developed and adopted
- Increased number of naloxone distribution partners in Barrie
- Increased number of naloxone kits distributed in Barrie

- Steps taken towards creation of other evidence-based harm reduction services
- Reduction in difference between Barrie's crude rate of opioid-related emergency room visits and that of Ontario
- Reduction in difference between Barrie's crude rate of opioid-related deaths and that of Ontario
- Reduction in Barrie's crude rate of opioid-related emergency room visits when compared to previous years
- Reduction in Barrie's crude rate of opioid-related deaths each year

[Page break]

Action 11: The Women and Children's Shelter of Barrie, Barrie Public Library, and partners will expand training about how to provide trauma-informed services

(NOTE: SOME COSMETIC CHANGES MAY STILL BE MADE TO THE LANGUAGE FOR THIS ACTION ITEM)

Priority Risk: Lived experience of trauma

Additional Risks Addressed: Mental illness; homelessness; poverty; discrimination ; opioid use and other addictions; social isolation,

Rationale:

Applying a trauma-informed lens to service delivery means individuals are supported by service providers with sensitivity rooted in knowledge of how an individual's behavior may be shaped by their traumatic life experiences.

Traumatic experiences can harm a person's sense of safety and self, as well as their ability to regulate emotions and navigate relationships. Long after traumatic events occur, people carrying trauma can often feel shame, helplessness, powerlessness and intense fear. Trauma can intensify or lead to the use of substances as a means to cope with that trauma. Mental health difficulties can worsen as the individual struggles to understand the trauma they have experienced while trying to appear "normal" in their everyday life and relationships.

Trauma may influence an individual's behavior towards people in their immediate circle, first responders, service providers, and general bystanders in the community. Behavior that is driven by the trauma they have experienced can impact the health of their personal relationships as well as their interactions within the community. An individual's negative interactions with service providers can create a "dangerous reputation" that becomes attached to that individual.

The effects of trauma on our bodies and our behaviors can end up passing trauma from parent to child — creating intergenerational traumas, which are experienced with particular severity within racialized and Indigenous communities.

Many of Barrie's most marginalized individuals have personal and family histories that involve significant trauma. These individuals interact with a variety of public and community services from health care providers to recreation centres, from libraries to police. When

these public and community services are not trauma-informed, those who have experienced traumas are less likely to be supported with sensitivity and are more likely to experience new harms due to inappropriate responses.

Training and supporting community agencies, businesses, first responders, and public service providers in trauma-informed service delivery will:

- ensure service providers have a general knowledge and understanding of a trauma-informed approach
- increase sensitivity and the skills to respond to the needs of all those they encounter; and
- improve the safety, service experience, and ultimately the well-being of many of Barrie's most marginalized individuals.

By including, in Barrie's CSWB Plan, a commitment to expanding access to training for trauma-informed service delivery, the City of Barrie acknowledges the role that all frontline City staff can play in helping increase public safety by responding appropriately to behaviors rooted in past traumas.

Action Co-Leads: The Women and Children's Shelter of Barrie and the Barrie Public Library

Action Partners: Barrie Police Service, City of Barrie

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, with support from other leads and partners:

- BPL will reach out to community and public service organizations to determine the level of existing training related to trauma-informed practices, the level of interest in accessing new training for staff, and what specific areas of training are of interest
- WCSB will determine mechanisms for offering training at appropriate scale (e.g. train-the-trainer, etc.)
- WCSB will develop training materials and methods, as well as simple mechanism to measure and results
- BPL, BPS, and City of Barrie will help coordinate access to trainings
- WCSB will deliver trainings in partnership and collaboration with other community agencies and people with lived experience, as appropriate
- BPL, WCSB, and BPS will work together to track number of trainings and results

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will:

- determine which City employees would be most beneficial to train in trauma-informed practices and coordinate their access to training

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Community agencies, businesses, first responders, and public service providers whose work involves contact with vulnerable populations will receive trauma-informed training
- Those who are trained will report being better equipped to respond appropriately to members of the community who have experienced past traumas

[Page break]

Action 12: The City of Barrie will consult CSWB Plan partners on how to best improve community safety when the City updates the 10-year Affordable Housing Strategy.

Priority Risks: Lack of Appropriate affordable housing

Additional Risks Addressed: Homelessness

Rationale:

Access to appropriate affordable housing is fundamental to individual, family, and community well-being, and is an important contributor to long-term community safety.

Like many areas in South and Central Ontario, Barrie has experienced significant increases in housing costs. For example, the year-over-year increase in average house price from February 2019 to February 2020 was 9%, rising from \$475,000 to \$518,000.

Rising costs have made housing increasingly unaffordable for those living on low incomes. In 2016, half of Barrie's renter population spent more than 30% of their income on housing.

Because housing is so critical to our well-being, rising housing costs means those on low incomes are forced to cut back spending on healthy food, prescription medicines, childcare and school supplies, and other essentials that contribute to their family's long-term health and well-being. Those who can find work must spend an increasing share of their time away from their children and others who they may be caring for, straining the health of families. Stress can contribute to increased mental illness and substance use. Children growing up in unstable housing are less likely to succeed in school and more likely to have chronic health conditions.

Rising costs in Barrie and surrounding areas contributing to a growing waitlist for social housing. In 2018, the centralized waitlist for Simcoe County's 2,882 rent-geared-to-income units grew 23% to 3,907 households. In the same year, only 182 households were successfully housed from this waitlist. Without sufficient social and supportive housing, a growing number of Barrie residents are ending up under-housed or on the streets.

Although the County of Simcoe is the social housing provider for the region and prepares a County of Simcoe Housing Homelessness Plan, the City of Barrie has a role to play using the tools it has available to improve access to affordable housing, including affordable rental housing. The City of Barrie's Affordable Housing Strategy guides the City's efforts in this regard — this strategy aims to encourage, stimulate and increase the supply and range of affordable housing options to meet the needs of our residents, at all income levels and stages of life.

Every 10 years, the City of Barrie updates that affordable housing

strategy. The next update will be undertaken in 2024. Given the fundamental relationship between affordable housing and community safety and wellbeing, it is important that the City consider how an updated Affordable Housing Strategy can make critical contributions to long-term community safety. Consultation with CSWB Plan partners on this question will ultimately help ensure that the updated Affordable Housing Strategy has a positive impact on community safety.

Action Lead: City of Barrie

Action Partners: CSWB Plan partners

Anticipated Steps: The City of Barrie will:

- Provide information to CSWB Plan Partners about the standard set of tools the City has available to increase access to affordable housing
- Seek feedback from CSWB Plan Partners about how these tools can be used most effectively to improve community safety
- Offer CSWB Plan Partners the opportunity to share ideas about other ways the City of Barrie could increase access to affordable housing
- Integrate advice of CSWB Plan partners into the updated City of Barrie Affordable Housing Strategy

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Greater understanding amongst CSWB partners of the tools available to the City of Barrie to increase access to affordable housing
- Integration of improved community safety as one of the goals of the City's updated Affordable Housing Strategy
- Inclusion of those actions most likely to improve community safety into the City's updated Affordable Housing Strategy

[Page break]

Action 13: The County of Simcoe will continue to collaborate with the City of Barrie and local stakeholders in efforts to reduce and ultimately end homelessness in Barrie and surrounding areas.

(NOTE: SOME COSMETIC CHANGES MAY STILL BE MADE TO THE LANGUAGE FOR THIS ACTION ITEM)

Priority Risks: Homelessness

Additional Risks Addressed: Lack of appropriate affordable housing

Rationale:

Being homeless puts people at high risk of harm, undermines their individual well-being, and reduces community safety. Homelessness significantly increases a person's risk of dying, makes it difficult to maintain their physical health, exacerbates social isolation, makes it incredibly difficult to address mental illness and addictions, and contributes to contact with the criminal justice system.

Homelessness is a significant challenge in Barrie that has been exacerbated by the COVID 19 pandemic. Chronic limited funding for homelessness prevention services from federal and provincial governments has contributed to this challenge. COVID-19 has also led to new resources being made available to address homelessness, with a number of new actions being taken with those resources.

Within the limits of existing funding, it is important that stakeholders share information and perspectives, identify shared challenges and opportunities, set shared priorities, and seek to coordinate their efforts. Processes exist for information sharing, consultation, shared priority setting, and coordination. All stakeholders can continue to improve Barrie's collective response to homelessness through active participation in these existing processes.

Currently, information sharing, consultation, priority setting, and system coordination occur through:

- The County of Simcoe, which, within its capacity of Consolidated Municipal Service Manager, is responsible for social housing and homelessness prevention services in Barrie, Orillia, and throughout the County

- The County of Simcoe’s Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, which includes key stakeholders from multiple sectors (i.e. County Council members and staff, Council representatives from the City of Barrie and City of Orillia, funded service providers, primary health care, mental health, and private builders)
- The County’s contractual relationships with homelessness prevention service providers, through which funding is provided and service targets & desired outcomes are established
- The Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness (SCATEH), which provides input to the County of Simcoe’s Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
- The Community Advisory Board (CAB) for Federal Reaching Home funding, through which funding priorities and recommendations are made to County Council
- The County of Simcoe continues to review and enhance mechanisms to better integrate multi-sector representatives in conversations about homelessness prevention.

The City of Barrie provides input through these existing processes with the intent to build stronger relationships and create more effective local coordination that ultimately improves our collective response to homelessness.

Action co-Leads: County of Simcoe within its role of Consolidated Municipal Service Manager; City of Barrie as Local Stakeholder and Partner Municipality

Action Partners: SCATEH*, Barrie Police Service*

Anticipated Steps: The County of Simcoe will continue to:

- Consult a range of relevant organizations about collaborative approaches to reducing and ultimately ending homelessness in the City of Barrie and surrounding areas; relevant organizations include, but are not limited to, homelessness prevention service providers, Indigenous service providers, and mental health and addiction providers.
- Review and enhance existing processes for information sharing, consultation, priority setting, and coordination regarding homelessness in Barrie.

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will continue to work with the County of Simcoe to strengthen local responses to homelessness

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Greater information sharing, consultation, priority setting, and coordination regarding homelessness in Barrie amongst a wider range of relevant stakeholders
- Improved relationships and communication between the range of relevant stakeholders, leading to better collective response to homelessness in Barrie
- Ongoing enhancement of existing processes

POP OUT BOX: EMERGENCY SHELTER IN BARRIE

As of 2018 Barrie had five homeless shelters with a total of 185 beds. Yet in the first ever enumeration of Barrie's homeless population, which occurred in April 2018, the total number of people living in homelessness in Barrie was 305. Emergency shelters are regularly over-capacity forcing would-be shelter goers back on the streets. Barrie's Indigenous population is particularly hard-hit by homelessness. Nearly one in three of Barrie's homeless are Indigenous, meaning that Indigenous people are eight times more likely to be homeless than the average resident.

While emergency shelters can provide short-term accommodation to some, they do not provide the necessary stability and supports necessary to address the underlying needs of the chronically homeless. Addictions issues, for example, contributed to a loss of housing for over one-third of Barrie's homeless population. Sufficient transitional and supportive housing is essential part of the solution to homelessness.

COVID-19 has accentuated these challenges further. Already inadequate emergency shelter capacity has had to be significantly reduced in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While the conversion of motels into temporary accommodations, along with other new initiatives, have created additional capacity, demand continues to outstrip supply.

[Section Break]

Action Area 4: Prepared and Protected

Two new actions focus on preparing and protecting Barrie residents from new and evolving challenges.

Broadly speaking, these actions focus on risk factors in the *Emerging Threats* category.

[page break]

Action 14: Barrie Police Service will work with partners to help protect at risk-residents from online risks and phone scams

Priority Risk: Vulnerability to online threats

Additional Risks Addressed: Social isolation, poverty, lived experience of trauma

Rationale:

Many organizations in Barrie recognize that scams and other internet and phone threats are growing challenges to the safety and well-being of Barrie residents, yet they report that these issues are not currently receiving the attention they deserve.

While these threats all exploit our internet and phone lines, they come in a diversity of forms.

Adults, especially newcomers and seniors, as well as businesses, are at growing risk of financial scams and fraud. Over the last decade in Canada, police-reported fraud has increased 64%.¹⁰

Research suggests that in Canada, nearly one in five young people has experienced cyberbullying or cyberstalking in the last five years, and that vulnerable youth — who have already experienced a sexual or physical assault, an incident of discrimination, or identify as LGBTQ+ — are more than twice as likely to experience cyberbullying or cyberstalking when compared to their peers¹¹.

Child luring for the purposes of child pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation is also a significant concern for vulnerable youth — In Canada, police-reported child pornography crimes increased 233% from 2006-2016¹².

In addition, there is also growing concern related to the amount and quality of screen time that children experience. Research suggests screen time generally has negative developmental impacts on young children, and too much poor-quality screen time for older children can decrease physical and mental health.

The diversity and evolving nature of online and phone threats leaves

¹⁰ Statistics Canada:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00010-eng.htm>

¹¹ Statistics Canada:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/161219/dq161219a-eng.htm>

¹² Statistics Canada:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/54842-eng.htm>

many in Barrie struggling to keep up.

In order to address this challenge, organizations with a shared interest in addressing this type of threat will gather and coordinate actions that ultimately help improve the safety and wellbeing of Barrie residents. This may include, for example:

- Researching the nature and extent of particular online and phone threats in Barrie
- Recruiting relevant partners to help improve online and phone safety; and
- Identifying and raising awareness about the most effective self-help resources.

By including, in Barrie's CSWB Plan, official recognition of the evolving challenges posed by online and phone threats, the City of Barrie is helping to ensure that at-risk residents are aware of these threats and supported to protect themselves.

Anticipated Lead: Barrie Police

Anticipated Partners: Georgian College

Anticipated Steps:

- Identify one or more online or phone threats to address first, as well as the population(s) that are most at risk to this threat - considering, for example, the needs of newcomers, young people, and seniors.
- Identify pre-existing actions in Barrie related to the prioritized threat
- Identify best or promising practices from elsewhere related to the prioritized threats
- Select risk mitigation action(s), recruit necessary partners and implement chosen action(s)
- Identify whether additional online or phone threats should be addressed, and if so, repeat previous steps.

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will act as a partner, when appropriate, for risk mitigation actions identified by this action's lead and partners. This may include using City communication

assets to promote awareness of relevant threats and mitigation strategies.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Greater awareness, amongst police, community service workers, educators and other key stakeholders, of online and phone threats and of best practices for addressing online and phone threats
- One or more collaborative initiative taken to address a prioritized online or phone threat
- Greater awareness amongst members of the community who are vulnerable to the prioritized threat(s)
- Decreased victimization amongst vulnerable members from the prioritized threat(s)

[Page break]

Action 15: The City of Barrie and partners will develop an updated City of Barrie Pandemic Plan so that organizations in Barrie are well prepared to work together in the event of a future pandemic

Priority Risk: Pandemics

Additional Risks Addressed: Pandemics, when they occur, are likely to impact many of the community's most vulnerable; by preparing for future pandemics, Barrie also addresses many of the other identified risks to community safety and well-being.

Rationale:

The COVID-19 pandemic has helped illuminate both the strengths and gaps of Barrie's existing pandemic preparedness, and, as our collective response to COVID-19 unfolds, much is being learned about how partners can work together to prepare and respond to future pandemics in a manner that effectively protects the safety and well-being of Barrie residents.

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit began the process of updating the existing regional inter-agency pandemic plan¹³ in mid-2020. In doing so, SMDHU is seeking to incorporate ways that the unfolding regional response to COVID-19 is already extending beyond the existing, pre-COVID pandemic plan. As a pandemic response partner, the City of Barrie is being involved in the process of updating the regional inter-agency pandemic plan.

When finalized, this updated regional inter-agency pandemic plan will provide a strong regional framework that helps us collectively prepare for and respond to future pandemics as effectively as possible.

Yet this regional inter-agency pandemic plan will not detail all necessary pandemic-related actions relevant to the City of Barrie. While the plan will describe anticipated roles for lower-level municipalities, such as by-law enforcement and municipal facility repurposing, the City will need to ensure they are operationally prepared to play these roles. In addition, certain concerns and priorities that are relevant to Barrie residents — supports for the local economy, or the impact of restrictions on dangerous drug use, for example — may not be sufficiently addressed in the regional inter-agency pandemic plan.

An updated City of Barrie Pandemic Response Plan can dovetail with the updated regional inter-agency pandemic plan by detailing how the City of Barrie will work in concert with local organizations to prepare for

¹³ Pandemic Influenza Plan for the County of Simcoe and the District of Muskoka. (

and respond to a future pandemic.

Action Lead: City of Barrie's Emergency Management Program Coordinator

Action Partners: Simcoe Muskoka District Public Health Unit

Anticipated Steps: Over the next four years, the lead and partners will:

- Support the update of the regional inter-agency pandemic plan
- Engage stakeholders to help identify local pandemic preparedness priorities
- Working with partners, develop City of Barrie Pandemic Response Plan that dovetail with the updated regional inter-agency pandemic plan and reflects local pandemic preparedness priorities
- Take necessary pandemic preparedness actions as identified by the Pandemic Response Plan

Anticipated Role of the City of Barrie: The City of Barrie will lead the process of updating a City of Barrie Pandemic Plan and coordinate necessary actions with partners.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Updated regional inter-agency pandemic plan for the County of Simcoe and the District of Muskoka
- Updated City of Barrie Pandemic Plan
- Pandemic preparedness actions detailed in the City of Barrie Pandemic Plan undertaken

[Section Break]

Appendices

Origins of Community Safety and Well-being Planning in Ontario

In the late 1990s and early 2000s many jurisdictions began experimenting with community safety, public health, and epidemiological models for reducing violent crime. This was especially true in the United States, which was reacting to the high crime years of the 1980s and early 1990s. These approaches spread to various jurisdictions in Europe and eventually to Canada.

The interest in community safety and well-being planning in Ontario dates to the early 2010s when a number of Ontario police services and then the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police began to advocate for its use by Ontario municipalities in order to develop a more community well-being focused approach to policing and crime prevention. This was also a reaction to real concerns, especially in the GTA, to a number of high profile shootings and noted increases in youth crime and gang violence. The Roots of Youth Violence Report, published in 2008 by the provincial government, contributed to this growing realization that crime prevention had its roots in healthy communities.

In 2012-2013 four Ontario police services (Toronto, Greater Sudbury, Waterloo, and Peel Region), inspired by the success of these public health informed crime prevention models, created the Ontario Working Group on Collaborative, Risk-Driven Community Safety, to begin work on an Ontario model. Sustained advocacy by the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police and support from the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services helped to popularize this emphasis.

This new emphasis was influenced by both the growing scholarship around well-being under development through the CWI, as well as studies of contemporary well-being informed approaches to crime prevention in the United States and Scotland.

Beginning in 2013 and lasting for three years, public servants from the Ontario Ministry of Public Safety consulted with local governments, individual police services and the Ontario Provincial Police, doing research and beginning to plan for the eventual creation and implementation of community safety and well-being plans. Out of these processes came three documents; *Crime Prevention in Ontario: A Framework for Action* (2012), *Community Safety and Well-being in*

Ontario: A Snapshot of Local Voices (2014) and, *Community Safety and Well-being Framework: A Shared Commitment in Ontario* (2018).

This process around community safety and well-being in Ontario culminated in the inclusion of a requirement for municipal plans in Bill 175, the Safer Ontario Act, introduced in 2017. Though organizations representing smaller municipalities raised some concerns around local capacity to develop these plans, community safety and planning provisions were generally supported, and found themselves included, unaltered, in Bill 68, the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act. This legislation was introduced in 2019 to replace Bill 175 after the 2018 provincial election.

Despite the fact that the original legislation only passed in March 2018, a number of communities had already received pilot funding from the Ontario government to begin creating these plans. These municipalities included;

- Kenora, (2015)
- Halton County, (2016)
- Thunder Bay, (2017)
- Prince Edward County, (2018)

Government Framework: A Plan for Every Community in Ontario

In *Community Safety and Well-Being Planning Framework: A Shared Commitment for Ontario*, the Ontario government defines community safety and well-being 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.”

The framework document was published as a guide for Ontario communities embarking on the process of community safety and well-being planning. This process, mandated by the Ontario government in legislation passed in 2018, is looking forward to a province in which all municipalities and First Nations have completed community safety and well-being plans. These plans, expected to be dynamic and evolving, are to be renewed regularly and to guide and inform comprehensive and collaborative community safety and well-being planning into the future.

This comprehensive provincial collection of community safety and well-being plans is meant to identify and support communities that are perceived as at-risk, while also encouraging already safe and healthy communities to take stock of their assets, understand their liabilities and work to improve community safety and well-being while planning for and addressing identified risks.

Requirement for Consultation as Part of Community Safety and Well-Being Planning

Bill 68, the Comprehensive Police Services Act of 2019, the legislation that sets out the requirements for Community Safety and Well-Being Planning in Ontario municipalities, sets out requirements for representation on the community safety advisory committee and emphasizes the need for community consultation as a key component of this process.

As such it sets out who must be members of municipal community safety and well-being advisory committees that will guide and govern this process in each municipality. Each committee must include:

- A representative of a local health integration network or another healthcare body.
- A representative of the education sector.
- A representative of the community services sector.
- A representative from a youth serving agency.
- A representative from a child protection agency.
- A municipal employee or member of the municipal council.
- A member of the local police service board.
- The local chief of police or their representative.

The legislation sets out that in order to meet the requirements for community consultation the municipality must consult with:

- The Community Safety and Well-Being Planning Committee.
- Members of the Community; including youth, individuals receiving mental health or addiction services.
- Members of racialized groups and First Nations communities