

---

## MEMORANDUM

**CAO 17-2020**

**Subject:** Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Update

**Date:** July 23, 2020

**To:** Regional Council

**From:** Ron Tripp, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

---

This memo is intended to provide Council with an update on the development of Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and current activities associated with the project during the declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic.

At the time of the provincial declaration of a State of Emergency, on March 17, 2020, the development of Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being was in the first phase of the project: "Identify Priorities". Activities involved in this phase included designing and conducting a community engagement plan, analyzing data from focus groups, surveys and other sources, and establishing priorities to improve safety and well-being in the community. Between February 1, 2020 and March 31, 2020:

- In-person and virtual focus groups elicited feedback from over 150 staff from across 70 different organizations, and over 85 clients/advisors from across 8 lived experience or client advisory groups
- An online Community Safety and Well-Being public survey received input from 1,279 residents across Niagara

As a consequence of the pandemic, a total of 10 focus groups were postponed – including Indigenous-specific focus groups planned in collaboration with an Indigenous-led service provider. As a result, an *Interim Report on CSWB Community Consultation* based on summary findings obtained prior to COVID-19 is in development, recognizing that critical input from local Indigenous communities is still needed to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach to consultation.

Following the emergency orders and lockdown measures, the Ontario provincial government passed the *Coronavirus Support and Protection Act, 2020* on April 14, which included an amendment to the deadline under the *Police Services Act* for municipalities to develop and adopt community safety and well-being plans. Within the amendment, the January 1, 2021 deadline to adopt community safety and well-being plans was rescinded, and it was indicated that a new deadline will be established, by regulation, at a future date.

While the goal of community safety and well-being planning is to identify opportunities to *enhance* the safety and well-being of residents, during the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations have rapidly shifted to implement measures to *protect* the health and safety of residents and staff. To accomplish this, organizations have made significant changes to the allocation of resources (e.g. staff layoffs, staff reassignments and redeployment within and even across organizations) and experienced financial pressures to effectively support the prevention, identification and management of COVID-19 outbreaks.

**In consideration of the rescinded legislative deadline, restrictions to in-person consultations, and current demands placed on the local human services system, the Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee has elected to focus on the collective coordination of resuming or reopening services in Niagara through a Community Recovery Planning Table, to convene from July to December 2020.**

It is recognized that Niagara's CSWB Plan will be further enhanced through the work of short-term recovery planning, leveraging data and information-sharing made possible through this Table, and will contribute to a more in-depth understanding of how emergency events, such as the pandemic, affect vulnerable groups who were already at risk of harm or victimization. Early opportunities identified by membership include key activities such as:

- Leverage an *Interim Report on CSWB Community Consultation* based on summary findings obtained prior to COVID-19
- Collaborate and provide cross-sector strategic feedback on plans
- Support risk-based planning while prioritizing a holistic understanding of health and well-being
- Establish common planning principles
- Share matrices, tools, frameworks
- Provide data and information sharing relevant to planning efforts

The Advisory Committee will build on the work of the short-term Community Recovery Planning Table to inform the development of Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, or what might be understood as a more long-term, strategic plan, and return to formal CSWB plan development in January 2021.

Please feel free to reach out to my office should you have an additional questions.

Respectfully submitted and signed by,

---

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Acting Chief Administrative Officer