

# Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy

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# Agenda

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy
  - Recommendations
  - How to create change
- Next Steps
  - Community discussions and alignment
  - Niagara Prosperity Initiative funding

# Poverty as a Human Rights Issue



# Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy



- Recommended by Brock University report
- Identified in the Region's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
- Part of Council's Strategic Priorities under Equitable Region
- Links to other strategies i.e. HHAP, DEI, Ec-Dev, Transportation, Children's Services Plan etc.
- Developed with extensive community input and research

# The goal of the strategy

Working together to prevent and end poverty and increase well-being in Niagara



# Areas of focus

- **Indigenous Well-being**
- **Housing**
- **Income**
- **Employment**
- **Food Security**
- **Early Child Development**
- **Transportation**
- **Mental Health and Addiction**

# Recommendations

- **Indigenous Well-Being:** Indigenous community to develop a strategy for Indigenous specific poverty reduction initiatives.
- **Housing:** Provide housing stability services for people living in poverty to maintain their current housing, prevent eviction, improve social inclusion, and access income through periods of financial instability.

# Recommendations – slide 2

- **Income:** Increase opportunities for living wage employment in Niagara and advocate for adequate, liveable rates from government income assistance programs.
- **Employment:** Promote and develop decent work opportunities that provide fair wages and benefits and foster stable, consistent, and safe employment.



# Recommendations – slide 3

- **Food Security:** Improve access to fresh, culturally appropriate, affordable and nutritious foods through income-based solutions to food insecurity.
- **Early Child Development:** Improve access to affordable, high-quality child care for families living in poverty or at risk of poverty.

# Recommendations – slide 4

- **Transportation:** Continue the work of Niagara Region Transit to achieve affordable and equitable access to services across municipalities.
- **Mental Health and Addiction:** Enhance core service capacity and offer a choice of timely, early recovery interventions and treatments for people who are living in poverty or at risk of poverty.

# How to create change

- Service Access, Coordination and Capacity
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Leveraging Voices of Lived Expertise
- Changing Mindsets
- Advocacy
- Funding

# How to create change – slide 2

- Service Access, Coordination, and Capacity
  - improve ease of system navigation and access
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
  - poverty is shaped through the intersections of identity, such as age, culture, gender, race, ability and other social aspects

# How to create change – slide 3

- Leveraging Voices of Lived Expertise
  - creating opportunities for people with lived expertise to provide input in policy development, planning and decision making
- Changing Mindsets
  - address false belief systems that feed into negative and harmful stereotypes

# How to create change – slide 4

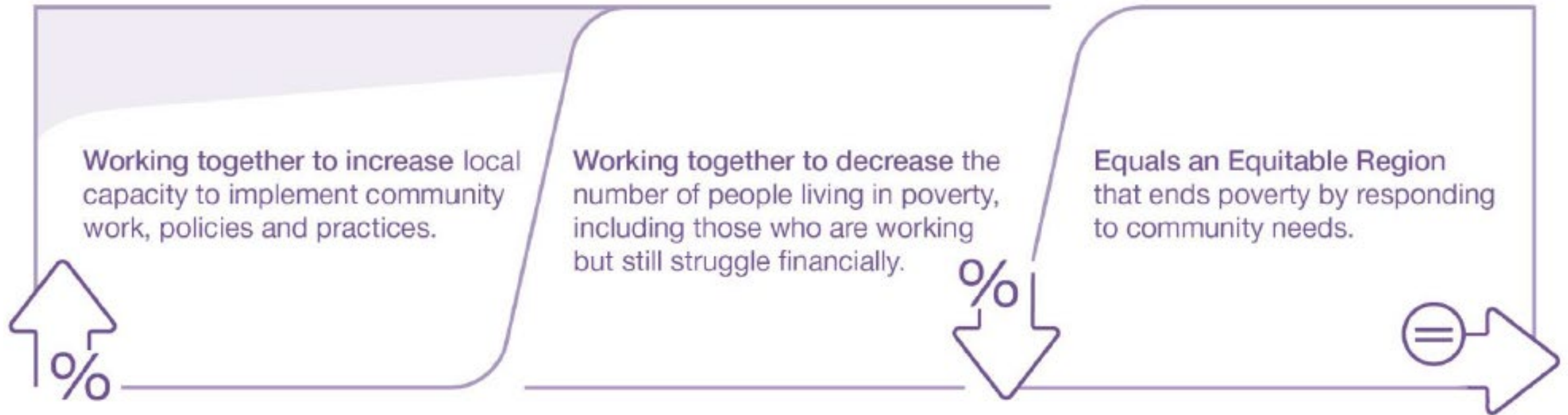
## ■ Advocacy

- ensure that people have their voice heard, to protect and promote rights and have views considered when decisions are being made

## ■ Funding

- adequate funding for outcome focused programs and addressing funding gaps

# Working Together



# Next steps 2024

- Connect with interested and affected parties and invite them to identify their role in helping to end poverty
- Explore with community champions ways to best implement actions listed in the strategy along with others that emerged during community engagement
- Align Niagara Prosperity Initiative with the strategy and release call for applications



# Next steps 2025-2028

- Start Niagara Prosperity Initiative funded projects
- Increase local capacity to implement community work, policies and practices
- Monitor and evaluate the strategy and impact on poverty
- Bring together implementation champions to explore the impact of our collective work and share knowledge about promising practices