



COUNCIL INFORMATION PACKAGE

Friday, July 19, 2024

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**PENDING MOTION REFERRAL/DEFERRAL SUMMARY
AS OF JULY 9, 2024**

CLERKS REF. NO.	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEM	DATE APPROVED BY COUNCIL	SUBJECT/ACTION	STATUS OF THE ITEM	COMMENTS/ COMPLETION INFORMATION
02-85 16-26	Infrastructure Services	July 19, 2016	Draft Sidewalk Policy that focuses on the creation of new sidewalks and the improvement and maintenance of existing sidewalks.	Status: In progress To Complete: Quarter 4, 2024	
99-99	Community Services	May 3, 2016	Report regarding potential alternatives to expand the use of waterway by the general public. Defers Report R&C-2017-08: Public Consultation Process - 'Go Quiet By-law' & Alternative Uses of the Waterway to the General Committee meeting on September 26, 2017.	Status: In progress To Complete: R&C-2017-06 - October 4, 2017 was received for information.	
17-2	Planning & Development Services Traffic & By-laws	September 19, 2017	Refers back to staff for report regarding Section 8 Schedule 3 Food Vehicle, Section 7 Schedule 2 Food Premises and Exemption Section 10 Schedule 4 Hawker and Peddler from By-law 2011-173. Went to the May 15th Council Meeting to be deferred to staff for a report to a General Committee meeting.	Status: In progress To Complete: Report coming back July 2024.	
09-152 18-2	Planning & Development Services and Fire Department	June 5, 2018	Report on an education strategy to the public, tenants and landlords regarding rental housing.	Status: In progress To Complete: Fire and Planning to provide an update report in 2024.	

CLERKS REF. NO.	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEM	DATE APPROVED BY COUNCIL	SUBJECT/ACTION	STATUS OF THE ITEM	COMMENTS/ COMPLETION INFORMATION
19-28	Planning & Development Services	March 5, 2019	Request for a Community Teaching Garden to staff for study and review.	Status: In progress To Complete: To be brought to the Green Advisory Committee for consideration in 2024.	
99-110	Community Services	May 7, 2019	Report regarding naming the trails along the waterway.	Status: In progress To Complete:	
19-75	Clerks Division	May 21, 2019	Report on suitable replacements for paper by becoming paper free by the end of the year 2019. Motion at BRC in Sept./Oct. for paper copies.	Status: In progress To Complete:	
19-28	CAO	July 9, 2019	Report regarding a partnership between all 4 Service Clubs to a General Committee meeting. (Kiwanis, Lions, Optimist and Rotary Clubs).	Status: In progress To Complete: CAOs office is awaiting a response from the community groups.	
19-88	CAO	July 9, 2019	Create a "Downtown Vacancy Mitigation Action Plan" between the City, Business, Community and applicable stakeholders that addresses vacancy rates in our downtown areas.	Status: In progress To Complete: To be included in the upcoming Downtown Revitalization Strategy 2024 work.	

CLERKS REF. NO.	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEM	DATE APPROVED BY COUNCIL	SUBJECT/ACTION	STATUS OF THE ITEM	COMMENTS/ COMPLETION INFORMATION
99-99	Community Services	September 3, 2019	Staff to start a public consultation process on the design of a new park area and that a report to include public replacement of the current park infrastructure and enhancements due to the loss of parkland come to General Committee by the end of 2019.	Status: In progress To Complete:	
17-19	Community Services	September 17, 2019	Staff to consult with public, agencies and other stakeholders regarding tree preservation.	Status: In progress To Complete:	
19-103	Planning & Development Services	September 17, 2019	Report on possible enhancements to the public notification process for Committee of Adjustment hearings. Went to the October 1, 2019 Council meeting requesting that subsequent report be provided outlining costs for the two options provided.	Status: In progress To Complete: 3 rd Quarter in 2024	
08-48	Planning & Development Services	February 18, 2020	Refers back to staff a report regarding an Occupancy Standards By-law.	Status: In progress To Complete: 2 nd Quarter 2024.	
19-94	Planning & Development Services	February 18, 2020	Refers back to staff matter regarding the petition from residents from 155 Gadsby Avenue, there be no change to the zoning, which is currently zoned as open space, in order to protect wild life.	Status: In progress To Complete: Ontario Land Tribunal matter at this time.	

CLERKS REF. NO.	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEM	DATE APPROVED BY COUNCIL	SUBJECT/ACTION	STATUS OF THE ITEM	COMMENTS/ COMPLETION INFORMATION
20-77	Infrastructure Services	June 16, 2020	WHEREAS due to the recent pandemic the City of Welland is not able to provide services that they normally would perform do to the safety of its employees; and further WHEREAS if residents did in fact require a service that is normally provided by the City, in this case being a sewer related service and had to act immediately and contact an outside contractor and in resolving the issue a fee was paid. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WELLAND directs staff to create a report to reimburse part or all of the fee paid by the owner (with guidelines similar to the rodent control program to be adhered to) and the amount be capped and for a certain period to time.	Status: In progress To Complete:	
20-106	Planning & Development Services	October 6, 2020	Signed petition from the residents of Caithness Drive regarding turning an established residential area from a single family homes to duplexes and refers this petition to Planning staff for review.	Status: In progress To Complete: Will be considered as part of update to City's Official Plan in 2024.	
20-19	Planning & Development Services	October 20, 2020	Refers to staff for report the notice of motion regarding 113 Michael Drive, redesignates this area as Open Space and proceed with an RFP to have a park with playground equipment be installed at this location.	Status: In progress To Complete: Approval for Park Development and will be amended to Open Space in the updated to the City's Official Plan.	

CLERKS REF. NO.	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEM	DATE APPROVED BY COUNCIL	SUBJECT/ACTION	STATUS OF THE ITEM	COMMENTS/ COMPLETION INFORMATION
20-82	Planning & Development Services	March 2, 2021	Report regarding a Municipal Comprehensive Review, under section 4.3.3.1 of the Official Plan, for the property outlined in Report P&B-2021-08 for an Employment Land conversion from Gateway Economic Centre to Agriculture.	Status: In progress To Complete: To be considered as part of the update to the Official Plan in 2024.	
21-58	CAO & Planning & Development Services	March 2, 2021	Report regarding Brownfield Employment Lands that are non-employment producing within the city limits.	Status: In progress To Complete: Will be included in 2024 update to the Brownfield CIP.	
21-59	CAO & Economic Development	March 2, 2021	Report on a strategy to aggressively pursue the acquisition of seaway lands from the Federal government, to discuss with them an accelerated process to declare such lands surplus and enter into discussions for the acquisition of identified properties and review options for "lease to own" such lands until such time as they become available. Staff identify Seaway lands of interest and develop servicing plans and other strategies as may be required and further staff identify other lands within and/or adjacent to employment lands identified in Welland's official plan that would be strategic acquisitions for the purpose of industrial/employment use and see if owners are interested in selling those lands to the municipality. If they are not interested the city would not pursue expropriation. In relation to all of the above staff would prepare strategies and associated costs to service lands so that they would be "shovel ready".	Status: In progress To Complete: Update report to come in 2024 through Economic Development.	
06-156	Planning & Development Services	April 20, 2021	Report as part of the Official Plan Review detailing what Urban Farming initiatives Council should consider accommodating.	Status: In progress To Complete:	

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21-92	Planning & Development Services	July 6, 2021	Report regarding petition by residents of Seaway Pointe Condominium at 330 Prince Charles Drive regarding parking space for the Evertrust Development at 350 Prince Charles Drives.	Status: In progress To Complete: Applications were approved and building is currently under construction.	
98-82	Community Services	September 21, 2021	Refers Report R&C-2021-17 back to staff to present an updated design to an upcoming General Committee Meeting based on the comments from members of Council.	Status: In progress To Complete:	
07-144	Economic Development	January 31, 2023	Dissolution of the Welland Development Commission (WDC) referred back to staff for further information.	Status: In process. To Complete: 4 th quarter of 2024.	
05-50	Planning & Development Services	March 7 & 28, 2023	Refers back to staff regarding changes to the Municipal Heritage Register from the Town of Grimsby and Report P&B-2023-06.	Status: In process To Complete: 2 nd Quarter 2024.	
02-160	Planning & Development Services	March 27, 2023	Staff report re: having Council representation or staff on the Committee of Adjustment, Grants and Programs and Property Standards Committee.	Status: In process To Complete: 2 nd Quarter 2024.	
22-152	Planning & Development Services	March 27, 2023	Develop content for residents, simplifying and explain the process to provide a better understanding for interested parties, and to freely provide these resources to members of the public by posing online on the City website.	Status: In Progress To Complete: 3 rd Quarter 2024.	

CLERKS REF. NO.	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEM	DATE APPROVED BY COUNCIL	SUBJECT/ACTION	STATUS OF THE ITEM	COMMENTS/ COMPLETION INFORMATION
02-160	Human Resources Division/ Clerks Division	May 16, 2023	Refers back to staff a notice of motion to arrange a customized training session, Human Rights and Equity: The Role and Obligations of Municipal Leaders offered by the Association of Municipalities not later than Q2 in 2024.	Status: To Complete:	
23-22	Planning & Development Services Traffic and By-laws Division	May 16, 2023	Refers back to staff Report P&B-2023-15: Cash In Lieu of parking Policy. Went to the July 18, 2023 Council Meeting to consult with the development community and public with regards to the proposed Cash-In-Lieu Parking By-law with a final By-law for consideration.	Status: In progress To Complete:	
21-79	Planning & Development Services	June 6, 2023	Refers back to staff Report P&B-2023-22 Application for Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment for 368 Aqueduct Street and 155 Gadsby Avenue.	Status: In progress To Complete: At Ontario Land Tribunal due to decision from Council.	
22-137	Planning & Development Services	June 6, 2023	Refers back to staff Report P&B-2023-20 Application for Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment for 50 Bruce Street.	Status: In progress To Complete: At Ontario Land Tribunal due to decision from Council. Went to CW on April 23/24.	
02-160	CAO	September 5, 2023	Refers back to staff notice of motion re: shall be notified in camera if any entity including but not limited to committees, commissions, agencies or boards that the city funds, or approves members or places members of council on, if this entity experiences any litigation involving its members.	Status: To Complete:	
02-160	Clerks Division	September 19, 2023	Refers back to staff Report CLK-2023-19: Amendment to Hybrid Model – Meeting of Council.	Status: To Complete:	

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23-122	Clerks Division	September 19, 2023	Refers back to staff Notice of Motion regarding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report recommendation #57.	Status: City Clerk is exploring training opportunities. To Complete:	
21-121	Engineering Division/Planning Division	November 21, 2023	Report to increase the funding for SWAP Program to soften costs to the homeowner.	Status: To Complete:	
06-84	Community Services	December 12, 2023	Correspondence from Town of Fort Erie re: encouraging contribution supporting Hospice Niagara and refers the motion back to staff for a report.	Status: To Complete:	
23-28	Community Services	December 19, 2023	Presentation re: Crimestoppers Program and refers matter to staff for report.	Status: To Complete:	
99-99	Community Services	January 9, 2024	Prepare a report in regards to creating and allowing family caping along the west side of the former Welland Canal.	Status: To Complete:	
23-22	Community Services	January 9, 2024	Report that would address parking at Chippawa Park from the pavilion on First Avenue north to Laughlin Avenue on the park property which is currently grass/open space similar to Burgar Park.	Status: To Complete:	
24-19	Community Services	February 27, 2024/ April 9, 2024	Report to include but is not limited to – the specifics and terms of the contract, the bidders, scoring and the awarding of the contract, any damages, future replanting, costs and funding and to include a recommendation to Council.	Status: In progress To Complete:	

REF. NO.	RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEM	APPROVED BY COUNCIL	SUBJECT/ACTION	STATUS OF THE ITEM	COMMENTS/ COMPLETION INFORMATION
24-36	Planning & Development Services	March 19, 2024	Petition from residents of the City of Welland opposing the planning application for the zoning at 44 Heron Street.	Status: To Complete:	
23-29	Clerk's Division	April 9, 2024	Staff to prepare a report for Council to consider a "Councillor Information Report".	Status: To Complete:	
24-14	Clerk's Division	April 9, 2024	Staff to provide council with options on a reduced council size, with the sole objective to reduce the cost on to the taxpayer.	Status: To Complete:	
24-22	Planning & Development Services Traffic and By-laws Division	April 23, 2024	Report to consider amending the City's Zoning By-law 2017-117 to include a requirement for visitor parking, as well as reviewing the parking requirements spaces per dwelling units in the surrounding municipalities.	Status: To Complete:	
24-22	Planning & Development Services Traffic and By-laws Division	April 23, 2024	Refers back to staff notice of motion regarding lowering 50km per hour speed limits to 40km per hour speed limits to reduce accident impacts.	Status: To Complete:	
21-121	Infrastructure Services	May 7, 2024	Refers back to staff Report ENG-2024-13: Increasing Sewage Water Alleviation Program (SWAP) Grant Allocations.	Status: To Complete:	

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24-22	Planning & Development Services Traffic and By-laws Division	May 7, 2024	Refers back to staff Report TRAF-2024-04: Update to Traffic and Parking By-law 89-2000.	<u>Status:</u> <u>To Complete:</u>	
24-22	Planning & Development Services Traffic and By-laws Division	May 14, 2024	Directs staff to create a report on increasing the maximum yearly eligible amount per resident under the Roden Rebate program.	<u>Status:</u> <u>To Complete:</u>	
02-160	Clerk's Division	May 28, 2024	Staff to find a suitable provider to begin streaming Welland City Council Meetings on Facebook.	<u>Status:</u> <u>To Complete:</u>	
24-22	Planning & Development Services Traffic and By-laws Division	May 28, 2024	By-law staff present to Council a formal presentation update on property standards, grass cutting, fines and enforcement, empty buildings within the City.	<u>Status:</u> <u>To Complete:</u>	
24-22	Planning & Development Services Traffic and By-laws Division	July 9, 2024	Refers back to staff Report TRAF-2024-07: Update to Traffic and Parking By-law 89-2000 for investigation of removing the bicycle lanes and having parking only on one side.	<u>Status:</u> <u>To Complete:</u>	

June 27, 2024

City of Belleville
Attn: Clerks Department

Via email: nhenderson@belleville.ca

RE: Family Doctors Resolution

During the June 24, 2024, regular meeting of council, the request submitted by the City of Belleville regarding the Family Doctors was brought forward and discussed, the following resolution was passed:

Moved: Debb Pitel Seconded: Liz Welsh

THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petrolia support the City of Belleville's resolution dated May 13, 2024;
AND THAT confirmation of the Town's support resolution be forwarded to Premier Doug Ford, MPP Bob Bailey, the City of Belleville and all municipalities in Ontario.

Carried

Kind regards,

Original Signed

Mandi Pearson
Director of Legislative Services | Deputy Operations | Clerk

cc: file
Premier Doug Ford
MPP Bob Bailey, Sarnia-Lambton
Ontario Municipalities

Encl.

Phone: (519)882-2350 • Fax: (519)882-3373 • Theatre: (800)717-7694

411 Greenfield Street, Petrolia, ON, N0N 1R0

www.petrolia150.com www.town.petrolia.on.ca





CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
TELEPHONE 613-968-6481
FAX 613-967-3206

City of Belleville

169 FRONT STREET
BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO
K8N 2Y8

May 16, 2024

Todd Smith, MPP
Prince Edward Hastings
5503 Hwy 62 S., Phase 1, Unit #4
Belleville, ON K8N 4Z7

via e-mail: Todd.Smithco@pc.ola.org

Ric Bresee, MPP
Hastings-Lennox&Addington
8 Dundas St. W
Napanea, ON K7R 1Z4

via e-mail: Ric.Bresee@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Smith and Minister Bresee:

**RE: City of Belleville Healthcare Resolution in Support of Family
Doctors
New Business
10. Belleville City Council Meeting, May 13, 2024**

This is to advise you that at the Council Meeting of May 13, 2024, the following resolution was approved.

"WHEREAS, the Province of Ontario is responsible for providing quality health care to all residents of Ontario;

AND WHEREAS, Family medicine is the backbone of the healthcare system and providing timely access to a primary health care provider for everyone in the Province is essential and should be the Provincial Government's highest priority;

AND WHEREAS, the shortage of family physicians across the province has reached a crisis point where millions of Ontario residents do not have a family doctor and hospitals, emergency rooms and clinics are overloaded by the health care needs of Ontario residents;

.J2

10. New Business
Belleville City Council Meeting
May 13, 2024

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AND WHEREAS, studies have shown that without access to a primary care provider, patients end up with poorer health outcomes and it costs the health care system more;

AND WHEREAS, the Province of Ontario could address this issue quickly and efficiently by increasing wages paid to family physicians and lessening the administrative burden all family doctors face with managing practices;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Province of Ontario take immediate action to ensure family physicians are properly compensated with immediate fee increases and that the administrative burden now being experienced by family doctors be reduced so they have more time to see their patients;

AND FURTHER THAT, the City Clerk forward Council's resolutions resulting from Council's approval of these recommendations to premier Doug Ford, Health Minister Sylvia Jones, MPP Todd Smith, MPP Ric Bresee, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and to the municipal Clerks of Ontario's municipalities;

AND FURTHER THAT Council request a direct response from the MPPs within 30 days."

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours truly,


Matt MacDonald
Director of Corporate Services/City Clerk



Phone: (519)882-2350 • Fax: (519)882-2351

411 G

www.petr.ca

MMacD/nh
Pc: Premier Doug Ford
Health Minister Sylvia Jones
AMO
Municipal Clerks of Ontario



City of Stratford, Corporate Services Department

Clerk's Office

City Hall, P. O. Box 818, Stratford, Ontario N5A 6W1

Tel: 519-271-0250, extension 5237

Email: clerks@stratford.ca

Website: www.stratford.ca

July 12, 2024

Sent via email –bthornton@pecounty.on.ca

Ben Thornton,
Council and Committee Coordinator
Prince Edward County

Re: Resolution - Call to Action to Meet the Deadline of an Accessible Ontario by 2025

We acknowledge receipt of your correspondence dated March 28, 2024, regarding the above-mentioned matter.

The said correspondence was provided to Stratford City Council for their information as part of the April 8, 2024, Council meeting Consent Agenda (CA-2024-055). Council adopted the following resolution:

THAT CA-2024-005, being a resolution from Prince Edward County regarding a call to action to meet the deadline of an accessible Ontario by 2025, be endorsed.

Sincerely,

A. Pascual

Audrey Pascual, Deputy Clerk

/mf

cc: Premier of Ontario
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
All Ontario municipalities

March 28, 2024

Please be advised that during the regular Council meeting of March 26, 2024 the following resolution regarding support for 'a call to action' to meet the deadline of an Accessible Ontario by 2025 was carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-151

DATE: March 26, 2024

MOVED BY: Councillor MacNaughton

SECONDED BY: Councillor Pennell

WHEREAS the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act (AODA) is ground-breaking legislation, created to help people with disabilities fully participate in society, bring them to the table in crafting regulations, and build mechanisms to enforce standards;

WHEREAS Rich Donovan, an expert in accessibility issues, was appointed as the Independent Reviewer of the Act in 2022, and in his 2023 legislative review declared a crisis as a necessary catalyst to get Ontario back on track for accessibility;

WHEREAS at least 2.9 million Ontarians currently live with a disability, representing at least 22% of the consumer base and the workforce, but due to barriers, Ontarians with disabilities are too often falling short of their full potential;

WHEREAS the AODA aims to develop, implement and enforce standards related to goods, services, accommodation, employment and buildings before Jan. 1, 2025, and municipalities, as the level of government closest to the people are at the front lines, developing, implementing and enforcing these standards without meaningful guidance on its implementation and/or enforcement by the Province;

WHEREAS people with disabilities and advocates, including Prince Edward County's Accessibility Advisory Committee, note the slow pace of current and previous Ontario governments in implementing the AODA and there are growing concerns there will be no renewed push to keep accessibility issues at the forefront after 2025;

WHEREAS Prince Edward County is dedicated and committed to creating a welcoming environment so that all people may have equitable access to programs, goods, services and facilities, but making investments to achieve the AODA

standards has been challenging given the lack of consistent and stable funding for municipalities to remove accessibility barriers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of Prince Edward County strongly encourages action on the part of the Provincial Government to urgently:

- a) create a "Municipal Accessibility Fund" for municipalities to develop, implement and enforce AODA standards related to goods, services, accommodation, employment and buildings. Such a fund could be modeled after the Canada Community-Building Fund or the Ontario Cannabis Legalization Implementation Fund on a per household basis;
- b) to commit to working with municipalities to implement the Donovan Review immediate crisis recommendations;

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor write a letter in support of this resolution to the Minister of Seniors and Accessibility, and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Seniors and Accessibility, the Minister of Children, Community, and Social Services, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus, and all Ontario Municipalities.

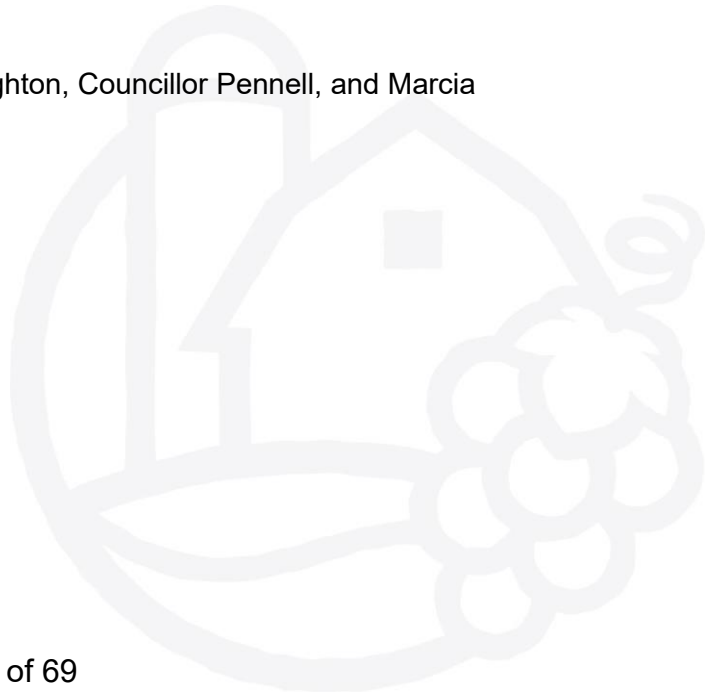
CARRIED

Yours truly,



Catalina Blumenberg, **CLERK**

cc: Mayor Steve Ferguson, Councillor MacNaughton, Councillor Pennell, and Marcia Wallace, CAO





City of Stratford, Corporate Services Department

Clerk's Office

City Hall, P. O. Box 818, Stratford, Ontario N5A 6W1

Tel: 519-271-0250, extension 5237

Email: clerks@stratford.ca

Website: www.stratford.ca

July 12, 2024

Sent via email – chandley@loyalist.ca

Cindy Handley,
Administrative Assistant
Corporate Services Department
Loyalist Township

Re: Resolution regarding solutions to resolve significant financial and budgetary pressures relating to infrastructure development, maintenance and repairs

We acknowledge receipt of your correspondence dated March 18, 2024, regarding the above-mentioned matter.

The said correspondence was provided to Stratford City Council for their information as part of the April 8, 2024, Council meeting Consent Agenda (CA-2024-049). Council adopted the following resolution:

THAT CA-2024-049, being a resolution from the Loyalist Township regarding solutions to resolve significant financial and budgetary pressures relating to infrastructure development, maintenance and repairs, be endorsed.

Sincerely,

A. Pascual

Audrey Pascual, Deputy Clerk

/mf

cc: Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
All Ontario municipalities

March 18, 2024

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

DELIVERED VIA EMAIL

Dear Premier Ford:

Re: Motion regarding solutions to resolve significant financial and budgetary pressures relating to infrastructure development, maintenance and repairs

Please be advised that at its regular meeting of March 12, 2024, Loyalist Township Council passed the following resolution:

Resolution 2024-49

Moved by Councillor Budarick
Seconded by Councillor Parks

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has agreed to assume responsibility for the Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway from the City of Toronto, which will be uploaded to the Province of Ontario;

AND WHEREAS like the City of Toronto, The Corporation of Loyalist Township and all municipalities in the Province of Ontario are experiencing significant financial and budgetary pressures including those related to infrastructure development, maintenance and repairs, and are seeking reasonable solutions to address the same while balancing their financial books;

AND WHEREAS the uploading of municipal highway infrastructure to the Province of Ontario or, alternatively, appropriately increasing the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund to Ontario municipalities will assist municipalities in addressing such financial challenges;

AND BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- a. The Province of Ontario:



- upload from local municipalities the responsibility of and costs associated with the continued construction, operation, and maintenance of major municipally-owned highways throughout the Province of Ontario to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation; or
 - alternatively, if uploading is not the preferred option of the Province and/or local municipality, to appropriately increase the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund to municipalities so as to fairly and equitably allocate resources to Ontario municipalities.
- b. A copy of this resolution be circulated the Honourable Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, the Ontario Minister of Transportation; MPP Ric Bresee, Hastings, Lennox & Addington; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; all municipalities in Ontario.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anne Kantharajah".

Anne Kantharajah
Township Clerk

Cc: the Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, the Ontario Minister of Transportation
Ric Bresee, M.P.P., Hastings, Lennox & Addington
Association of Municipalities
All municipalities in Ontario
Jim Hegadorn, Mayor, Loyalist Township
Rebecca Murphy, CAO, Loyalist Township
Councillor Budarick, Loyalist Township
Councillor Parks, Loyalist Township



Office of the Regional Chair | Jim Bradley

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, PO Box 1042 Thorold, ON L2V 4T7

Telephone: 905-980-6000 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215 Fax: 905-685-6243

Email: jim.bradley@niagararegion.ca

www.niagararegion.ca

July 11, 2024

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Bldg Rm 281, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Sent by e-mail: premier@ontario.ca

RE: Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy – Social Assistance Rates

A five-year community-led Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) (2024-2028) was launched in March 2024 and approved by Niagara Regional Council.

The strategy reflects concerns, opportunities and actions identified by residents during a broad engagement process and outlines eight Areas of Focus with one recommendation for each area. The Areas of Focus are: Indigenous Well-Being, Housing, Income, Employment, Food Security, Early Child Development, Transportation, and Mental Health and Addiction. Each Area of Focus includes one recommendation and a set of actions that addresses the issue of poverty within that area.

Within the strategy, income was identified as the primary determinant of poverty. The recommendation that addresses income levels calls for Niagara to advocate for adequate, liveable rates from government income assistance programs.

At the June 27, 2024, meeting of Niagara Regional Council a motion was passed calling for a copy of the NPRS be circulated and for the provincial government to increase the Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) basic financial assistance rates and establish a policy to index rates to inflation for OW.

The approved motion is as follows:

1. That the Regional Chair **BE DIRECTED** to send correspondence to the Provincial Government requesting that action be taken to increase the Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) basic financial assistance rates and establish a policy to index rates to inflation for OW similar to ODSP, to mitigate further hardship that has resulted from frozen rates.

2. That the Regional Chair **BE DIRECTED** to circulate a copy of the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy and associated correspondence to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), the Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO), the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA), local area MPs and MPPs and local area municipalities for consideration of further actions required to address poverty.

To this end, as directed by Regional Council, I want to formally request that the Provincial Government increase the Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) basic financial assistance rates and begin a collaborative process to develop and implement a policy to index rates to inflation for OW.

Sincerely,



Jim Bradley, Chair
Niagara Region

- cc: The Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health
The Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
The Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Sam Oosterhoff, MPP, Niagara West
Jeff Burch, MPP, Niagara Centre
Wayne Gates, MPP, Niagara Falls
Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens, MPP, St. Catharines

Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy

2024 - 2028

Acknowledgements

Authors

Lisa Gallant

Poverty Reduction Strategy Advisor,
Community Services, Niagara Region

Marc Todd

Manager, Community Services,
Niagara Region

Contributors

Residents and community champions made this strategy possible.

Thank you to the hundreds of people in Niagara for sharing their time, wisdom, commitment and stories. Thank you to community groups listed in "[Appendix A: Locations of community engagement](#)" on page 33 for hosting sessions to increase the reach of engagement and facilitators for leading meaningful community conversations.

Special thanks to

Mary Ellen Simon

Director of Housing, Niagara Regional Native Centre
leading engagement with Indigenous community in Niagara

Olivia Schmidt

Student, Brock University
supporting research referencing

Rachel Sam

Former Poverty Reduction Strategy Advisor,
Niagara Region (Phase 1)
community engagement and research review

Land acknowledgement

Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The Regional Municipality of Niagara stands with all Indigenous peoples, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

The Regional Municipality of Niagara is committed to equity and respect for all by ensuring Indigenous voices are heard and included in our plans and programs. In addition, we are committed to eradicating anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination within our community.

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A message from the Poverty Reduction Steering Committee

The goal of this strategy is:

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

The Poverty Reduction Steering Committee, made up of individuals from government, Niagara residents, Indigenous community, education and health, is pleased to present Niagara's Poverty Reduction Strategy. It is the mission of this committee and of this strategy that by **working together to prevent and end poverty and increase well-being in Niagara** we will create positive change for our community.

This strategy has been shaped by diverse voices of residents in Niagara including those who are disproportionately affected by poverty. The actions outlined in the strategy are supported by research and best practices and inspired by work happening in other communities to end poverty.

The Committee played a pivotal role in developing the recommendations, identifying interconnected strategies and providing input into the development of a picture of poverty in Niagara – what poverty is, what poverty means in people's lives and how poverty affects all of us.

Through the community's voice, the Committee selected the Areas of Focus of this strategy and prioritized eight recommendations aligned with best practice and existing strategies. These Areas of Focus are Indigenous well-being, housing, income, employment, food security, early child development, transportation, mental health and addiction. Preventing and ending poverty will be achieved by working together as a community to strategically address factors that impact and reduce poverty within these Areas of Focus.

During implementation, the Committee will look at ways to increase opportunities for a network of champions to exchange ideas and harness the power of their successes. The Committee will call on a collaborative approach. **To achieve success, we need people with lived expertise, Indigenous peoples, and other residents, along with representatives from government, funders, businesses, health and educational institutions, non-profit organizations, service clubs and associations to collaborate, share leadership, exchange ideas, engage community and mobilize action.**

We recognize that ending poverty will take more than five years given the complex nature of poverty and the need for a community-wide response. This strategy provides a major step to achieve this goal. We thank everyone who engaged in community conversations and look forward to continuing our collaborative work to end poverty in Niagara.

Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy

Steering Committee members

Lori Watson (Chair)

Director, Community Services

Haley Bateman

Niagara Regional Councillor

Laura Ip

Niagara Regional Councillor

David Oakes

Chief Administrative Officer,
City of St. Catharines

Arceli Olivares

Niagara resident

Christina Thomas

Niagara resident

Mary Ellen Simon

Director of Housing,
Niagara Regional Native Centre

Marie Louise Bowering

Indigenous Community Connections Facilitator,
Niagara Catholic District School Board

Jon Braithwaite

Chief Executive Officer,
The Hope Centre

Jennifer Gauthier

Executive Director,
Birchway and Chair Niagara Poverty
Reduction Network

Vivian Kinnaird

Chief Executive Officer,
Workforce Collective

Taralea McLean

Executive Director,
Bridges Community Health Centre

Mary-Beth Raddon

Department Chair Sociology,
Brock University

Carla Stout

General Manager,
Niagara Transit Commission

Ruth Unrau

Host, Niagara Made,
NewsTalk 610 CKTB

Nadine Wallace

Executive Director,
Contact Niagara

Why Niagara needs a strategy

A strategy lays a foundation to build a community of best practice as it relates to how and when we interact and provide service. Recognizing that Niagara Region and many local providers already deliver services to lift people out of poverty, this strategy provides a way to identify best practice, uncover gaps and leverage local knowledge to inform future action. The strategy can play a significant role to inform where to best invest resources in areas such as housing, economic development, child care, transit and the Niagara Prosperity Initiative, to have the biggest impact on poverty reduction.

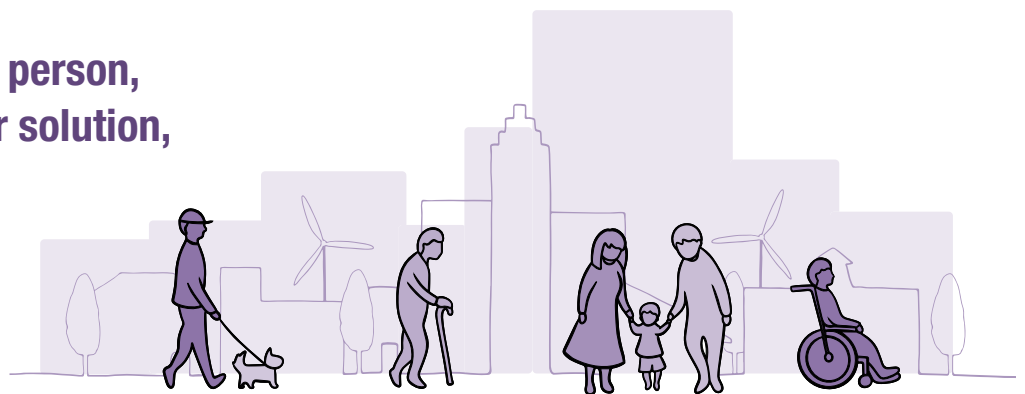
Definition and impacts of poverty

The Government of Canada's first Poverty Reduction Strategy, released in 2018, describes poverty as "the condition of a person who is deprived of the resources, means, choices and power necessary to acquire and maintain a basic living standard needed to promote and facilitate integration and participation in society".¹

Poverty is a complex issue with no single solution. We recognize that everyone experiences poverty differently. Each person's story is unique and a result of multiple complex and interrelated causes. As described by Tamarack, a Canadian institute that supports strategies that enable people to learn with and from each other to solve major community challenges, "There are many interconnected reasons why people are poor.

For practically every family, every problem magnifies the impact of the others, and all are so tightly interlocked that one reversal can produce a chain reaction with results far distant from the original cause. If problems are interlocking, then so must be solutions. A job alone is not enough. Medical insurance alone is not enough. Good housing alone is not enough. Reliable transportation, careful family budgeting, effective parenting, effective schooling, are not enough when each is achieved in isolation from the rest. There is no single variable that can be altered to help people move away from poverty. **If problems are interlocking, then solutions must also be interlocking".²**

Poverty is unique to each person, complex, with no singular solution, a human rights issue



1 Employment and Social Development Canada. (2018). Opportunity for All-Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy, 7.

2 Loewen, G. (2009). Compendium of Poverty Reduction Strategies and Frameworks. Tamarack An Institute for Community Engagement, 9.

Community Input

The complexity and interconnectedness of poverty was evident during engagement. When talking about the experience of living in poverty, Niagara residents used words such as **depression, hopelessness and despair**, and they linked poverty to negative outcomes such as gender-based violence, discrimination, homelessness, victimization and exploitation. Research reinforces the interconnectedness of poverty with many issues. For example, “reducing financial stress may decrease potential for relationship conflict and dissatisfaction, which are strong predictors of gender-based violence.”³

Further, participants spoke to elements of social and spiritual poverty through stigma, social isolation and lack of purpose. Social poverty exists where people are isolated and lack the formal and informal supports necessary to be resilient in times of crisis and change. Spiritual poverty exists where people lack meaning and purpose in their lives.⁴

Poverty is a human rights issue. Human rights are the basic rights every person has, inherently and universally, to live with safety and dignity. Examples include the right to work, the right to adequate food and the right to housing. In October 2023, the Ontario Human Rights Commission released its Human Rights-Based Approach Framework.⁵

We will leverage this framework to bring a human rights approach to ensure an equitable, inclusive Niagara that provides enough for all.

3 Niolon, P. H., Kearns, M., Dills, J., Rambo, K., Irving, S., Armstead, T., & Gilbert, L. (2017). Preventing Intimate Partner Violence Across the Lifespan: A Technical Package of Programs, Policies, and Practices. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

4 Poverty Institute (n.d.). Poverty in Canada. povertyinstitute.ca/poverty-canada

5 Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2023). Human Rights-Based Approach Framework.

Poverty in Niagara

The Low-Income Measure After-Tax is an established measure of poverty in Canada. All persons in a household are considered to be living in poverty if their household income falls below half of median incomes of the same household size.

To fully comprehend the state of poverty in Niagara, it is important to understand the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In pre-pandemic statistics of 2016, Niagara had 14.5 per cent of people living in poverty (64,944 people). Numbers from Statistics Canada in 2021 indicate that Niagara had 10.4 per cent of people living in poverty (49,706 people).⁶

The National Advisory Council on Poverty in their 2023 report, “Blueprint for Transformation”, indicated that the temporary increase in government transfers available during the pandemic influenced the 2021 poverty statistics. This growth in income protected people from falling into poverty and helped lift many people out of poverty. In Niagara, 15,238 people in Niagara temporarily moved out of poverty, a change of four per cent from 2016 to 2021. This information reconciles with what local service providers saw. For example, food banks reported a drop in visits during that time; however, since 2021, use of food banks has significantly increased from pre-pandemic visits. This suggests that income-based solutions are key to reducing poverty.

As cautioned by the National Advisory Council on Poverty, the phasing out of the COVID-19 income supports alongside higher inflation and increasing cost of living mean that poverty rates have likely increased. It is important to keep this context in mind when comparing the poverty rate to earlier years.

⁶ Source. Statistics Canada, Census Profiles, 2016 and 2021 Census of Population. Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT).

One Niagara Regional grant program that has a direct goal to alleviate and reduce poverty in Niagara, is the Niagara Prosperity Initiative. Since its inception in 2008, Regional Council approved \$1.5 million annually to fund local projects. This funding resulted in work with over 90 organizations and over 400 innovative neighbourhood-based projects, impacting over 100,000 families and individuals living in poverty in Niagara.

Recognizing local evidence that indicated that the pandemic had exacerbated and amplified many issues caused by poverty, the 2022 Niagara Prosperity Initiative targeted funding into six areas:

- Indigenous well-being
- Early child development
- Housing and homelessness
- Food security
- Domestic violence
- Living wage

The Niagara Prosperity Initiative is one funding source that we can use to enhance actions identified in this strategy. Evaluation of outcomes of funded projects will inform future investments. Staff will align the Niagara Prosperity Initiative with the Poverty Reduction Strategy to distribute resources where they can have the greatest effect.

Indigenous prosperity

Prosperity for Indigenous peoples in the Niagara region will require a deep understanding of Indigenous history and culture to incorporate the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional well-being of the individual, family and both human and non-human communities simultaneously. Culturally safe environments for Indigenous peoples are needed to engage and build relationships with municipal governments.

It is well established that existing systems perpetuate colonization and racism, and that many of them fail to support Indigenous peoples. It is important to understand the role that colonialism plays in poverty in Indigenous communities and its continued existence today.⁷

Niagara Region acknowledges that colonialism and past actions and inactions across all levels of government have created discriminatory policies and practices against Indigenous peoples. This has had direct, widespread and devastating effects on the health and well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. We need to move beyond acknowledgement and take actions to change this. Municipal governments, as well as other levels of government in Canada, share responsibility and have a significant role to play in eradicating anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination and fostering equity and respect for all.

⁷ Employment and Social Development Canada. (2021). Understanding systems: The 2021 report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty.

How we developed the strategy

In October 2021, Niagara Region staff received Council approval to develop a Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy and a new approach for Niagara Prosperity Initiative investments. The Niagara Prosperity Initiative is an annual investment by the Region towards poverty reduction. Development of a Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy meets recommendations put forth in the **Connecting the Pieces: An Evaluation of the Niagara Prosperity Initiative** report by Brock University and the **Niagara Community Safety and Well-Being Plan** (niagararegion.ca/community-safety/plan.aspx)

Stages of strategy development

This strategy is driven by diverse perspectives and experiences. We heard from people who are disproportionately affected by poverty and typically underrepresented in research. Recommendations are supported by research.

The community spoke. We listened. Together, we developed a strategy

Niagara Regional Council approves development of a local poverty reduction strategy

1000+ residents give input about an ideal future state, challenges, strengths and actions

200+ Indigenous people give input about Indigenous prosperity

Staff review research to identify best practices to address poverty

Staff draft recommendations based on community input and best practices

Staff engage with Local Area Municipalities

100+ content experts validate recommendations

Niagara Region staff indicate alignment with other Niagara Region plans

Steering Committee prioritize recommendations based on impact, effort and community support



Council Strategic Priorities - Equitable Region

Economic Development Strategy	Children's Services Service System Plan	Consolidated Housing Master Plan	Community Safety and Well-Being Plan	Poverty Reduction Strategy
Niagara Prosperity Initiative	Transportation Master Plan	Housing and Homelessness Action Plan	Indigenous Action Plan	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan

Engaging community

Residents who participated in Community Conversations envisioned an ideal future state, spoke to challenges, identified community strengths and recommended actions.

For details about input provided by residents, read the [Interim Report on Community Engagement](https://niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/interim-report-community-engagement.aspx).
niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/interim-report-community-engagement.aspx

When asked about an ideal future state, the community envisioned:

A Niagara that is...

- Equitable and inclusive
- Meeting all residents' basic needs
- Supportive, accessible and allows people to live with dignity
- Community-oriented
- Safe
- Prosperous
- Healthy and well
- A great place to raise a family

The Niagara Regional Native Centre's Director of Housing met with the Indigenous community in Niagara to discuss Indigenous Prosperity. Respondents emphasized the importance of:

- Indigenous identity
- Non-Indigenous relationships
- Culture
- Community development
- Education
- Equity
- Self-determination
- Health/well-being
- Housing
- Safety
- Spirituality
- Financial well-being

Introduction to the strategy

The goal of Niagara's five-year Poverty Reduction Strategy is:

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

This strategy reflects concerns, opportunities and actions identified by residents during a broad engagement process.

The community identified eight Areas of Focus for the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy. Each Area of Focus includes one recommendation and a set of actions that address the issue of poverty within that area.

In total, the community identified over 100 actions to reduce poverty. In the following pages, we list actions that:

- Are supported by research
- Consider impact, effort, and community support to make them happen
- Align with Niagara Region Council priorities



Areas of focus

Through community conversations, eight Areas of Focus emerged



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 current housing, prevent eviction, improve social inclusion and access income through periods of financial instability.



Income

Increase opportunities for living wage employment in Niagara and advocate for adequate, livable rates from government income assistance programs.



Employment

Promote and develop decent work opportunities that provide fair wages, and benefits and fosters stable, consistent and safe employment.



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.



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.



Indigenous well-being

Most Indigenous people who responded to a survey that asked, “what do you believe is Indigenous Prosperity?” identified that community development, Indigenous identity, culture and self-determination were essential components of prosperity. Respondents talked about the need to improve on services that impact the education, health, housing, income and safety of Indigenous peoples. Not only are more services needed, but we also need to address how we deliver these services. Mainstream services need to be respectful of Indigenous cultural practices and social values of the Indigenous community.

The Indigenous community has called upon the Niagara Region to adopt a bottom-up approach to addressing Indigenous well-being. Indigenous peoples have the right to “pursue their economic, social and cultural development”, and so must be able to determine their own futures and develop poverty reduction strategies that meet their specific needs and priorities, enabling them to pursue their own economic development opportunities and carve their own path towards greater independence and self-sufficiency.

Recommendation

Indigenous community to develop a strategy for Indigenous specific poverty reduction initiatives.

Action

- Work in partnership with Indigenous community leaders to develop a strategy driven by a community process



Housing

Residents named housing and homelessness as one of the biggest and most visible poverty-related challenges for Niagara. They expressed concern with the lack of available housing, affordability, accessibility and quality of housing in Niagara. This is especially true for those living on a fixed income.

Recommendation

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.

Action

- Improve relationships between tenants and property owners to reduce evictions
- Expand the use of quick reconnects of financial and other supports for people who have previously been homeless
- Increase legal supports for people in low-income households
- Increase early identification of housing related risk
- Address needs of those escaping gender-based violence

Implementation of this recommendation will align with Niagara Region's Housing Master Plan and with the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan which uses best practice approaches, including Housing First⁸ and Built for Zero⁹ as a foundation.

8 Supportive Housing Programs. (n.d.). Niagara Region. niagararegion.ca/housing-homelessness/supportive-housing-programs.aspx

9 Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. (n.d.). Built for Zero Canada. bfzcanada.ca/



Income

Residents pointed to income as the primary determinant of poverty. They identified two points of focus that affect income, availability of a living wage and adequacy of social assistance. A living wage is the hourly wage a worker needs to earn to cover their basic expenses and participate in their community. Employees that earn a living wage can face fewer stressors and employers that pay a living wage can be confident they are not keeping their employees in poverty.

The rising unaffordability of the basics such as housing, food and transportation are additional barriers. Unfortunately, the gap between income and the rising cost of living has continued to grow. Residents noted that the face of poverty has not changed, just expanded to include more people who used to be “middle-income.”

Recommendation

Increase opportunities for living wage employment in Niagara and advocate for adequate, liveable rates from government income assistance programs.

Action

- Increase awareness, support for and adoption of living wage in Niagara as a poverty reduction effort
- Advocate to federal and provincial governments to:
 - Develop and implement a Universal Basic Income
 - Increase government programs that provide income and benefits (e.g., Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Canadian Pension Plan, Old Age Security)
 - Improve access and eligibility for people living in poverty to access health benefits such as dental services, drug benefits and eyeglasses



Employment

Residents noted a disconnect between existing skill sets and job requirements in Niagara. Others noted that the quality of employment in Niagara is lacking. For people with disabilities, options are not always accommodating. A larger topic of conversation focused on racism and implicit bias that exists in hiring practices in Niagara.

Recommendation

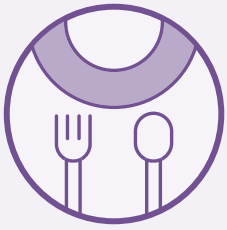
Promote and develop decent¹⁰ work opportunities that provide fair wages and benefits and foster stable, consistent and safe employment.

Action

- Increase vocation training for those living in poverty, so that they qualify for stable employment opportunities relevant to local industries
- Increase internships and apprenticeship opportunities for foreign trained newcomers to be able to work while obtaining Canadian credentials
- Explore a social procurement policy for Niagara Region that increases opportunities for small businesses and equity seeking groups

Implementation of this recommendation will align with Niagara Region's Economic Development Strategy. Regional staff in Economic Development foster regional growth by attracting and facilitating investment. They promote Niagara globally and support new and existing businesses to create and expand decent jobs. This work supports poverty reduction by facilitating an environment conducive to new job creation, investment and economic opportunities. New investments result in incremental improvements to the economy, new jobs for residents and additional tax revenue.

10 Decent work involves employment that is productive and delivers a fair income. It also should ensure workplace security, social protection, better prospects for personal development and social integration.” Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development Goals. sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8



Food security

Residents indicated that the primary problem with food security in Niagara is income and affordability.

With the cost of living exponentially increasing and incomes largely staying the same, an increasing number of residents are having to choose between paying their bills or purchasing groceries.

Recommendation

Improve access to fresh, culturally appropriate, affordable and nutritious foods through income-based solutions to food insecurity.

Action

- Advocate to federal and provincial governments to implement evidence-based policy solutions to reduce food insecurity
- Pilot interventions that reduce barriers to food access in identified priority neighbourhoods
- Continue to monitor and report the prevalence and severity of food insecurity and effective interventions to build awareness and knowledge about the problem and support for actions

To better understand the issues of food security, Niagara Region Public Health is mapping the food environment to determine locations of food deserts¹¹. This work can inform service, planning and decision making.

11 Food deserts are geographic areas that have limited access to healthy food. In some neighbourhoods, lack of economic resources and transportation can cause geographical barriers to access affordable healthy food. In these cases, residents may be dependent on convenience stores and fast-food restaurants resulting in lower quality of diets. This may be especially true for individuals living in rural areas.” Source: National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health. (2017). Food Deserts and Food Swamps: A Primer.



Early child development

Residents identified the need to address intergenerational poverty and to focus prevention efforts at childhood. Service providers noted that Niagara's children are vulnerable in many domains of childhood development, and this is often tied to socioeconomic status. Parents expressed how impossible it feels to keep up with the cost of raising children. Not just parents, but grandparents as well who are in custody of their grandchildren and parenting again. A major issue residents identified was the cost and availability of licensed child care in Niagara.

Recommendation Improve access to affordable, high-quality child care for families living in poverty or at risk of poverty.

Action

- Continue to implement the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care program in Niagara, including a reduction to the cost of child care to an average of \$10/day by 2026
- Continue to develop and implement an Early Childhood Educator workforce strategy in Children's Services to expand the system and increase child care spaces.

Implementation of this recommendation will align with Children's Services Service System Plan.



Transportation

Residents indicated that transportation is a significant poverty-related pressure point in the region. They noted that cost, timing and coverage of transit create barriers to use. Residents from rural communities expressed frustration over the difficulty and time commitment to travel to other municipalities and barriers to using NRT On-Demand Transit. These barriers can impact employment; residents indicated that some employers in Niagara will not hire people who take public transit, because it is unreliable. Overall, residents emphasized the importance of equitable transportation to access resources and social connectors.

Recommendation

Continue the work of Niagara Region Transit to achieve affordable and equitable access to services across municipalities.

Action

- Provide concession fare products for people who are living in poverty
- Improve access to transit and active transportation
- Increase hours of service, smoothing out evening, weekend and holiday hours across all levels of transportation services



Mental health and addiction

Links between mental health concerns and substance use and abuse concerns are generally complex. For example, although people with mental illness have a higher likelihood of also having an addiction¹², not all people with a mental illness have a co-occurring addiction.

Residents frequently discussed the impact of living in poverty while dealing with mental health and addiction challenges. The stress of not having enough money, being in a constant state of survival and hopelessness about living in poverty, can lead to anxiety, depression and thoughts of suicide. Service providers and people with lived expertise indicated that the situation is worse than it has been in a long time, and residents have lost hope that it will improve any time soon.

To address the effects of poverty, residents and service providers emphasized the need for mental health and addiction treatment supports within a better coordinated system of care. These supports need to address social determinants of health that are the root causes and stressors for people living in poverty or at risk of poverty such as housing, transportation and income.

Recommendation

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.

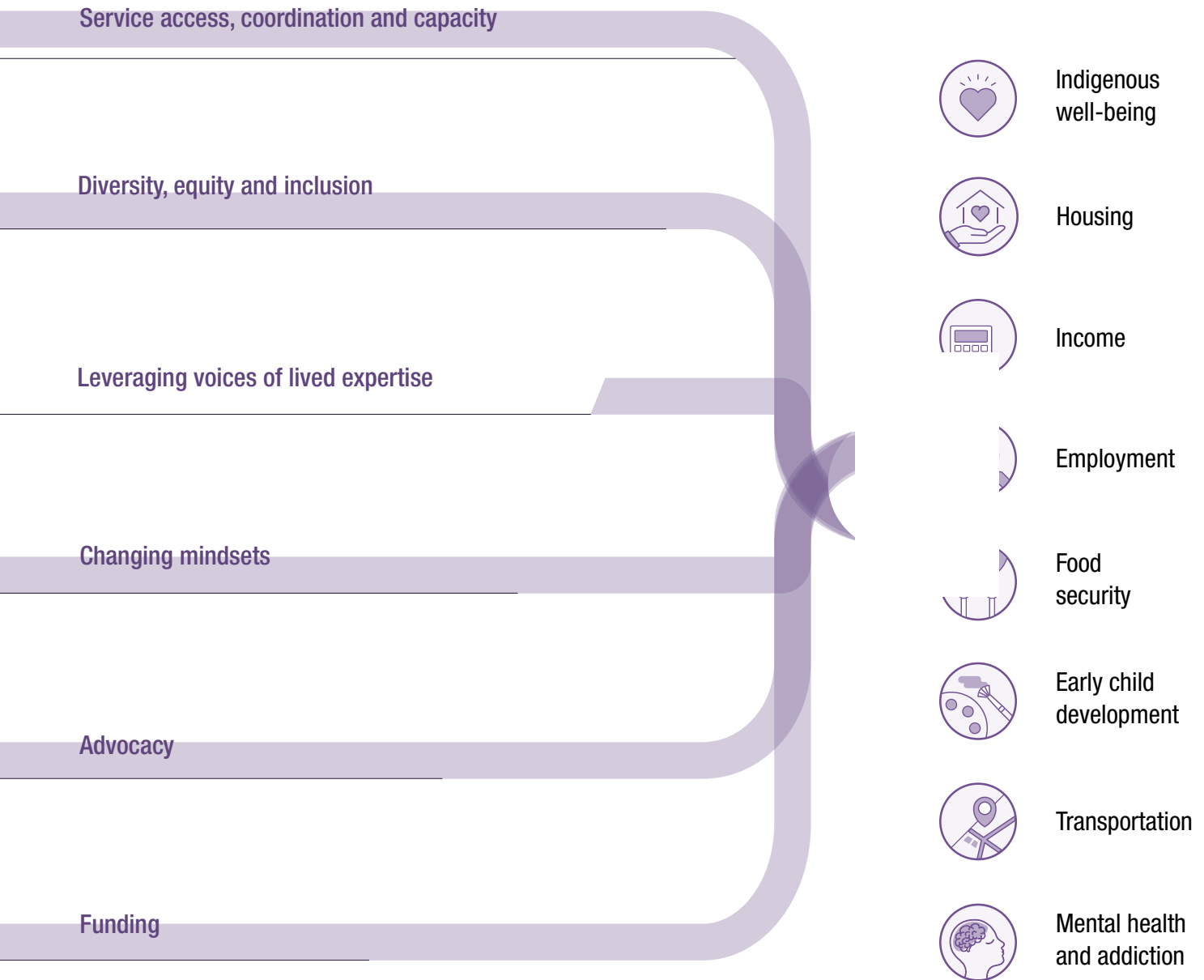
Action

- Address gaps and streamline local mental health and addiction services
- Continue to promote wellness and safety of people experiencing problems with substance use and addiction

12 CAMH. (2023). Mental Illness and Addiction: Facts and Statistics.
camh.ca/en/driving-change/the-crisis-is-real/mental-health-statistics

How to create change

During engagement, residents identified essential conditions needed to end and prevent poverty in Niagara. These conditions for change affect how we incorporate actions in the Poverty Reduction Strategy's recommendations throughout the Areas of Focus:



Service access, coordination and capacity

A person's ability to access services can impact their experience of poverty. A more coordinated and integrated network of health, justice and government funded social services would make it easier for people to navigate services they need to move out of poverty. In addition, those services need capacity, with funding, staffing and resources, to meet the needs of people seeking support.

Organizations, institutions and governments can improve ease of system navigation and access by increasing opportunities for people to access multiple services at the same time and location e.g., polyclinics or community hubs using mobile services as needed.

Other areas where this condition of change can enhance service is in:

- Strengthening supports for those escaping gender-based violence
- Strengthening transition supports such as discharge planning for people leaving hospitals and the justice system
- Building capacity to identify children at risk of poverty or living in poverty and strengthening referral pathways for families to a network of services such as income, housing, parenting and mental health supports

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Residents noted that attention to diversity, equity and inclusion in Niagara is important and needs to continue. The intersections of identity, such as age, culture, gender, race, ability and other social aspects, shape how people experience poverty. Addressing poverty must consider diverse experiences of poverty.

Public and private sectors can integrate diversity, equity and inclusion into program design and delivery as it relates to ending and preventing poverty. This can include increasing learning opportunities for staff, elected officials, agencies and community members to make services more equitable.

Leveraging voices of lived expertise

Lived expertise refers to “personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement in everyday events rather than through representations constructed by other people”.¹³ It includes “the experiences of people on whom a social issue or combination of issues has had a direct impact”.¹⁴

Creating opportunities for people with lived expertise to provide input in policy development, planning and decision-making is crucial to addressing poverty. This can include expanding opportunities to integrate peer support models into existing community work.

Changing mindsets

Residents identified stigma as one of the most significant poverty-related issues in Niagara. The stigma of poverty can have a profound impact on a person’s sense of self and self-worth. Stigma is not only a result of living in poverty but can also perpetuate poverty by impacting a person’s mental well-being, ability to access services, relate to others, maintain housing or keep employment.

Poverty is a socially isolating experience that can significantly impact a person’s well-being. Not only is social isolation a result of living in poverty, but a lack of social connection can mean that people do not have support in times of crisis. Staff heard that people living in poverty feel alone and lack connection to their community.

The intent of changing mindsets is to bring people together to better understand the experience of poverty and the role they can play to help lift people out of poverty. Poverty is discriminatory in nature. Addressing false belief systems that feed into negative stereotypes is an important predictor of successful poverty reduction efforts. Changing mindsets that feed into the stigmatization of people living in poverty can decrease discrimination and allow for better community connections, thereby reducing isolation and loneliness.

13 Chandler, D., & Munday, R. (2016). Oxford: A dictionary of media and communication (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

14 Sandu, B. (2017). The value of lived experience in social change: The need for leadership and organisational development in the social sector. Retrieved from thelivedexperience.org/report/

Advocacy

Residents emphasized the need for income-based solutions to poverty. They highlighted the importance of using a human right's lens when speaking about and advocating for poverty-related issues. The strategy calls for advocacy to federal and provincial governments for improvements to income, employment and food security such as:

- Implementing a Universal Basic Income
- Increasing social assistance rates and benefits
- Increasing minimum wage to a living wage
- Making accreditation processes easier and more affordable to help newcomers with employment
- Implementing evidence-based policy solutions to reduce food insecurity

Funding

Adequate funding for outcome focused programs based on best practice is a critical component of any poverty reduction strategy. Addressing funding gaps and methods of funding applies to all levels of government and all funding bodies.

Brock University's report "Connecting the Pieces; An Evaluation of the Niagara Prosperity Initiative and Call for a Broader Poverty Reduction Strategy for Niagara" recommended:

- Increased funding investments in poverty reduction
- Longer funding terms for programs to help address the "unpredictability and fragmentary nature of services provided through time-limited contracts"¹⁵

Service providers noted the importance of collaborative funding opportunities and the need to break down competition among agencies.

15 Raddon. MB, Soron, D & Petrina S. (2021). Connecting the Pieces: An Evaluation of the Niagara Prosperity Initiative and Call for a Broader Poverty Reduction Strategy for Niagara. Report prepared for Niagara Region. Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario. brocku.ca/npi-evaluation

Moving forward

Strategy in motion

During implementation, Niagara Region staff and members of the Poverty Reduction Steering Committee will invite interested and affected parties, such as United Way, Niagara Community Foundation and Ontario Trillium Foundation, to identify their role in helping to end poverty. Other interested and affected parties who are critical to successful implementation of this strategy include people with lived expertise, Indigenous peoples, and other residents, along with representatives from government, funders, businesses, health and educational institutions, non-profit organizations, service clubs and associations.

It is our hope that readers of this document will find inspiration to further align their work with actions identified in this strategy. Using Collective Impact, an approach used around the world to address complex issues such as poverty,¹⁶ we will explore with community champions ways to best implement actions listed in this report along with other actions that emerged during community engagement.

16 Tamarack Institute. (2019). Collective Impact in Practice.
www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/tool-collective-impact-in-practice



Measuring change

How we will measure impact on poverty

Featured below are outcomes we can use to identify long-term success. We selected these indicators based on a scan of what other communities are using, reputability of the sources, availability of data for Niagara and the power of these indicators to tell the story of change.

Decrease the number and percentage of people who:

- Live in poverty
- Work but still live in poverty
- Experience homelessness
- Live in food insecure households
- Experience financial concerns as a primary stressor

How we will measure benefits of working together

In addition to reducing poverty, we expect that by working together in different ways, we can increase:

- Local capacity to implement community work, policies and practices
- Public support to end poverty

We will bring implementation champions together to determine methods such as facilitated conversation and client feedback to capture these benefits and better understand the impact of our collective work.

How we will create our evaluation plan

We recognize that poverty is a complex experience, making it difficult to determine success.

We will capture qualitative and quantitative measures during implementation to help tell the story of change in our community. We will create a theory of change to further articulate how and why we expect change will happen to increase well-being in Niagara.

How to get involved

Moving this strategy forward will involve many interested and affected parties. We invite YOU to join us on this journey and share your commitment to change. To learn more about how you can get involved or lend you skills, email endpoverty@niagararegion.ca or visit niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/default.aspx

Together, we can end poverty in Niagara.

Resources consulted

This is a partial list of resources staff reviewed to inform recommendations. These resources complimented the direction staff received from residents on how to best address poverty in Niagara.

Poverty Reduction

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Service Access, Coordination and Capacity

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Preventing Adverse Childhood

Child and Parent Resource Institute. (n.d.). Trauma-informed care.

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Employment and Social Development Canada. (2021). Understanding Systems: The 2021 report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty. Government of Canada. canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/national-advisory-council/reports/2021-annual.html

Lived Expertise

Homer, A. (2019). 10 Engaging People with Lived/Living Expertise: A guide for Including People in Poverty Reduction. Tamarack Institute.

Sandu, B. (2017). The value of lived experience in social change: The need for leadership and organisational development in the social sector. thelivedexperience.org/report/

Changing Mindsets

Alliance for Healthier Communities. (2020). Rx Community - Social Prescribing in Ontario Final Report. allianceon.org/Rx-Community-Social-Prescribing-In-Ontario

World Health Organization. (2022). A toolkit on how to implement social prescribing.

Indigenous Well-being

Niagara Chapter – Native Women Inc. (2021). Mno Bmaadziwin: Living the Good and Healthy Life. niagararegion.ca/community-safety/pdf/mno-bmaadziwin.pdf

National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health. (2020). Poverty as a Social Determinant of First Nations, Inuit and Metis Health.

Housing

Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. (n.d.). Built for Zero Canada. bfzcanada.ca/

The Homeless Hub. (n.d.). Housing First. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. homelesshub.ca/solutions/housing-accommodation-and-supports/housing-first

Income

Cross, P. (2021). The Minimum Wage, Lost Jobs, and Poverty in Canada. Fraser Institute.

Lee, C. R., & Briggs, A. (2019). The Cost of Poverty in Ontario: 10 Years Later. Feed Ontario.

Ontario Living Wage Network. (n.d.). What is a living wage?
ontariolivingwage.ca/about

Employment

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Stapleton, J., & Yuan, Y. (2021). Ending Working Poverty: How to get it Done. Tamarack An Institute for Community Engagement.
tamarackcommunity.ca/reports/ending-working-poverty-in-canada-how-to-get-it-done

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conferenceboard.ca/product/opportunity-for-all_2023/

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Food Security

Feed Ontario. (2022). Hunger Report 2022: The Deepening Cracks in Ontario's Economic Foundation.

Ontario Dietitians in Public Health. (2020). Position Statement and Recommendations on Responses to Food Insecurity: Executive Summary.

National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health. (2017). Food Deserts and Food Swamps: A Primer.

PROOF Food Insecurity Policy Research. (2022). Food Security: A problem of inadequate income, not solved by food.

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Robinson, R., Tranjan, R., & Oliveira, T. (2021). Poverty in the Midst of Plenty: A report card on child and family poverty in Ontario. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Ontario Office.

Workforce Collective. (2022). Childcare workforce in crisis: Our economy won't work without ELCC workers. workforcecollective.ca/childcare-workforce-in-crisis-our-economy-wont-work-without-elcc-workers/

Transportation

Pei, N. (2023). Innovative Rural Transportation Strategies Aid in Poverty Reduction. Tamarack Institute. tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/innovative-rural-transportation-strategies-aid-in-poverty-reduction

University of Alberta Centre for Healthy Communities, & Alberta Health Services. (2019). Building Financial Well-Being: A Community Planning Toolkit.

Mental Health and Addiction

Association of Municipalities Ontario. (2022). An Integrated Approach to Mental Health and Addictions: AMO's Submission to the Ministry of Health. amo.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/DOCUMENTS/Reports/2022/Integrated_Approach_to%20Mental_Health_and_Addictions_20220802_RPT.pdf

CAMH. (2023). Mental Illness and Addiction: Facts and Statistics. camh.ca/en/driving-change/the-crisis-is-real/mental-health-statistics

Appendix A: Locations of community engagement

Thank you to community organizations for hosting community conversations

Ailanthus CASTLE Community	Niagara Emergency Medical Services Huddle
Adverse Childhood Experiences Steering Committee	Niagara Food Security Network
Bethesda Clients	Niagara Francophone Interagency Table
Children's Services Sector Network	Niagara Ontario Health Team
Coalition to End Violence Against Women	Niagara Poverty Reduction Network
Elmview CASTLE Community	Niagara Region Mental Health Client Advisory Committee
Employment-Focused Roundtable through Workforce Collective	Niagara Suicide Prevention Coalition
Future Back Female	Overdose Prevention and Education Network of Niagara
Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Prevention Group, Lived Experience Advisory and Taskforce	Project Share Clients
Human Service and Justice Coordinating Committee	Port Cares Clients
Lived Experience Advisory Network	Queenston Neighbourhood Roundtable
Local Immigrant Partnership	St. Catharines Accessibility Advisory Committee
Mental Health and Addictions Working Group	Stronger Fort Erie Neighbourhoods: Lived Experience and Service Providers
Newcomers through Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities	Westview Centre 4 Women Clients
Niagara Children's Planning Council	Youth Advisory Committee through Niagara Region Public Health
	Youth Advisory Committee and Lead through the Youth Wellness Hub

Appendix B: Alignment to Regional reports

The Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy aligns with Niagara Region's:

Children's Services Service System Plan

Staff from Children's Services informed the Poverty Reduction Strategy to align with local efforts that address child care service system management.

niagararegion.ca/living/childcare/default.aspx

Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

Action Five of this plan calls for a local Poverty Reduction Strategy which sets local targets and aligns investments to measurably reduce poverty. The Poverty Reduction Strategy aligns with work identified in the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan such as Situation Tables, gender-based violence, mental health and addiction, housing and homelessness, income and systemic discrimination in Niagara.

niagararegion.ca/community-safety/plan.aspx

Consolidated Housing Master Plan

The affordable housing strategy brings together the work of many partners to address local need for affordable housing. Affordable housing is housing that fits the budget of low to moderate-income households while leaving enough money for them to meet other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transportation, medical care and education. The plan includes work to increase the number of affordable housing units and provide a mix of housing that is appropriate for the various sizes and incomes of households in Niagara.

niagararegion.ca/growing-better-together/growing-housing.aspx

Council Strategic Priority: Equitable Region

An action of this priority calls for a Poverty Reduction Strategy that ensures the Region is inclusive, welcoming and free of discrimination.

niagararegion.ca/priorities/default.aspx

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan

Staff from Niagara Region's, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Relations team informed actions throughout the Areas of Focus in the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

niagararegion.ca/about/inclusive-communities/diversity-equity-inclusion.aspx

Economic Development Strategy

Staff from Niagara's Economic Development team informed the recommendation related to Employment to align with opportunities for future workforce around emerging sectors.

niagaracanada.com/about-us/economic-development-strategy/

Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy

The Poverty Reduction Strategy aligns with the work of the Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy to support an increase in youth and young adult-focused prevention and early intervention programs and services.

niagararegion.ca/community-safety/pdf/gun-and-gang-prevention-strategy.pdf

Housing and Homelessness Action Plan

The Poverty Reduction Strategy aligns with the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan's action to increase affordable housing and reduce homelessness. The Poverty Reduction Advisor and Homelessness Action Plan Advisor worked closely together to exchange research and results from community engagement.

niagararegion.ca/housing-homelessness/action-plan/default.aspx

How We Go – Transportation Master Plan

The Poverty Reduction strategy aligns with the Transportation Master Plan's action to address demand-responsive transit and pedestrian and cycling facilities.

niagararegion.ca/2041/transportation-master-plan/default.aspx

Indigenous Relations Action Plan

The Poverty Reduction Plan includes a recommendation for Indigenous Well-being. Staff from Niagara's Region's, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Indigenous Relations team and the Director of Housing from the Niagara Regional Native Centre led work to identify actions that address Indigenous Well-being. This action is driven by the voices of Indigenous peoples as led by the Director of Housing, Niagara Regional Native Centre. It is informed by The Joint Roundtable which continues to work on the Indigenous Relations Action Plan based on recommendations from the 2021 report, Mno Bmaadziwin: Living the Good and Healthy Life.

niagararegion.ca/about/inclusive-communities/indigenous-engagement.aspx

Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy

Niagara Region
Community Services
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
Thorold ON, L2V 4T7
905-980-6000 | 1-800-263-7215
endpoverty@niagararegion.ca

Citation: Niagara Region Community Services (2024).
Niagara Region Poverty Reduction Strategy 2024–2028.
Thorold, Ontario.

niagararegion.ca/community-safety/poverty-reduction-strategy/default.aspx

NOTICE OF THE PASSING OF ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

Cannabis and Industrial Hemp Production
(File No. AM-05-2024)

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Pelham passed By-Law No. 47 (2024) on July 10, 2024, being a by-law which amends Zoning By-law No. 4481 (2022), as amended, under Section 34 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that a specified person, public body or the registered owner of any land to which the by-law would apply, who before the by-law was passed made oral submissions at the public meeting or written submissions to Council, or the Minister may appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) in respect of the by-law by filing an appeal with the Clerk of the Corporation of the Town of Pelham not later than Wednesday, July 30, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. A completed "Appellant Form (A1) Planning Act" which must include the reasons for the appeal together with a certified cheque for \$1,100.00 payable to the Minister of Finance. An Appellant may request a reduction of the filing fee to \$400, if the Appellant is a private citizen or eligible community group. The request for a reduction in the fee must be made at the time of filing the appeal. Please use the OLT [Request for Fee Reduction Form](#).

The Appellant Form (A1) is on the Service Ontario website. Only a specified person, public body or the registered owner of any land to which the by-law would apply who, before the by-law was passed made oral submissions at the public meeting or written submissions to Council, or the Minister may appeal the Zoning By-law amendment to the OLT. However, a notice of appeal may be filed in the name of an individual who is a member of the association or group on its behalf. No specified person or public body shall be added as a party to the hearing of the appeal unless before the by-law is passed the specified person or public body made oral submissions at the public meeting or written submissions to Council, or in the opinion of the OLT, there are reasonable grounds to add the person or public body as a party. An Appellant Form (A1) may not be filed by an unincorporated association or group. However, an Appellant Form (A1) may be filed in the name of an individual who is a member of the association or the group.

Planning staff's recommendation report was presented to Council on July 10, 2024. The report can be found online at <https://events.pelham.ca/meetings>.

The explanation of the purpose and effect of the by-law is attached. The complete by-law is available for public review by request via email or at the Town of Pelham Municipal Office, Community Planning & Development Department, located at 20 Pelham Town Square, Fonthill, between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

DATED at the Town of Pelham, this 10th day of July 2024.

HOLLY WILFORD – TOWN CLERK

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF PELHAM
P. O. BOX 400, 20 PELHAM TOWN SQUARE
FONTHILL, ON L0S 1E0

EXPLANATION OF THE PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF
ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT (BY-LAW NO. 47(2024))

ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT - BY-LAW 47 (2024) is a By-law to amend Zoning By-law 4481(2022), as amended, to incorporate regulations approved by the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) to regulate cannabis and industrial hemp production in Pelham.

Changes were made to:

- Section 2: Definitions
 - Introducing definitions for:
 - Cannabis-Related Use – Indoor and Outdoor;
 - Industrial Hemp-Related Use – Indoor and Outdoor; and
 - Sensitive Land Use.
- Section 4: Parking Provisions
 - Regulations specific to indoor cannabis and industrial hemp-related uses.
- Section 5: Rural/Agricultural Zones
 - Update Section 5.1.2 and 5.2.2 to include a setback from sensitive land uses;
 - Creation of Agricultural Cannabis Zone, Specialty Agriculture Cannabis Zone and Rural Employment Cannabis Zone;
 - Zone provisions to regulate: lot frontage; lot area; lot coverage; minimum front, side, rear and exterior lot lines; and
 - Regulations prohibiting a retail store as an accessory use and setback requirements for storage areas.



Advanced Councillor Training

AMO's Councillor education workshops are the renewal you may need at this point in your term. Refocus your efforts and revive your approach as you develop and deliver on the priorities of your mandate.

1. Strategic Thinking, Planning, and Leading

As an elected official, your understanding and approach to planning and leadership will be one of your lasting legacies in your organization and community. This session will investigate various elements of leadership and actions you should be undertaking.

This session will explore:

- stewardship
- strategic planning
- fiscal sustainability

Register for the [September 25, 2024](#) workshop.

2. Community Engagement Strategic Approached

This workshop will help you demystify a number of key municipal responsibilities. Budget and strategic planning are a great internal exercise but if your constituents and community members don't really understand what you are doing, why you are doing it, and how priorities are identified and planned for, well, we all understand what the fallout can look like.

This session will explore:

- The elected official and community engagement
- Communications
- The Fine Points of Leadership

Register for the [October 2, 2024](#) workshop.

These one-day workshops will be offered virtually.

Fee: \$425.00 + HST per workshop (Individual registration only. For group rates, contact events@amo.on.ca)

A \$75.00 cancellation fee applies.

Participation is limited to 30 per session.

For full information including workshop descriptions, dates and registration visit amoeducation.ca

Inquires: events@amo.on.ca

*Disclaimer: The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) is unable to provide any warranty regarding the accuracy or completeness of third-party submissions. Distribution of these items does not imply an endorsement of the views, information or services mentioned.

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LARDER LAKE

69 Fourth Avenue, Larder Lake, ON
 Phone: 705-643-2158 Fax: 705-643-2311



MOVED BY:

- Thomas Armstrong
- Patricia Hull
- Paul Kelly
- Lynne Paquette

SECONDED BY:

- Thomas Armstrong
- Patricia Hull
- Paul Kelly
- Lynne Paquette

Motion #: 7

Resolution #: 7

Date: July 9, 2024

WHEREAS current provincial-municipal fiscal arrangements are undermining Ontario's economic prosperity and quality of life: And

WHEREAS nearly a third of municipal spending in Ontario is for services in areas of provincial responsibility and expenditures are outpacing provincial contributions by nearly \$4 Billion a year: AND WHEREAS municipal revenues, such as property taxes, do not grow with the economy or inflation; And

WHEREAS unprecedented population and housing growth will require significant investments in municipal infrastructure: And

WHEREAS municipalities are being asked to take on complex health and social challenges - like homelessness, supporting asylum seekers, and addressing the mental health and addictions crises; And

WHEREAS inflation, rising interest rates, and provincial policy decisions are sharply constraining municipal fiscal capacity; And

WHEREAS property taxpayers - including people on fixed incomes and small businesses - can not afford to subsidize income re-distribution programs for those most in need; And

WHEREAS the province can, and should, invest more in the prosperity of communities: And

WHEREAS municipalities and the provincial government have a strong history of collaboration:

BE ITT RESOLVED THAT the Corporation of the Township of Larder Lake requests that the Province of Ontario commit to undertaking with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario a comprehensive social and economic prosperity review to promote the stability and sustainability of municipal finances across Ontario;

AND BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this Resolution be sent to Premier Doug Ford; Minister of Finance; Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM); our local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP); and all Ontario Municipalities.

Recorded vote requested:

	For	Against
Tom Armstrong	✓	
Patricia Hull	✓	
Paul Kelly	✓	
Lynne Paquette	✓	
Patty Quinn	✓	

I declare this motion

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carried
<input type="checkbox"/> Lost / Defeated
<input type="checkbox"/> Deferred to: _____ (enter date)
Because:
<input type="checkbox"/> Referred to: _____ (enter body)
Expected response: _____ (enter date)

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest*

Chair: 

*Disclosed his/her (their) interest(s), abstained from discussion and did not vote on this question.

Economic Development Brief

July 12, 2024

Statistics and Trends

Labour force conditions

Labour force conditions (unadjusted) in Niagara made substantial improvements in July 2024 building on progress from previous months. Niagara also performed well compared to Ontario across most indicators although the participation rate remained lower, and the unemployment rate remained higher in Niagara. Seasonal factors benefitted labour force indicator performance in Niagara, but the seasonally adjusted figures also show improvement.

Month-over-month data from May to June 2024 show the following:

- Population: Niagara increased by 0.3% (1,100 people) while Ontario increased at the same rate.
- Labour force: Niagara increased by 3% (6,900 people) while Ontario increased by 1.1%.
- Employment: Niagara increased by 3.1% (6,500 people) while Ontario increased by 1.2%.
- Unemployment rate: Niagara decreased by 0.1% to 7.8% while Ontario remained the same at 6.9%.
- Participation rate: Niagara increased by 1.6% to 60.2% while Ontario increased by 0.5% to 65.7%.

Niagara's unemployment rate did not change much despite substantial employment gains, but this is due to the fact that the labour force participation grew faster than employment. There were more people entering the labour force than people gaining employment during that time, which raised the unemployment rate since they are not yet employed.

New population estimates data show major gains for Niagara

Statistics Canada recently released postcensal population estimate data and Niagara has made major population gains. The total population of Niagara as of 2023 is estimated to be 525,352. This is growth of 40,781 or 8.4% over 484,571 in 2019. In comparison, Ontario grew by 7.1% and Canada grew by 6.6% during the same period. Postcensal estimates are based on the latest census counts adjusted for census net under coverage (including adjustment for incompletely enumerated reserves and settlements) and for the estimated population growth that occurred since that census.

The economic development updates in this brief were compiled with input from economic development staff from Niagara's local area municipalities and public information sources.

Economic Development Updates

Canada and Ontario committing \$23.55 million to Vineland Research and Innovation Centre

The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing \$23.55 million through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership in horticultural research, innovation, commercialization activities, and infrastructure to benefit Ontario farmers and consumers. This investment will support the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre in increasing the competitiveness and profitability of horticulture in Ontario and Canada. It will also ensure the VRIC has up-to-date equipment and infrastructure for industry-focused research and innovation. VRIC's research covering automation, biological crop protection, plant responses, plant variety development, and market insights, aligns with the Grow Ontario Strategy goals, including developing new agri-food technologies and increasing the market for Ontario's innovative technologies.

Jordan Sherlock hired as new Executive Director of Niagara Industrial Association

Past Board member and Chair, Jordan Sherlock, has filled the role of Executive Director of the Niagara Industrial Association. Jordan served as Board Chair for two years and has been a Board member for eight. He brings nearly 20 years of experience leading Niagara-based manufacturing and construction organizations and in his time with the NIA, has shown leadership skills both operationally, as well as when working with external partners and representing the sector. Jordan's leadership comes at a time when a wave of industrial expansion is expected in the coming years. His official start date with the NIA was July 8, 2024.

Niagara-on-the-Lake councillors approve \$500 million White Oaks Resort project

Niagara-on-the-Lake councillors approved a four-tower mixed-use development on the White Oaks Resort and Spa property, reversing their previous rejection. The project, estimated to cost \$500 million, includes 17 to 25 storey buildings with a total of 810 residential units and commercial space, incorporating some affordable housing units. Despite some opposition due to height and density concerns, the development is expected to generate significant tax revenue, development charges, and jobs. The plan also aims to enhance the proposed regional transit hub and provide additional amenities, such as expanded daycare and new retail outlets.

City of Welland celebrates the grand opening of Fonthill Lumber to the public

Fonthill Lumber, established in 1951, has expanded significantly from its original site on Highway 20 in Fonthill to a new, much larger facility on Woodlawn Road in Welland. The new complex, featuring a manufacturing facility for trusses, a retail outlet, and a sawmill, will celebrate its grand opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by Mayor Frank Campion and other dignitaries. Despite concerns about relocating, the company maintains its strong brand identity and strategic location, enabling efficient service across Niagara and even into the United States.

The economic development updates in this brief were compiled with input from economic development staff from Niagara's local area municipalities and public information sources.

Lemayzz Meats adds second location in Welland

Lemayzz Meats is opening a second location in Welland after successfully running their first store in Port Colborne since 2016. The new 4,500 SF butcher shop, set to employ about 30 people, will offer an expanded deli menu, a barbecue area, and Lemay's wife's online cookie business, The Artful Cookie. Lemay's primary focus remains on retail, providing high-quality, personalized customer service, while also supporting local restaurants and engaging the community with special events and competitions on Sundays.

Riddell opens new location in Welland

Riddell opened its doors to their new location in June 2024 at the City's River Road and Downs Drive Industrial Park. Riddell is known for designing and manufacturing football equipment, particularly helmets and protective gear. They are a leading brand in the sports industry, providing equipment for players at all levels, from youth leagues to professional teams. Riddell is recognized for its innovations in helmet technology aimed at improving player safety, including advancements in concussion management and impact reduction.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Council approves new hotel

The proposal for a 129-room hotel at the former Parliament Oak school site in Niagara-on-the-Lake has moved closer to approval following a narrow 5-4 vote by local councillors. Despite significant opposition from residents and concerns about land use, heritage impacts, and community disruption, amendments to the town's Official Plan and zoning bylaw were approved, pending ratification. Proponents argue the hotel will fill a gap in the local tourism strategy and provide economic benefits, while detractors worry about the loss of community space and the impact on the neighborhood's character.

Swiss marine power company selects Port Colborne firm for North American representation

Port Colborne's Allied Marine & Industrial has been chosen as the North American agent for Swiss marine power provider WinGD, whose clean fuel two stroke engines are used in many Canadian vessels. This partnership aligns with global shipping industry's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to cleaner fuels. AMI's expertise and strategic location by the Welland Canal make it well suited to support these environmental initiatives. The collaboration presents growth opportunities for AMI and contributes to marine transportation's role in reducing environmental impacts, supported by investments from the Ontario and Federal governments.

The economic development updates in this brief were compiled with input from economic development staff from Niagara's local area municipalities and public information sources.

812-unit world-class buildings to overlook Niagara Falls

A vacant property in Niagara Falls will be transformed into an 812-unit apartment complex, featuring 29 and 38 storey towers, following city council's approval. The development, located on Portage Road, aims to intensify an underutilized site, providing significant natural features and innovative design elements, including roof plantings and animated podiums. While the project has been praised for its potential to enhance the area and support local tourism, concerns remain about its affordability, proximity to industrial sites, and potential service capacity issues.

Construction to start on first-of-its-kind \$58 million condo development in downtown Grimsby

Construction has begun on the \$58 million Century Condos development in downtown Grimsby, led by DeSantis Homes. The four storey L shaped building at 21 Main Street has already sold 85% of its units, priced between \$500,000 and \$1.2 million, and aims to blend with the heritage of the community. Originally proposed as an eight-storey project, the plans were reduced to four storeys following community backlash, and traffic on Main Street will be partially closed for several months to accommodate construction.

Town of Pelham announces new Director of Community Planning and Development

Pam Duesling PhD, MAES, BES, MCIP, RPP, Ec.D., CMMIII, has been appointed as the Director of Community Planning and Development for the Town of Pelham, starting July 29, 2024. With over 25 years of experience in municipal development and a strong academic background, including a PhD in Rural Planning, she has previously managed development services and policy implementation for the County of Brant. In her new role, Duesling will be responsible for overseeing community planning, development review, and land use policies, contributing to Pelham's growth and quality of life.

Neptunus Yachts celebrates 35-year anniversary

Neptunus Yachts celebrates their 35th anniversary in 2024. They have also recently launched the Newfoundlander. Neptunus Yachts is North America's premier manufacturer of 65-to-75-foot motor yachts and has built more than 180 yachts at its shipyard in St. Catharines. The skilled Neptunus team is known for its craftsmanship and is respected for its well-found boats. 2024 represents the ninth year for Neptunus' commitment to CE Category A – Ocean certification, reflecting its passion for quality and delivering an unequalled yachting experience. Category A vessels are yachts that meet the highest design standard.

The economic development updates in this brief were compiled with input from economic development staff from Niagara's local area municipalities and public information sources.

Born and Raised festival a success

The Born and Raised homecoming concert series for Alexisonfire and City and Colour enjoyed another successful weekend at Montebello Park in St. Catharines. The 2024 event rocked Downtown St. Catharines July 5-6 and featured the hometown bands and Metric, Sloan and Dooms Children for the Friday show and The Used, Counterparts and Ekkstacy on Saturday. For the festival weekend Alexisonfire wanted to do something special to support Downtown St. Catharines and collaborated with some local businesses, including Mindbomb Records, Happies Juice, Mahtay Café and Lounge and Warehouse Concert Hall.

George Spezza, Ec.D., CEcD
Director, Economic Development

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July 17, 2024

Dear Municipal Councillors,

Subject: Niagara Region Waste Management Strategic Plan Phase One Update and Upcoming Phase Two Engagement Opportunities

This purpose of this letter is to provide an update regarding the completion of phase one of the Niagara Region Waste Management Strategic Plan (the Plan), a brief synopsis of what phase two entails and avenues to provide feedback.

The first phase of the Plan involved assessing the existing system and understanding how the community views our current programs. The valuable input from the phase one survey and open houses laid the groundwork for establishing the Plan's mission, vision, goals and guiding principles, as well as new programs and initiatives for consideration.

In phase two the draft vision statement, mission statement, goals and guiding principles were presented to the WMPSC and PWC in a collaborative workshop session on June 24, 2024. The final statements, goals and guiding principles will be presented to interested parties and feedback will be sought on proposed waste management options. Public engagement begins September 10, 2024, through another survey that will be open until September 30. In addition to the survey, the following virtual open houses are scheduled:

- Public Open House on Tuesday **September 10, 2024, from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**
- Public Open House on Monday **September 16, 2024, from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

Please visit niagararegion.ca/future-of-waste for more information on the Plan, to register for one of the open houses, and to take the survey.

If you have any questions, please contact us at wmstratplan@niagararegion.ca or phone Project Manager Jennifer Mazurek at 905-980-6000 ext. 3236.

Sincerely,

Catherine Habermebl (she/her)
Director, Waste Management Services
Public Works, Niagara Region
Phone: 905.980.6000, ext. 3204
Email: catherine.habermebl@niagararegion.ca

Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The Regional Municipality of Niagara stands with all Indigenous peoples, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.