



Community Services and Social Development

Making life better every day

A Vision and Plan 2022-2032



Community Services and Social Development’s (CSSD) primary purpose is to provide our citizens with the tools and supports required to improve their quality of life, with a special focus on those who experience vulnerabilities. We do this by offering programs and services to support healthy, safe, and thriving individuals, families and neighbourhoods. The communities we serve – Brantford and Brant County, are vibrant, growing destinations for an increasing number of families who are attracted to our natural environment, convenient location and the pace of living in a smaller city or town. Visitors and residents alike benefit from the abundant culture, sports and heritage that Brantford and Brant County offers, which is showcased at the new Tourism hub at the Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre. The future we envision includes opportunities for all residents across all stages of life, ethnicities, socioeconomic situations, and abilities, to be included in the community and reach his or her fullest potential.

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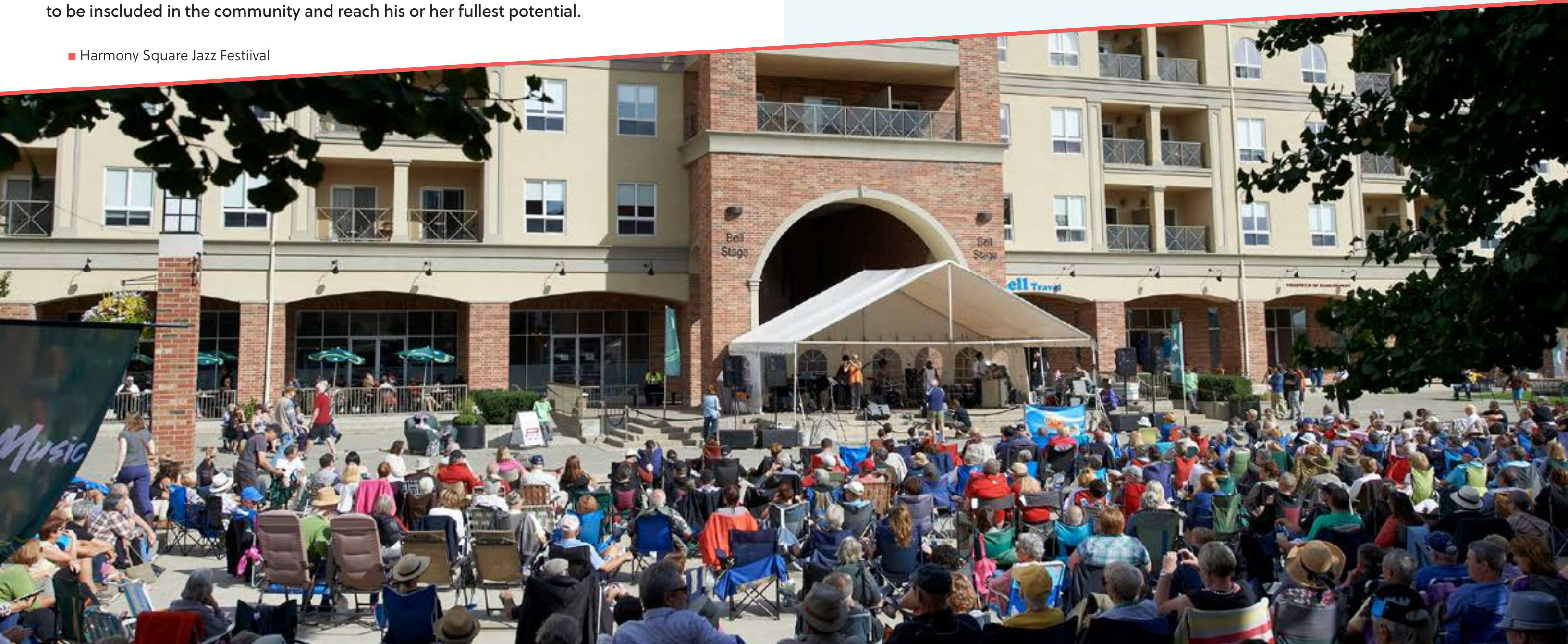
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■ Harmony Square Jazz Festival



The City of Brantford is the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (or “Service Manager”) for both the City of Brantford and County of Brant for these CSSD programs and services:



Housing & Homelessness



Ontario Works



Children’s Services
(Child Care/Early Years/Child Care Subsidy)

These programs are funded jointly by the Province of Ontario, City of Brantford and County of Brant.

The following programs are delivered exclusively within the City of Brantford:



Social Planning/ Development (includes such initiatives as Age Friendly Planning, Immigration Partnership, Grants to Non Profit organizations, Youth Plan, Healthy Kids)



Recreation (Includes aquatics and Fitness programs, Day Camps, Seniors recreational programming, Youth Leadership training programs and more)



Community Programs and Events (Includes such initiatives as Neighbourhood Associations, Harmony Square programming, Brantford’s Canada Day, Remembrance Day, Volunteer management)

This Vision Plan is inclusive of everything CSSD provides: both the joint City of Brantford/ County of Brant services, and those offered in the City of Brantford only.

3 Service Areas

Department	Brief Description	Life Stage Focus
Family & Income Stability	Ontario Works Financial Assistance Stability Supports – life skills coaching and service navigation Special benefits – health related items for low income residents and social assistance recipients Assisted Funerals	Life Stage Focus: Adult (16-65)
Housing & Homelessness	Housing Programs – centralized wait list for affordable housing applications, affordable housing programs Housing Operations – management of City-owned community housing Housing Stability – homelessness prevention services Housing Development – development of new affordable housing	Housing infancy to senior Housing infancy to senior Homelessness –(youth, adults, seniors)
Community Programs & Social Development	Children’s Services and Early Years Community Recreation Neighbourhood Associations Aquatics and Fitness Programs Beckett Recreation Centre (Seniors) Earl Haig Family Fun Park Community Events Brantford Immigration Partnership Youth Programs Age-Friendly Community Planning Healthy Kids Program Strategic Planning and Community Partnerships	Children’s Services: children 0-12 Community Programs: infancy to senior Social Development: infancy to senior

Our vision begins with a story. First and foremost, CSSD is about people. For those who are struggling, CSSD connects them with the supports they need to better their lives and outcomes. Kylie's story is an example of the purposeful work we do and why we do it – to make a difference – to improve lives and outcomes for individuals and their families.

Kylie: A story about getting the right supports, in the right places, at the right times

Brantford, Ontario – some time in the not too distant future.

Kylie, a lifelong Brantford resident, just turned 21 years old. She finds life to be a struggle most days. Growing up, she witnessed and experienced violence at home, which resulted in moving around to live in different places: with her mother sometimes; other times, when her mother wasn't doing well, she lived with various relatives and occasionally in foster homes. She has had feelings of severe anxiety since she was young, and has used alcohol and other substances– when she can get them – to cope with these feelings. With all the disruptions and dysfunction in her home life, Kylie did not finish high school. For the past few years she's been living with a man several years older than her. She knows it isn't a healthy relationship, but she feels that it's her best option. Now, after a night of heavy drinking and violence at the hands of her partner, Kylie is scared and thinking about leaving the relationship, especially since she just found out she is pregnant. Kylie wishes she could give her baby a different kind of upbringing from what she experienced, but she feels overwhelmed and unsure. She doesn't know where she would go if she left.

Kylie's sister suggested she should apply for social assistance. Kylie discovers there is an Access Point that she can walk to when her partner is at work. She is able to discuss her situation with a knowledgeable representative who helps arrange for her to live with her sister temporarily and apply for Ontario Works and subsidized housing online. Kylie's sister lives in Paris, and Kylie is happy to find out she can keep working with the same person since the County is Brant is part of the service area. Kylie and her service coordinator are in frequent contact over the next several weeks while her plan comes together. She is attending prenatal appointments at the local health clinic, getting addictions and personal counselling online using a computer her service coordinator arranged for her, and taking prenatal yoga classes with the encouragement of her addictions counsellor. The fees for her yoga program are covered by the recreation subsidy program. Her service coordinator finds her help to complete her taxes. Kylie is excited to find out there is a program for single mothers to complete high school and post secondary education and it comes with a housing subsidy. A housing resource worker helps her find an apartment to share with another single mother who is attending college part time, and her tax refund is enough for the deposit. Kylie is relieved to have somewhere to live until she is able to get into the subsidized unit when she starts her education program. Her new roommate even gave Kylie some baby supplies and clothing.

■ Opposite page: Kylie



Project purpose & Background

The City of Brantford and County of Brant are home to a combined population of 144,162 people (2021 Census Data). Our communities are growing fast: by 2031, there are projected to be more than 168,000 residents. As the community grows and changes, the needs of our citizens will shift. CSSD requires a well-planned approach that steers us in directions that best serve the people of Brantford and Brant.

This plan is fluid and will adapt to the continuously shifting municipal environment influenced by global changes, provincial policy direction, and demographic changes. It is designed to be dynamic and able to adapt to unforeseen circumstances and emerging opportunities.

The purpose of this plan is:

- To articulate an essential and cohesive purpose for the CSSD Commission that clearly defines the organization for staff, customers and stakeholders.
- To sketch a blueprint for the 10 year horizon (2022-2032).
- To identify focus themes and strategies that will guide the interrelated work of our 3 departments.
- To inform priorities for capital and operating investments into existing and new infrastructure in support of these themes.

■ Neighbourhood Community Kitchen



Work that has already been done

This Plan has been developed using many overarching and related City and County strategic planning documents that guide overall priorities and service delivery including the City of Brantford Council Priorities (2021/22) and the County of Brant – Our Future Brant (2019-2023).



Age Specific Plans (5):

- Brantford’s Youth Strategy 2022-2024
- Elder Abuse Prevention Plan
- Healthy Aging: City of Brantford City of Brantford Age-Friendly Strategy 2022-2024
- County of Brant Age Friendly Community Plan
- Child Care and Early Years 10 Year Plan 2022 to 2023 Building our Community from the Kids up



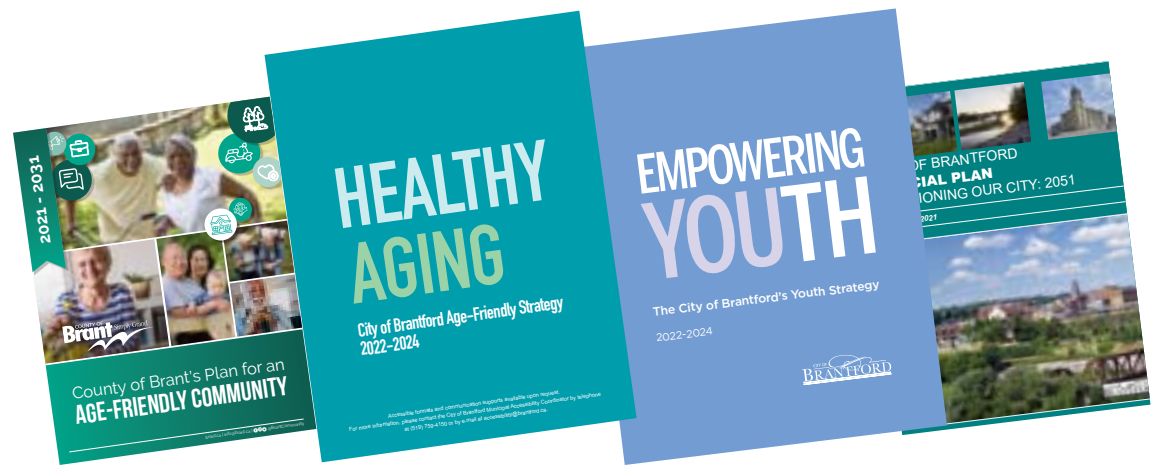
Built Environment (6):

- North of Shellard Neighbourhood and Recreation Plan
- City of Brantford Official Plan Brantford
- City of Brantford Downtown Improvement Priority Plan
- County of Brant Official Plan
- Waterfront Master Plan
- Downtown Master Plan



Social Care (3):

- Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy 2020-2025
- Recovery and Renewal: Ontario’s Vision for Social Assistance Transformation
- Canada Poverty Reduction Strategy





- Health/Mental Health/Addictions Care (2):**
- Brantford-Brant Community Drugs Strategy
 - Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario’s Mental Health and Addictions System



- Housing & Homelessness (9):**
- Brantford-Brant Housing Stability Plan 2014-2024
 - Brantford Brant Housing Master Plan
 - Mayor’s Housing Partnerships Task Force
 - Annual Brantford Housing Forum
 - Point-in-Time Counts
 - More Homes More Choice: Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan, Provincial Plan
 - More Homes for Everyone, 2022, Provincial Plan
 - National Housing Strategy
 - Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy



- Community (4):**
- County of Brant Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan
 - City of Brantford Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan Action Plan
 - City of Brantford Parks & Recreation Master Plan 2018
 - Immigration Partnership Action Plan



Leading Municipal Practices

Through research and consultation, specific trends and leading practices were identified and have influenced the development of the Vision Plan.

1) Municipal/Post Secondary partnerships

Post secondary institutions are a valuable asset to communities in addressing complex so- cial issues, offering research expertise, student placements, and access to academic grants, among other benefits. Recognizing the importance of collaboration with the academic sec- tor, in March 2022 the City of Brantford formalized a Memorandum of Understanding with Wilfrid Laurier University (Brantford Campus) to guide joint activities and sharing of knowl- edge and resources.

Guelph Lab: This initiative combines research, experimentation and teaching towards find- ing solutions for shared challenges within the City and University. Community and the voic- es of citizens is at the centre of the process of public innovation. Projects have included food security and improving road safety in lower income neighbourhoods.

City of Toronto/University of Toronto and City of London/University of Western Ontario are additional examples of municipal/postsecondary partnerships that have delivered proj- ects in the community programs/social service space.

2) Community Based Service Delivery

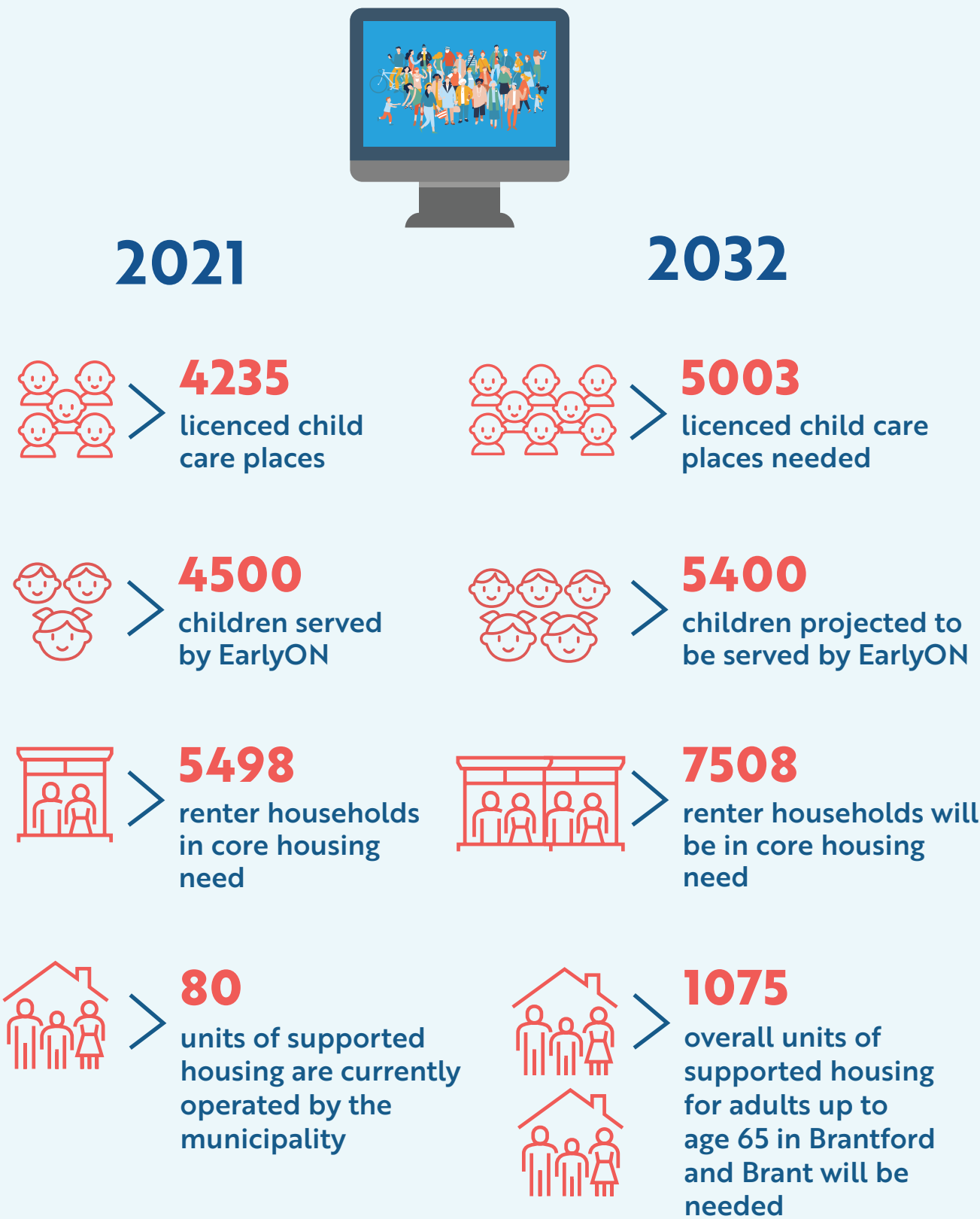
Municipalities are increasingly moving away from a model that requires citizens to physically attend at a centralized administration building (“City Hall”) to meet with staff or obtain ser- vices. In addition to the explosive growth in virtual channels for interaction with the public, completing requests or answering inquiries, precipitated in part by COVID 19 restrictions, communities are bringing select services to access points embedded in neighbourhoods and extending hours to increase accessibility for citizens.

City of London: In addition to City Plaza downtown, there are 5 satellite locations developed across the City in plazas and community centres. Each site functions on a distinct model and includes community partners along with City staff.

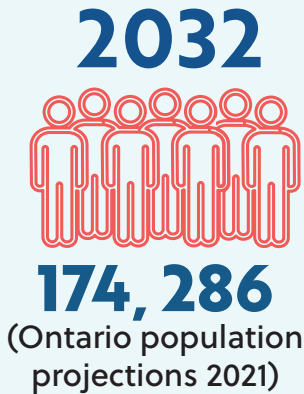
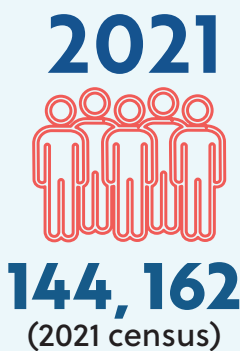
Region of Waterloo also locates social services staff in selected community centres and schools.

3) Neighbourhood Assets

Asset Based Community Development builds on the assets that are already present in the community and mobilizes individuals, organizations and institutions to come together and build on their strengths as opposed to concentrating on their needs. Active participation and empowerment of the residents are emphasized in the belief that community driven solutions are the most sustainable. Many of the communities surrounds Brantford and Brant have met with success through implementing aspects of the ABCD philosophy through neighbourhood associations and/or other affiliate structures. These include the **City of Kitchener, City of London, City of Hamilton, and the City of Cambridge.**



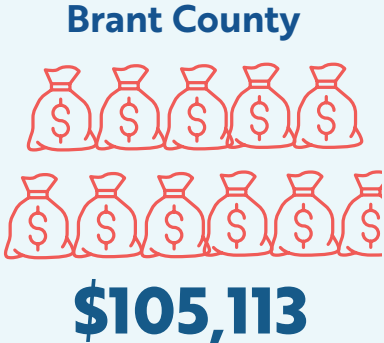
Brantford Brant population



Age distribution

Age group	2021	2032	%
0-14	26858	28018	+4.3%
15-64	9848	106551	+8%
65+	28558	39717	+39%

Average Income



Social Assistance Caseload Forecast

Age group	2021/2022	2022/2023	%
Ontario Works	2091	2450	+17%
Ontario Disability	6058	6292	+3.8%
Overall	8149	8742	+7.26%

Percentage of population in receipt of social assistance (2022) 5.65%

In 2020/21, a CSSD staff action team created this vision statement and values to describe how our team will work with the community and each other.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Vision and Values

Community Services and Social Development strives to enrich and motivate Brantford-Brant residents on their pathway to improved well-being and personal growth. Our goal is to continue to provide impactful services within a collaborative and trusting environment.



Places



People



Partnering

P1: Safe and Vibrant Places



The evidence is clear: Places matter for the wellbeing of those who reside in our communities. Residents want affordable, comfortable housing and safe neighbourhoods where they are connected to each other and can continue to live in their familiar places as they age.

As the population base of our communities changes over the next decade, CSSD will also evolve to best serve neighbourhoods as they grow through new development and intensification.

Key Strategies we will use to build better places to live and grow in Brantford and Brant:

P1.1 Continue working towards a range of available housing so residents can live in a setting most appropriate to their needs

- P1.1.1 Develop an interdepartmental staff committee to review , explore and coordinate affordable housing development opportunities (e.g. Planning, Housing, Finance, Building, Engineering, Legal/Real Estate)
- P1.1.2 Investigate opportunities for municipal-led development that can include mixed tenure housing to generate additional revenues to support rental housing
- P 1.1.3 Continue discussion with partners including the County of Brant in order to develop and submit funding applications for new affordable housing development opportunities
- P1.1.4 Guided by the City of Brantford and County of Brant Official Plans, work with municipal planning staff to foster the development of different housing types for more income and density diverse neighbourhoods in all wards for more inclusive and complete communities
- P 1.1.4 Expand affordable housing options available for older adults to age in place

P 1.2 Create an ecosystem of localized service delivery with access tailored to people’s needs

- P1.2.1 Engage citizens to understand patterns of service use and preferences for access (digital, in person, telephone)
- P 1.2.2 Retain a full service hub location in a Brantford location to be determined where citizens can receive personal supports
- P 1.2.3 Imbed CSSD and partner agency staff and programs in locations with higher concentrations of individuals and families experiencing multiple disadvantages
- P 1.2.4 Build out a network of service access points based on the established needs and preferences of primary user groups
- P1.2.5 Promote clear information on service availability through a variety of channels
- P1.2.6 Work collaboratively with the City of Brantford Customer Service towards integrated customer experiences and maximizing staff utilization

P1.3 Promote solutions to ensure individuals and families who are unhoused or at highest risk for chronic homelessness are housed and experience housing stability

- P1.3.1 Inventory supported housing and support services across all sectors, identify projected needs, and quantify gap to consider current and future need
- P1.3.2 Explore innovative practices to develop additional units of housing with operational funding for on site supports in both the City and County
- P 1.3.3 Train and include non-profit and co-operative housing providers in eviction prevention efforts and provide toolkits of material and best practices to all housing providers
- P 1.3.4 Continue to build capacity within the emergency shelter sector to consistently operate from a Housing First/Housing Focussed framework

P1.4 Promote gathering spaces for culture, sports, recreation and entertainment opportunities to support both formal and informal uses (City of Brantford only)

- 1.4.1 Host major events and a range of signature and community festivals in partnership with community organizations
- 1.4.2 Animate open spaces through programming, activities and events that encourage daily and all-season use
- 1.4.3 Develop a robust volunteer management program in support of events and programming
- 1.4.4 Encourage participation in programming, activities and events from populations at higher risk of social isolation

Safe and Vibrant Places: 18 Stirton Ribbon Cutting



Healthy People: Playing Pickleball



Strategic Priorities

P2: Healthy People



Health is about much more than just physical health or treatment in the health care system; it is about the many factors that shape the overall well-being of our citizens. Our health and well-being begins with basic needs – clothing, shelter, food, transportation, and income. We need ways to express ourselves, to be safe and included, supportive services, positive connections, and to learn and grow.

Together we are creating and continually improving the conditions that enable all of us to enjoy the highest level of health and well-being possible.

Key Strategies we will use to build stronger, more resilient people in Brantford and Brant:

P 2.1 Promote higher levels overall wellness, mental health and responsible substance use in service users and in neighbourhoods of concern working creatively with health sector partners to develop new access pathways

- 2.1.1 Actively collaborate with the Ontario Health Team (OHT) Brantford Brant to identify and action strategies to improve health outcomes for high service users across both systems
- 2.1.2 Encourage co-location of health service providers in City owned/operated spaces housing where indicated by needs assessments
- 2.1.3 Work with LHIN home care and other partners to support older adults in City owned housing to manage chronic health conditions and remain living independently for as long as possible
- 2.1.4 Develop an awareness campaign featuring success stories promoting the benefits of participating in CSSD programs

Strategic Priorities

P 2.2 Children and youth will receive a great start in life through a mix of universal and targeted investments

- 2.2.1 In partnership with municipal recreation, provide seamless access to Child Care Fee Subsidy and City of Brantford and County of Brant summer camps
- 2.2.2 EarlyON Child and Family Centres to continue to offer flexible programming that meet the needs of families (e.g., time, type, location)
- 2.2.3 Align EarlyON Child and Family Centres with City of Brantford and County of Brant community centres. Work with the County of Brant to source space for a dedicated Paris EarlyON location
- 2.2.4 Collaborate with local recreation, healthcare, and social service providers, as well as youth leaders, to develop and implement a variety of health and wellness recreation and education programs for local youth
- 2.2.5 Enhance access to youth social and recreation programing through the community centres and neighbourhood-based programs. Promote the use of outdoor amenities for youth programing, including parks, trails, sports fields, and natural greenspaces

P 2.3 Design spaces, services and processes to be inclusive of all community members

- 2.3.1 Deliver welcoming CSSD facilities and services that are friendly for all ages and abilities, culturally appropriate as well as universally accessible
- 2.3.2 Train all staff in Trauma Informed approaches and build processes that are sensitive to the experience of those affected by trauma
- 2.3.3 Continue an intentional journey of understanding the impact of colonialism and the intergenerational trauma related to our local residential school legacy
- 2.3.4 Investigate offering gathering and event spaces for hosting Indigenous cultural and ceremonial practices
- 2.3.5 Review and assess City-run youth programs and services for opportunities to increase their accessibility
- 2.3.6 Provide the opportunity to licensed child care to embed indigenous culture and teachings in programming, supported by indigenous cultural facilitators. Further embed Indigenous programming into EarlyON programming at all sites
- 2.3.7 Enable publicly accessible internet at CSSD locations where feasible, and work with partners to increase device ownership, personal internet availability and digital literacy in service users

Strategic Priorities

P 2.4 Invest in play, fitness and recreation for all

- 2.4.1 Together with internal City staff, ensure clean, modern, well maintained facilities that encourage citizen use of City recreational and cultural amenities
- 2.4.2 Consider opportunities to develop regional approaches to sport, leisure and recreation where it makes sense to do so
- 2.4.3 Together with external partners, continue to deliver senior focused recreational activities and events while considering the most appropriate venues based on older adult population needs

■ People: Youth Programs



P3: inspired Partnerships



Community Services and Social Development has a long and proud tradition of bringing people and organizations together to collaborate on solutions to community-wide challenges and find innovative ways to meet identified resident needs. Partnerships allow the City to leverage out-side resources and maximize public funds.

City of Brantford – Wilfrid Laurier University Collaboration

The Community Services and Social Development team has worked closely with staff and faculty at Wilfrid Laurier University on a number of research, evaluation and project planning initiatives including the Brant Community response Team, Empower Youth Strategy, Brantford Downtown Outreach Team, and the Brantford Immigration Partnership, to name a few. This partnership provides high quality academic support to City initiatives, while providing experiential learning and research opportunities for students and faculty.

P 3.1 Identify and strengthen collaborations to best serve marginalized communities

- 3.1.1 Apply for grants and secure third party funding to expand existing programs and pilot new ones in collaboration with youth-serving community partners
- 3.1.2 Align EarlyON programming with recreation, sport and library programs to increase awareness and attendance
- 3.1.3 Develop and pilot case conferencing approach to housing supports for tenants living within municipal housing (including Ontario Works staff and other community resources)
- 3.1.4 Partner with community organizations to prevent gender-based violence, through education, and support those impacted by it

P 3.2 Partner with post secondary to improve knowledge creation and data driven practice

- 3.2.1 Under the leadership of the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Brantford and Wilfrid Laurier University (2022) and Joint- University/City Working Group, identify opportunities for research projects which advance the priorities identified in this plan
- 3.2.2 Continue to develop and host student placement opportunities
- 3.2.3 Coordinate sessions for graduating students to promote positions within CSSD and recruitment processes

Partnerships: W Lounge at Woodman Community Centre



P 3.3 Operate with a sustainability lens

- 3.3.1 Undertake a process to establish a sports and recreation program delivery framework that balances community access with revenue generation and cost recovery
- 3.3.2 Look for opportunities to target, leverage, and work with other municipal services in the City of Brantford and the County of Brant (i.e. municipal recreation departments, libraries, etc.)
- 3.3.3 Examine opportunities to align repairs and future capital projects in the Housing department with the City’s Climate Change Action Plan

P3.4 Organize to improve decision making through the establishment of data analytics and business intelligence with the objectives of improved quality and efficiency of service delivery

- 3.4.1 Use available provincial technologies and emerging platforms to advance a valuable digital experience for customers and efficient staff work
- 3.4.2 Pursue a focus on quality & continuous improvement to enable departments to deploy a more efficient, sustainable and innovative approach to the delivery of municipal programs and services that are aligned with our customer’s expectations
- 3.4.3 Consider the creation of a Business Analysis unit which would align data and program analysis resources to support improved cross-commission capacity for program evaluation, performance measurement/reporting, dashboarding, predictive analytics and data-informed decision making

P3.5 Align marketing, staffing models program design and corporate policy to enhance revenue and accessibility

- P3.5.1 Develop a unified annual marketing plan, including rebranding, that maximizes awareness and attendance for City programs
- P3.5.2 Adapt User Fees and Charges By-law to provide flexibility for community use, pilot programs and revenue generating opportunities
- P3.5.4 Develop a staffing model that supports growth, expansion and efficiencies over the long term
- P 3.5.5 Modernize marketing and registration tools to increase ease of access for potential participants

Kylie and Aiden ...the next chapter

While life isn’t perfect, by the time baby Aiden arrives, Kylie is feeling optimistic about giving him a different upbringing from what she experienced. She can’t wait to take him to parent and baby programs at the neighbourhood EarlyOn, and when Aiden is a little older, she will start her new education program. Kylie talks about becoming a youth outreach worker or a paramedic. She’s had some visits from a nurse who reassures her that Aiden is doing well on the weight and height chart. They now have a family doctor at the health clinic where she is getting help with her anxiety. A weekly recovery support group helps Kylie manage her substance use. Kylie takes Aiden for walks around the neighbourhood, has become friends with her roommate and reconnected with her sister. Thanks to a team of supporters, Kylie and Aiden’s future looks bright.

Kylie and Aiden



Appendix

Age Specific Plans
Brantford's Youth Strategy 2022-2024
Elder Abuse Prevention Plan
Healthy Aging: City of Brantford Age-Friendly Strategy 2022-2024
County of Brant Age Friendly Community Plan
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