

Community Safety and Well-being Plan 2021 – 2025



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**Message from
Mayor Kevin Davis**

Brantford City Council is committed to building a community that offers great opportunities for children and youth, supports our aging population, and embraces our values of diversity and inclusion. These principles are the key to our prosperity, economic growth, and overcoming social challenges.

The Community Safety and Well-being Plan, along with our Climate Change Action Plan, the Official Plan and the Economic Development Plan supports our collective vision to make Brantford the best City in Canada to live, work and play.

On behalf of Brantford City Council I want to sincerely thank Members of the Advisory Committee for their time, insight and leadership in the development of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan, and I am excited to see the great work that we are going to do together.



**Message from
Marlene Miranda
General Manager, Community
Services & Social Development**

The City of Brantford is a destination of choice for businesses, students and families, and we are committed to providing exceptional programs and services to our residents.

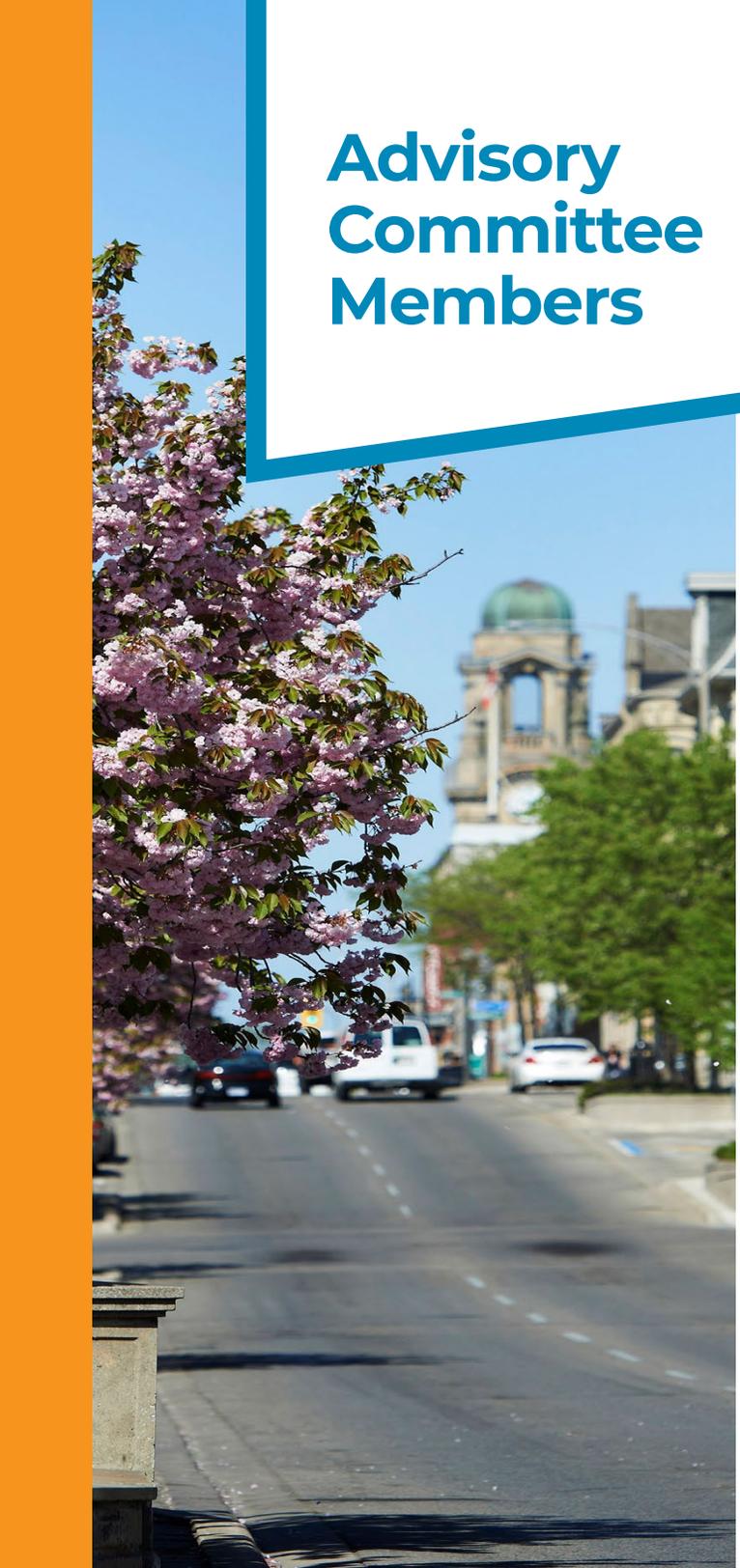
The Community Safety and Well-being Plan will help us deliver on the priorities of Brantford City Council, and our staff will continue to work with local agencies, volunteers and other levels of government to enhance the well-being and safety of the people we serve, and build a community that is healthy, vibrant and inclusive.



**Message from
James Popham
Chair of the City of Brantford
Community Safety and Well-Being
Advisory Committee**

On behalf of the Advisory Committee, I would like to congratulate the City of Brantford for the development of their Community Safety and Well-being Plan. This Plan recognizes the tremendous work already being done throughout the community, reflects key community needs, evidence-based approaches, and creates a roadmap for the municipality and its partners to build and support this community.

I want to thank all Advisory Committee members for contributing their expertise and perspectives and we look forward to working collaboratively on the Community Safety and Well-being Plan Action Plan in the years ahead.



Advisory Committee Members

- Mayor Kevin Davis, City of Brantford
- Robert Davis, Chief of Police, Brantford Police Service
- James Yuhasz, Campus Manager (Brantford) Conestoga College Institute of Advanced Learning
- Heidi Northwood, Senior Executive Officer, Wilfrid Laurier University, Brantford Campus
- Kim Baker, Director of Clinical Services, St. Leonard's Community Services
- Flora Ennis, Director of Services, Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services
- Constance McKnight, Executive Director, De dwa da dehs nye>s, Aboriginal Health Centre
- Michael Benin, Executive Director, Canadian Mental Health Association, Brant Haldimand Norfolk
- Peter Szota, Executive Director, Grand River Community Health Centre
- David McNeil, President and CEO, Brant Community Healthcare System
- James Popham, Strategic Community Research Liaison, Centre for Research on Security Practices, Laurier Brantford
- Dr. Elizabeth Urbantke, Medical Officer of Health, Brant County Health Unit
- Councillor Richard Carpenter, Member of the Brant Elder Abuse Committee
- Trevor Rumble, Member of the Brantford Brant Chamber of Commerce
- John O'Neil, Member of the Downtown Business Improvement Area
- Colleen Goupil, Citizen Representatives
- Terry Skoryk, Citizen Representatives
- Heather MacDonald, Citizen Representatives

Introduction

Brantford's Community Safety and Well-being Plan will be more than a legislative obligation. This municipal plan will be a guide to growing the community in a manner that supports individual safety and builds on the sense of community found throughout Brantford. The plan addresses needs that currently exist and is adaptable enough to address new concerns as they arise.

Ultimately, this plan will serve as a guide for both the City and its partners to cultivate a Brantford that continues to be a great place to live, work, learn and play.



Why Develop a Community Safety and Well-being Plan?

The Community Safety and Well-being Plan is a legislated requirement of all Ontario municipalities under the Safer Ontario Act, 2018, and was guided by the Ministry of the Solicitor General framework, which outlined strategies to identify local priorities and support action.

Creating this plan provided the opportunity for the City to engage with partners from a variety of sectors within the community to identify key priorities. By leveraging the experience and knowledge from within our community, we can best position the City to effectively build a community where all residents feel safe and connected.



The City of Brantford's Role

Lead

The municipality will provide leadership in the areas within the municipal scope (e.g. housing, youth engagement, neighbourhood development).

Advocate

The municipality will advocate for the needed resources and policy change in areas outside of the municipal scope (e.g. mental health and addictions, primary care).

Support

The municipality will continue to support the goals of existing community groups through collaborative projects and grant writing (e.g. Brantford Regional Indigenous Support Centre, Grand River Council on Aging).



Creating the Community Safety and Well-being Plan

Choosing Our Priorities

The CSWP is based on four key elements:

- 1** Brantford City Council's established Priorities for 2021 and 2022
- 2** Alignment with Complementary Community Plans and Strategies
- 3** Review of Community Data
- 4** Community Consultations



Priorities, Plans and Community Strategies

Council Priorities

In 2020, Brantford City Council identified key priorities and actions for 2021-2022. The following Council Priorities were vital in guiding the development of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan:

- All neighbourhoods in the City are safe, vibrant, attractive, and inclusive
- Improve municipal capacity for by-law enforcement, including extended hours and expanded scope, to address concerns related to property standards, noise, nuisance, and compliance with COVID-19 regulations
- Continue to invest in downtown revitalization and advance the *Downtown Master Plan*
- Work with Brantford Police Service and other community partners to develop a long term, prevention-based approach to community safety that creates opportunity for local youth (Complete a *Community Safety and Well-being Plan*)
- Work with Brantford Police Service and other community partners to address short term needs associated with community safety, including CCTV cameras, increased police presence, and solutions to petty crime
- Develop a *Youth Strategy*, including opportunities for Youth Centre expansion
- Social services support is provided to Brantford residents in need
- Commence one or more additional housing developments, funded through proceeds from the disposition of municipal assets
- Together with health care partners, participate in the continued implementation of the *Brantford-Brant Community Drugs Strategy*
- Support the continued implementation of the *Elder Abuse Prevention Strategy* and other age-friendly initiatives

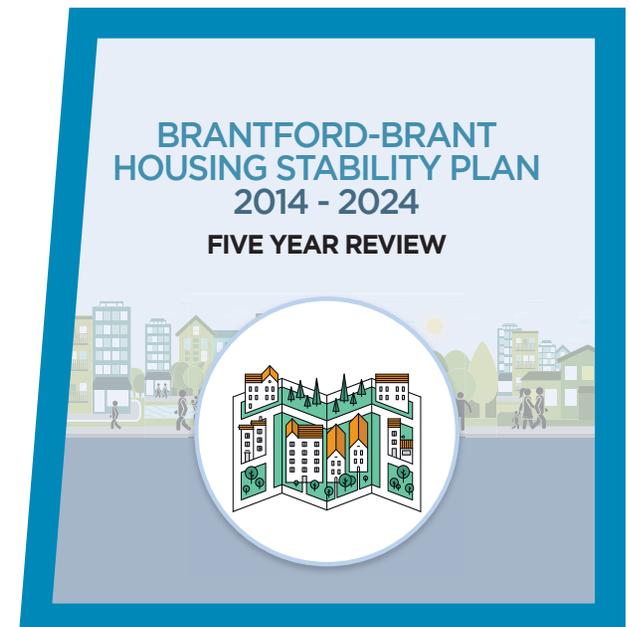


Community Strategies and Corporate Plans

The following community plans and strategies were reviewed to ensure the Community Safety and Well-being Plan aligns with existing community efforts:

- Mayors' Housing Partnership Task Force Action Plan
- Brantford-Brant 10-year Housing Stability Plan
- Brant Vital Signs Report
- Brantford-Brant Community Drugs Strategy
- Healthy Aging: City of Brantford Age-Friendly Plan
- Brantford Downtown Master Plan
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Right Now: A Community Strategy to Prevent and Address Elder Abuse
- Together for Youth: A Coordinated Youth Services Strategy for the City of Brantford and the County of Brant
- A Review of Homeless Shelter and Housing with Supports System in the City of Brantford
- Brantford Police Service Strategic Plan
- Brant Community Healthcare System Strategic Plan

These existing plans were informed by extensive community consultation and represent over 4,500 residents, including individuals with lived experience of mental health concerns, addictions and/or homelessness, youth, seniors, newcomers, service providers, and community leaders.



Community Consultations

Consultation sessions were conducted with Advisory Committee members and their staff teams to establish key priority areas for the Community Safety and Well-being Plan. Consultations with Advisory Committee members were conducted before and after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic to reflect any possible changes.

Over 500 community members were engaged through a Safety Perceptions Survey conducted by Wilfrid Laurier University and a Let's Talk Brantford Campaign which captured residents' perspectives and ideas for programs, projects and partnerships.

The City is committed to ongoing engagement with community stakeholders, subject matter experts, and community residents to support implementation and evaluation of the Plan.

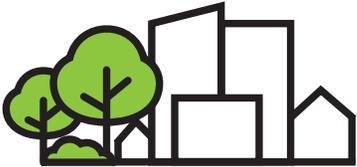
Community Data

Data and information from various sources were used to inform the development of the priorities for the Plan, including the following:

- Statistics Canada
- Brant County Health Unit
- Public Health Ontario
- Supports for Success
- Brant Vital Signs Report
- Brantford Police Service



The Community Safety and Well-being Plan Priorities



Affordable Housing



Older Adults



Children and Youth



Safe and Vibrant Neighbourhoods



Diversity and Inclusion



Substance Use



Action Plan

1. Affordable Housing

1.1 Implement Recommendations of the Mayors' Housing Partnership Taskforce

The goal of the Mayors' Housing Partnerships Task Force was to build partnerships to create more housing options, more quickly, across the housing continuum. *The Mayors' Housing Partnership Task Force Affordable Housing Action Plan* outlined 34 actions to aid in the creation of more housing options.

1.2 Support Housing Stability

The City of Brantford has developed a mid-term plan for supporting Housing Stability, outlining future actions and key partnerships needed to enhance homelessness prevention and shelter diversion efforts. The plan also supports the Coordinated Access System, covering clear and consistent processes for entry points, case management, information sharing, and reporting through the implementation of the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) to better serve our homeless population.

1.3 Increase the Availability of Supportive Housing

Supportive housing provides housing supports to individuals who have experienced repeated episodic or chronic homelessness, who often have complex needs related to trauma, physical and/or mental health concerns, disabilities, or substance use. The program focuses on the "Housing First" philosophy of homelessness prevention that provides safe and affordable housing with access to health and social services. As part of the province's Home for Good program, the City operates a new 30-unit supportive housing building on Marlene Avenue.



2. Children and Youth

2.1 Expand the Healthy Kids Program

The Healthy Kids Program supports healthy lifestyles for children and families by offering programs and activities that promote physical activity, healthy eating, and positive relationships. The Healthy Kids Program adds a new theme each year and the 2021 theme is *Healthy Kids Celebrate Culture!* encouraging children and families to participate in various cultural opportunities that help promote inclusion and community connection.

2.2 Coordinated EarlyON programming

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free programs in Brantford and County of Brant for children 0 to 6 years old and their caregivers. EarlyONs are staffed by early learning professionals trained in early childhood development and offer support and resources for families. Participants learn and play with their child through reading, storytelling, songs, and games, while connecting with other families. Indigenous-led programs are available and teach Indigenous activities and languages.

2.3 Update the 'Together for Youth' Coordinated Youth Services Strategy

The 2015, *Together for Youth: Coordinated Youth Services Strategy* identified opportunities for supporting youth in the community. The City of Brantford will work with community partners to develop an updated Youth Strategy that will identify opportunities to enhance and expand youth programming.

2.4 Develop and Launch Youth Violence Prevention Initiatives

The City will work with community partners to explore ways to develop and implement youth violence prevention programs and further enhance current programs and services that support local youth.



3. Diversity and Inclusion

3.1 Cultural Celebrations, Events and Campaigns

In partnership with the Brantford Immigration Partnership (BIP), cultural associations, and Indigenous organizations, the City will explore additional opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity in Brantford. This includes cultural activities and programs, social media and video content, and educational awareness campaigns that promote cultural learning and anti-discrimination.

3.2 Support Urban Indigenous Engagement and Connection

The City will work in collaboration with Indigenous partners to enhance inclusion of urban Indigenous residents, foster community connection, and to explore the feasibility of developing an Urban Indigenous Strategy and Action Plans to help support community initiatives.

3.3 Increase Accessibility to Community Services and Resources

In collaboration with community partners the City will enhance participation and access to recreation and other community programs by incorporating cultural activities, fostering participation for intergenerational families, and exploring opportunities for interpretation services and translation of information guides and community resources.



3.4 Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Plan

The development of a framework and strategic plan will guide the municipality in their efforts to foster inclusion, promote accessibility, and celebrate Brantford's growing diversity. This Diversity and Inclusion Plan will also support the City's application to join the UNESCO Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities committed to improving practices to promote social inclusion and to establish policies to eradicate all forms of racism and discrimination. Joining the Coalition will provide an opportunity to critically review complex challenges faced in Brantford, while further advancing diverse cultural values and practices in our community.

3.5 Creating a Welcoming Community for International Students

The Brantford downtown is home to two post-secondary campuses, Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier University. The size of the student body is steadily increasing and both institutions attract significant numbers of international students. The City will work with post-secondary partners to provide programs and services that help international students participate in curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular programming so they can best experience and contribute to campus culture.

4. Older Adults

4.1 Update the Healthy Aging: City of Brantford Age-Friendly Plan

The City of Brantford's Age-Friendly Plan outlines 99 recommendations and 42 actions based on the World Health Organization's eight domains of an Age-Friendly Community. As the Age-Friendly Plan is in its third year of implementation, there will be opportunities to update the plan, assess additional gaps in age-friendly planning and explore ongoing actions and initiatives to continue to support seniors.

4.2 Expand Senior's Programming within Community Recreation

The Beckett Adult Leisure Centre, located in downtown Brantford, offers programs for adults aged 50 and over. The Centre offers arts programs and workshops, drop-in activities and games, and promotes physical activity and recreation that can be expanded to other neighbourhoods.

4.3 Expand the 'Let's Get Moving' Program

The Let's Get Moving Program provides opportunities for older adults to remain active and connected to the community. The City will continue to engage new and existing community partners to develop programming, and will explore additional opportunities to reduce social isolation and promote increased connections.

4.4 Support the 'Right Now: A Community Strategy to Prevent and Address Elder Abuse'

Right Now: A Community Strategy to Prevent and Address Elder Abuse outlines 13 recommendations and 42 actions to prevent and address elder abuse and serves as a shared work plan for community partners. In partnership with the Elder Abuse Awareness Committee, the City will continue to support education and awareness campaigns, local training, and promotion of resources including the Power of Attorney workshops, Seniors Toolkit, and service provider response protocols.



5. Safe and Vibrant Neighbourhoods

5.1 Improve Municipal Capacity for By-Law Enforcement and Downtown Security

The City of Brantford will continue to support the improvement of municipal capacity for by-law enforcement, including extended hours and expanded scope, as well as addressing concerns related to property standards, noise, nuisance, and compliance with COVID-19 regulations. Alignment with the Corporate Security Guard Team, post-secondary security programs, and Brantford Police Service will provide a layered approach to security and create options for a stratified response to concerns within the downtown core.

5.2 Expand and Promote Neighbourhood Associations

Neighbourhood Associations (NAs) are volunteer committees that work in cooperation with the City of Brantford to support their community. There are currently 21 active NAs consisting of 174 executive members that offer a variety of activities, including neighbourhood events and programs, outdoor ice rinks, and learning opportunities.

5.3 Implement a Downtown CCTV Program

The City of Brantford and Brantford Police Services are working jointly on the development of a downtown CCTV Program to help deter crime in the downtown. The program will consist of a network of CCTV cameras in the downtown area that will enhance existing security measures from both public and private partners, including post-secondary institutions, law enforcement, and local businesses.

5.4 Continue to Implement the Downtown Master Plan

Through partnerships with the provincial government, post-secondary institutions, the Downtown Brantford BIA, and other stakeholders, the City of Brantford's *Downtown Master Plan* has created opportunities for sustained growth, and continues to improve the vitality of the downtown.

5.5 Support the Goals of Vision Zero Task Force

Vision Zero Safety is a global initiative that promotes road safety. By adopting the initiative locally, Vision Zero Brantford will aim to improve education, enforcement, engineering, evaluation and community engagement to promote street safety.

5.6 Promote Community Connection and Use of Green Space

The City of Brantford will continue to support community access and participation in engagement with green spaces, such as community gardens, parks and trails. The City will explore ways to connect community to natural environments through promotion campaigns and expansion of community programs.

5.7 Enhance Service Connections

The City of Brantford will continue to promote connections to health and community services through our reach of clients and service users. The integration of community recreation and social services through the corporate re-organization will also present a unique opportunity for Brantford to implement creative methods to reach people throughout the community such as, Library based Community Housing Outreach Worker and outreach team led by St. Leonard's Community Services.

6. Substance Use

6.1 Development of Youth-focused Substance Use Prevention Programs

As a priority of the *Youth Strategy* and the *Community Drugs Strategy*, the City will explore program models for youth drug education and prevention, including working with community partners to develop education and awareness campaigns and programs.

6.2 Advocacy to Other Levels of Government

The City of Brantford plays a role in advocating for resources and will continue to explore opportunities to support community efforts and groups, such as the Ontario Health Team and Brantford-Brant Community Drugs Strategy Committee, through ongoing advocacy to stakeholders and other levels of government.



Evaluation, Governance and Reporting

Evaluation

The City will work alongside experts from Wilfrid Laurier University and Brant County Health Unit to develop evaluation frameworks for the various projects and programs outlined in the Action Plan. The evaluation framework will include a list of outcomes and indicators that will be used to measure program development and successes.

Governance

The development of the City of Brantford's Community Safety and Well-being Plan represents a collaborative community effort. The Community Safety and Well-being Advisory Committee provided valuable insight and guidance to the development of the Plan, providing input from various sectors which serve the community. As we transition from planning to action, oversight and direction of the Plan will come from Brantford City Council.

Consultation and engagement with community members and partner agencies will continue to provide key sources of input into the delivery and direction of the activities, programs, and initiatives within the Plan. As the implementation of the current Plan moves forward, city staff will work closely with the community members, partner agencies, and subject matter experts on the application of key initiatives respond to emerging priorities, and adapt the Plan when needed.

Reporting

The Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated every four years. Annual reviews of the Plan will be done in consultation with local service agencies and community members to ensure that the Plan is adaptive to emerging issues. This process will also provide opportunities to develop and take preventative measures before an emergency situation arises. Brantford City Council will receive update reports on the entire Community Safety and Well-being Plan on an annual basis, including project specific reports relating to key activities and progress. In addition, city staff will participate in regular updates to partner boards, planning bodies, and community groups.

Ongoing community consultation and engagement around the Plan, including its priority areas, and specific activities, will be an essential part of the continual review process. These community level consultations will use tools such as the Let's Talk Brantford Community Engagement Platform, community surveys, and focus groups. Through this engagement, city staff will be able to fully evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Plan's actions and priorities.