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**For Information**

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**REPORT TITLE:**     **Community Safety and Well-being Plan 2022 Update**

**FROM:**             Nancy Polsinelli, Commissioner of Health Services

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**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an update on the status of Peel’s 2020 - 2024 Community Safety and Well-being Plan and alignment with the federal government’s new Building Safer Communities Fund program.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- In 2022, efforts to advance the implementation of Peel’s 2020-2024 Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) Plan continued. An update on accomplishments since 2022 is provided.
  - Given changing conditions CSWB partners are concerned about capacity constraints. Additional resources approved through the 2023 Budget will support with Plan progress and address community needs.
  - In March 2022, the federal government announced via the Building Safer Communities Fund that Peel Region is eligible for up to \$8.1 million to address youth gun and gang violence in Peel.
  - Peel Region has applied for the funding, hosted a funding announcement by the Minister of Public Safety but is still awaiting formal approval from the funder.
  - Peel Region will build on successful initiatives in the community and work with partners to develop a comprehensive strategy to address youth involvement in gun and gang violence.
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**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

CSWB Plans are provincially legislated under *the Police Services Act, 1990* and the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (once in force). CSWB Plans emphasizes a social approach to safety and wellbeing by focusing on addressing upstream and equitable responses to emerging issues to reduce the need for crisis response. Peel’s 2020 – 2024 CSWB Plan was developed in partnership with community organizations and adopted by Regional Council on October 22, 2020.

Over 25 CSWB partner organizations are collaborating to advance the goals of the three focus areas outlined in Peel’s 2020 – 2024 CSWB Plan: family violence, mental health and addictions and systemic discrimination (see Appendix I). The governance structure is outlined in Appendix II. For each focus area a corresponding action table has been established to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration on shared priorities. Action table initiatives are enabled by support from the Peel Region’s CSWB team, which functions as the Secretariat. Across

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focus areas there is a special consideration for the needs of youth. Current action table efforts by the CSWB collective are directed to continuing Plan implementation

This report highlights key Community Safety and Well-Being updates and accomplishments since 2022 and includes an overview of the approach to develop a youth gun and gang violence strategy for Peel via the Building Safer Communities Fund.

### 2. 2020 – 2024 CSWB Plan Implementation and Area of Focus Update

Implementation is driven by community partners with the expertise, and networks to reach residents and achieve collective impact within the three focus areas. Given the complexity of these issues, partners have emphasized the importance of building the right foundation for cross-sectoral collaboration and many of the activities reflect that approach.

Annual seed funding is made available, through the CSWB operating budget, to support partners with implementing prioritized activities. In 2022, Council authorized the Director, Strategic Policy and Performance with delegated authority to approve CSWB seed funding initiatives (Resolution 2022-540). CSWB partners are also encouraged to align initiatives within their respective organizations to the priorities of the action tables, where appropriate.

The following section highlights key developments at the action tables and System Leadership Table from 2022 to present.

#### a) Family Violence Action Table

**Family Violence Action Table Collaborative Forum (Goal 1, Strategy 1)** – On November 15, 2022, Family Services of Peel hosted an in-person Family Violence Action Table Collaborative Forum with 2022 seed funding. The forum brought approximately 95 partners together to build connections and trust, support dialogue, and enhance sector coordination. The forum identified tangible solutions for the action table to implement and ultimately better support residents impacted by family and intimate partner violence. Details are being finalized prior to initiation.

**Co-Designing Family Violence Interventions in Peel (Goal 1, Strategy 2)** – Trillium Health Partners and partners are using a community-based approach that centres the voices of people with lived experience of family violence to co-create regional interventions for family violence prevention during pandemic recovery. A Community Advisory Board comprised of community representatives, researchers, and people with lived experience was established. The team is currently using photovoice research methods to gather insights from people who have experienced or witnessed family violence.

**Public Awareness Campaign (Goal 2, Strategy 1)** – In November 2022, the Peel Region launched its third annual Family and Intimate Partner Violence campaign to increase public and bystander awareness and encourage residents to start the conversation about gender-based violence. The 'Break the Silence' campaign ran across various channels, including pre-show film advertisements, social media, and posters in salons, washrooms, and community hubs, encouraging difficult conversations about violence against women and sharing Peel resources for survivors.

#### b) Mental Health and Addictions (MHA) Action Table

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**MHA Collective Advocacy (Goal 2 Strategy 1)** – Building off the Peel Region’s MHA advocacy campaign in 2021, the action table developed an advocacy strategy to raise awareness for Peel’s mental health and addictions needs. In February 2023, the table submitted a CSWB pre-budget submission (Appendix III) to the Ontario Government asking them to:

- Ensure provincial health human resource policies and compensation practices are supportive of building and retaining a robust Peel MHA workforce.
- Increase funding for mental health and addictions in Peel to meet population needs, correct for historical underfunding, and tackle unprecedented crisis level demand.
- Provide sustained funding and approvals for consumption and treatment services to combat the drug toxicity crisis impacting Peel.

**24/7 Crisis Walk-In Design Model (Goal 2, Strategy 1)** – Using 2022 seed funding, the Canadian Mental Health Association Peel Dufferin and partners designed a clinical model and business case for an innovative 24/7 Crisis Walk-in in Brampton and Mississauga which will make it easier for people experiencing mental health or addictions crisis to get care. The project is completed and a proposal has been submitted to relevant funders.

**Co-designing Mental Health Care Improvements Research Project (Goal 2, Strategy 1)** Partners are collaborating with the Family and Child Health Initiative at Trillium Health Partners on an arts-based research project which co-designs improvements to mental healthcare with young adults, family, caregivers, and providers.

### c) Systemic Discrimination Action Table

**Systemic Discrimination: Collective Action Now Forum (Goal 1, Strategy 3)** – On February 22, 2023 the Regional Diversity Roundtable and partners hosted a forum for system leaders and local organizations to share learnings and challenges in advancing equity and addressing systemic discrimination within organizations. The forum facilitated cross-sectoral collaboration and knowledge exchange. The findings are being used to make recommendations to advance shared goals.

**Disaggregated Workforce Assessment Tool (DWAT) Analysis and Reporting (Goal 2, Strategy 1)** – The DWAT supports organizations collect workforce sociodemographic data. Following its launch in 2021, the Regional Diversity Roundtable and partners have continued this work by analyzing the collected data and implementing changes to the tool to improve equity and inclusion in their workplaces.

### d) System Leadership Table

On January 30, 2023, System Leadership Table partners met for a half-day visioning meeting. Extended Leadership Table partners from Council and action table co-chairs were also invited to inform the dialogue. The meeting objectives were to review accomplishments from the first two years of Plan implementation, determine emerging and continuing priorities and implications to the CSWB Plan, and re-affirm commitment from system leaders. Informed by discussions, four recommendations for the CSWB Plan emerged:

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1. Stay the course with the existing three areas of focus but factor in the systemic needs and challenges being experienced in the community.
2. Review processes and structural barriers to improve partner coordination, responsiveness and collective impact.
3. Build data collection, sharing, analysis and evaluation capacity and practices.
4. Launch a more innovative communication and engagement strategy to reach different audiences.

The recommendations will be used to advise on direction and action for the next two years of implementing CSWB priorities.

### **3. Current Focus and Emerging Needs**

The third year of CSWB Plan implementation is underway. Seed funding for community partners to implement aligned and new initiatives in 2023 will be released in the second quarter of this year. Staff will report back to Council with an update on funded projects.

Following the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and changing social and economic conditions, partners have expressed concern for their diminished capacity to address family violence, mental health and addictions and systemic discrimination. Through the 2023 Budget, Council approved additional resources to better support community partners and CSWB action tables with advancing upstream priorities and responding to community needs.

Given the increasingly complex needs of the Peel community, there is recognition that other challenges to community well-being and safety requiring support may rapidly emerge or evolve. Youth mental health, for example, is an issue with growing need and Council has supported an increased response through enhanced collaboration with school boards (Resolution 2023-283). As the CSWB Plan is a community plan, the Region and partners together will determine the appropriate method of responding to emergent needs.

### **4. Building Safer Communities Fund**

In March 2022, the Government of Canada announced their commitment to support municipalities with crime prevention and safety through the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF), which aims to prevent youth gun and gang violence. Peel Region has been selected to receive up to \$8.1 million through to 2026 to develop and implement interventions that support youth who are involved or at risk of becoming involved in guns and gangs.

In the Fall of 2022, staff conducted community engagement to inform funding focus. Through this process it was determined that there is no current comprehensive strategy to address youth gun and gang violence in Peel. Subsequently a two-fold approach was developed with input from a BSCF steering committee, community consultations and environmental scans:

#### **a) Augmenting and learning from existing initiatives**

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Early investment opportunities have been identified to increase the resources and capacity of community agencies leading peer mentoring, youth justice integration, diversion, and entrepreneurship and other programs offered by youth-serving providers in Peel.

### **b) Develop and implement a youth gun and gang prevention and intervention strategy**

Staff will evaluate and learn from these community programs and strengthen relationships and partnerships with youth-serving providers to facilitate the sharing of ideas and experiences to address the root causes of gun and gang crime. This will inform the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy.

On February 10, 2023, Peel Region hosted Peel Region's Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF) announcement with the Office of the Minister of Public Safety.

Staff have submitted the application for funding to the federal government where it is currently awaiting review and approval. Staff will report back to Council with an update on the plan for 2024-2026 following the receipt of funding and the launch of the program in Peel.

There is strong alignment between Peel's CSWB Plan and the BSCF program. Both initiatives consider the youth population and aim to intervene on and prevent the conditions that contribute to crime by targeting key risk factors, such as violence, mental health and addictions and social exclusion. Further, with recent youth violence trends there is recognition of the need for a strategic approach to youth gun and gang prevention for Peel.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is funded through current budget and the BSCF initiatives will be fully funded through the federal program.

## **CONCLUSION**

Peel's CSWB Plan is developed with, by and for the community. CSWB partners continue to demonstrate their commitment to collective impact through the various phases of Plan implementation. The broad-based, multi-sector System Leadership Table continues to provide system level direction for plan implementation and identify emerging issues for consideration. Seed funding for 2023 will be used to initiate the development of new projects and advance shared goals. An update on funded initiatives will be provided to Council in the future.

Additionally, staff will continue to work with the federal government to acquire the anticipated funding to address youth gun and gang violence and to assist with the development of a comprehensive strategy tackling the root causes of crime in Peel.

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix I – CSWB Plan Summary

Appendix II – Governance Structure

Appendix III – CSWB MHA 2023 Ontario Pre-Budget Submission

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