Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

Thunder Bay 2021-2025

CITY OF
Thunder Bay
Superior by Nature

community safety
and well-being
THUNDER BAY

Message from the Mayor

I am inspired by the collaborative efforts of dedicated individuals and community partners throughout our city who have contributed to the development of a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for Thunder Bay. The outreach and engagement in 2020 and 2021 saw many citizens and organizations share ideas and information that helped shape this Plan.

I am proud of the work done, which establishes a solid base upon which we can build a clear path forward. Ultimately, we want all citizens to feel safer in their city and that requires everyone to do their part. We know what we need to do, and we have a Plan to get there.

The Thunder Bay Police are key partners in ensuring public safety, but there are many additional elements in creating a safe community. This Plan, with its focus on upstream supports that promote equity and inclusion, and health and wellness, can be transformational for our community when it comes to addressing the serious issues related to criminal activity and public safety. At its foundation, the plan works to build a culture of fairness, equity and access to opportunity for all citizens living in our community.

I encourage everyone to learn more about the work being done and get involved in helping to make our city a safer place, where everyone belongs. Indeed a healthier community is in reach as we move forward as one city growing together.

Bill Mauro, Mayor
City of Thunder Bay
www.thunderbay.ca

Message from Chief of Police

Community safety represents one of the most fundamental expectations that is commonly shared by all citizens. That expectation can only be met when there is widespread support and belief that we each have a role to play. Therefore, the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is such an important and unifying document.

A singular way of creating and sustaining a safe community does not exist. We have all come to realize that there are many facets to the problem and that the only way to move forward is to pool our knowledge. This is where a multi-faceted plan, built by committed community partners, offers hope for success.

The pillars of the plan are sound and provide a solid base, which speaks to the need to be open minded and creative in how we approach our collective challenges. Thunder Bay has faced an unprecedented threat by criminal organizations who have profited from the hardships of addiction. We have also experienced violence within families, the desperation of a mental health crisis and the deep impact of other social issues. The plan embodies a desire to improve our collective well-being.

The Thunder Bay Police Service is a critical partner in public safety, but we recognize that we are not the sole agent of change. We are very optimistic that a plan born from the hard work of dedicated people can make change happen. As the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is brought to life, you can be assured that the members of the Thunder Bay Police Service will be there to do our part in making it a success.

Sincerely,

Sylvie Hauth, Chief of Police
Thunder Bay Police Service
www.thunderbaypolice.ca

Message from the Chair of CSWB Advisory Committee

Community safety and well-being is an important foundational component of any community. The development of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan builds on the hard work of the Crime Prevention Council. Over the last eleven years, the Crime Prevention Council has played a key role in building a strong foundation for the effective planning and implementation of the community safety and well-being planning underway today.

The Plan itself is designed to address current and emerging issues, with a focus on systemic change and upstream prevention. It identifies complex social issues that can be prevented and mitigated through social development, prevention and risk intervention. It forms and enhances multi-sectoral partnerships that align policies and programs throughout the city. By working together, we can more efficiently and effectively serve the people of Thunder Bay.

Together, every one of us shapes this community, and it's that synergy and strength that helped inform this Plan. The extensive community outreach and consultation over the last two years was integral to ensuring multiple diverse voices were heard. The Plan will be a continual and evolving work in progress, creative and flexible in nature and application. It will be a responsive Plan, one that can pivot to address emerging needs in our community.

As Chair, I would like to thank all citizens and organizations that participated in making Thunder Bay's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan a reality. Your voice matters, and I encourage everyone to remain engaged and play a role as we work to implement this Plan together.

Best Regards,

Jeff Upton, Chair
Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee

Message from the Medical Officer of Health

Good health for individuals, families and communities cannot be understated. It is one of the core motivations behind the development of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, which recognizes the importance of upstream prevention in the social determinants of health as a key strategy to building healthier and safer communities in the short and long-term.

We know that health starts at home. The conditions within which we are born, grow, work and age shape our physical and mental health. Making long-term investments to improve social determinants of health such as alleviating poverty, and improving access to housing and education, is vital to healthier citizens and communities.

A public health approach seeks to improve the health and safety of all individuals by mitigating risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or a perpetrator of crime or violence. Through established community partnerships and system collaboration, we are making progress in Thunder Bay.

This Plan helps build further capacity at the local level to continue developing responses that promote safe spaces and connect people with the appropriate support services. The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for Thunder Bay is evidence-based that will reduce harm and victimization, while also empowering our community to work together to become safer and healthier overall.

Dr. Janet DeMille,
Medical Officer of Health & Chief Executive Officer
Thunder Bay District Health Unit
www.tbdhu.com

DISCLAIMER

Please note that some information contained in this document may be triggering to some readers.
If you feel you need support, you can reach out to:

Canadian Mental Health Association Crisis Line: (807) 346-8282

Thunder Bay Counselling and Children's Centre Thunder Bay:
Talk-in Counselling: (807) 700-0090
Talk4Healing: (855) 554-HEAL

Connex Ontario (Mental Health, Addictions, Gambling): (800) 531-2600

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that Thunder Bay is built on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe people of Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. The footsteps of their ancestors have walked these lands for millennia, and we are grateful for their stewardship. We also acknowledge this place as a historic Métis settlement.

While a territorial acknowledgment is important, we recognize that this is only one small step towards reconciliation. Far more must be done to address the ongoing impacts of colonization, including systemic racism. May we all strive for respectful relationships as we search for collective healing, truth, reconciliation and, together, honour the ancestors, elders, knowledge keepers, the land and water, and all beings.

Contents

Support for Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Development

Acknowledgements

The Crime Prevention Council and Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee would like to thank City staff, local community partners, agencies, organizations and Thunder Bay residents who contributed their time, insight, expertise, passion and honesty to this planning effort. All contributed to the development of this plan for Thunder Bay. We would like to extend a special thanks to the People With Lived Experience Community Advisory Group, who shared their time, expertise and personal experiences related to many of the challenges included in this report. It will be crucial to look to them and additional partners as we move forward with implementation, and to help evolve the plan to meet the safety and well-being needs of all people in Thunder Bay.

The membership of the Crime Prevention Council is included in Appendix 1. Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee members, who have provided oversight for this work since 2019, are listed here:

- Fort William First Nation
- Nishnawbe Aski Nation
- Thunder Bay Police Service
- Thunder Bay Police Services Board
- Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Council
- Thunder Bay Drug Strategy
- Children's Centre Thunder Bay
- Dilico Anishinabek Family Care
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit
- Lakehead Public Schools
- District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
- Thunder Bay Multicultural Association
- Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre
- St. Joseph's Care Group
- Superior North Emergency Medical Services
- United Way Thunder Bay

We are also very grateful to the members of the Data Working Group and Community Engagement Working Group for their time and effort throughout this planning process.

OUR VISION

Thunder Bay is a safe, healthy and connected community, where everyone is valued and has opportunities to thrive.

OUR APPROACH

Collective Impact
We believe community safety is everyone's responsibility. We recognize that large-scale social change requires a collaborative approach that includes inter-sectoral expertise and coordination, and all voices.

Our Guiding Principles

Equity

We understand that meeting the basic needs of people in our community is critical. These needs include equitable access to services, supports and opportunities to thrive and participate in decision making.

Empathy

Cultivating empathy creates connections that break down the "us and them" divide, and helps to build compassion for the challenges, circumstances and risks of diverse people in our community. We value dignity and respect and support others without judgment. We are open, honest and caring in our relationships.

Efficacy

We know that safety and well-being requires a community effort based on evidence, and encourages upstream investment in the protective factors that keep people safe and well. We work in partnership and build on the strengths, skills and capacities of our community to bridge gaps and solve problems.

Our Commitment to Truth, Reconciliation and Anti-Racism

We are deeply committed to truth and reconciliation and will prioritize anti-racism efforts. We will further the **Anti-Racism & Inclusion Accord** and support its adoption by individuals and organizations across Thunder Bay.

Thunder Bay's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

Thunder Bay's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (the Plan) was developed in accordance with provincial legislation (Police Services Act 2019), which mandates every municipality in Ontario to develop and implement a Community Safety and Well-Being (CWSB) Plan. We have followed the Community Safety and Well-Being Planning Framework, developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SOLGEN).

Included in the legislation is a requirement for municipalities to work in partnership with a multi-sectoral advisory committee comprised of representation from diverse sectors including law enforcement, local service providers in health and mental health, education, community and social services, and children and youth services.

Thunder Bay's broader success is linked to the safety and well-being of all people in Thunder Bay. The ultimate goal of the Plan is to create a community where everyone feels safe, has a sense of belonging, opportunities to participate, and where individuals and families are able to meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression[1].

Moving Upstream to Increase Community Safety and Well-Being in Thunder Bay

Moving upstream means that we are focussed on addressing structural violence, including systemic racism, which creates inequities and disparities in our systems. These inequities lead some individuals and groups to disproportionately experience poverty, homelessness, violence, and unequal access to education, employment, and health and social services. Improving safety and well-being in Thunder Bay means we must look deeply at systems and structures and remove all barriers that continue to cause inequity and harm. We must also focus on social development and prevention initiatives that include a harm reduction approach to support individuals where they are at, and help improve access to supports and services that mitigate risks and prevent crises.

There is significant evidence that demonstrates investing upstream in social, health and community infrastructure and the social determinants of health can increase overall community safety and well-being[2]. Addressing inequity and how our systems and structures affect people's circumstances, opportunities, choices and actions can create the conditions to improve health and social outcomes.

Moving upstream together will help achieve our shared vision of a safe, healthy and connected community, where everyone is valued and has opportunities to thrive.

The Impacts of COVID-19

Since the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 pandemic on March 11, 2020, our community has been impacted through lockdowns, widespread closures of schools, businesses and community services, and job losses. At the time of writing, over 3300 residents have contracted the virus and over 60 have died. The pandemic has also resulted in significant mental health impacts, increased levels of family violence, increased overdose rates, and additional significant social, health and economic challenges. While the pandemic has led to drastic changes to how we all live our daily lives, some individuals and groups have been disproportionately impacted.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought social and racial injustice, inequities and disparities to the forefront of public health[3]. It has highlighted disproportionate social, health and economic impacts on individuals and groups who were already excluded or marginalized by systemic and structural barriers. We know that the social determinants of health, such as gender, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, occupation, Indigeneity, homelessness and incarceration, play an important role in the risk of COVID-19 infection[4].

In February 2021, the City of Thunder Bay declared a health and social services state of emergency, in response to an outbreak among individuals experiencing homelessness or precarious housing. This was the City's second state of emergency related to the pandemic, and lasted over two months. During this time, community partners came together to put in place additional measures and services to respond and support the needs of many individuals impacted.

Through the pandemic, we have also witnessed our community's resilience and how individuals, agencies and governments came together to prioritize the needs of people who are made most vulnerable in our community. Community partners have demonstrated how they can collaborate and create innovative solutions to adapt their services and programs to respond to diverse needs. The lessons learned will help inform community recovery planning and make improvements to future service delivery. While we continue to respond to immediate challenges posed by the pandemic, we also need to commit to rebuilding systems with sustainable solutions that address essential needs, inequity and social determinants of health.

Intersecting Crises

As the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to play out across the world, many consider that we are currently living in a time of triple crisis: the COVID-19 pandemic, racial and social injustice, and the climate crisis. The connections between them expose the underbellies of structural inequities and systemic marginalization, and create interlinked and interconnected challenges, vulnerabilities and burdens. It is crucial that we understand how all three impact health, safety and well-being. Additionally, we must deepen our collective understanding of our relationships with the natural world, upon which we all depend for a safe and healthy life.

Provincial CSWB Planning Framework

The Provincial CSWB Planning Framework was released by the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SOLGEN) and outlines the provincial approach to community safety and well-being. The framework is intended to guide municipalities, First Nations communities and their partners in developing local plans. Understanding each of the four areas within the framework – Social Development, Prevention, Risk Intervention and Incident Response, will help ensure local plans are as efficient and effective as possible in making communities safer and healthier. Thunder Bay's Plan follows the Provincial Framework.

Figure 1: Provincial CSWB Planning Framework: Zones of Intervention
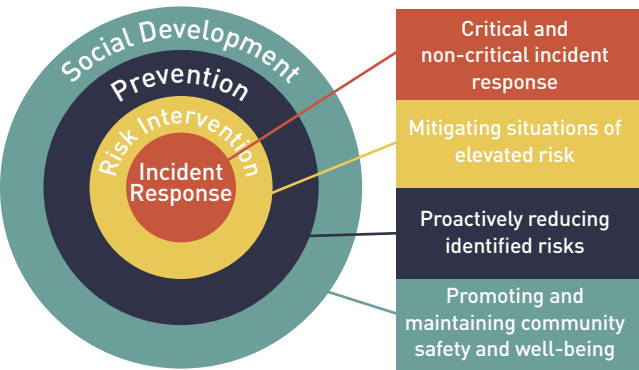
Social Development: Promoting and maintaining Community Safety and Well-Being

Social development requires upstream and long-term, multi-disciplinary efforts and investments to improve systemic issues like racism and the social determinants of health. Communities that invest heavily in social development by establishing protective factors through improvements in things like health, employment and graduation rates will experience the social benefits of addressing the root causes of crime and social disorder.

Example of planning in this zone: programs that address racism and discrimination

Prevention: Proactively reducing identified risks

Planning in this area involves proactive strategies using evidence-based programs to reduce locally identified priority risks to community safety and well-being before they result in crime, victimization and/or harm. Successful planning in this area may indicate whether people are feeling safe and less fearful, and that greater engagement makes people more confident in their own abilities to prevent harm.

Example of planning in this zone: recreational programming for youth at risk of poor outcomes

Risk Intervention: Mitigating elevated risk situations

Planning in this area involves multiple sectors working together to address and respond to situations where there is an elevated risk of harm, and mobilizes interventions before an emergency or crisis-driven response is required. Risk intervention is intended to be immediate and prevent an incident (i.e. crime, victimization, harm).

Example of planning in this zone: community mobilization/Situation Table model

Incident Response: Immediate response to urgent incident

Planning in this area is what is traditionally thought of when referring to crime and safety. It requires immediate and reactive response that may involve a sense of urgency like police, fire and emergency medical services, and other emergency-driven services. Many communities invest a significant amount of resources into incident response, which is reactive and, in some instances, enforcement-dominated.

Example of planning in this zone: mobile crisis response teams

A Holistic Approach

This approach to CWSB planning is intended to be holistic. It requires planning to occur at all zones of intervention and also recognizes that it is beneficial to maximize efforts in the outer zones of social development and prevention. By meeting the needs of individuals before a situation escalates into a crisis, we can help prevent increased demands for more costly downstream interventions with police and other emergency response systems.

Coming Together for Collective Impact

Collective Impact is a multi-sector/multi-agency, collaborative approach to large-scale social change in communities. Collective Impact is characterized by five core conditions, which facilitate effective cross-sector collaboration.

The Five Conditions of Collective Impact[5]

Shared Vision

All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

Shared Measurement

All participants agree on how to measure and report on progress, with a short list of common indicators identified to drive learning and improvement.

Mutually Reinforcing Activities

A diverse set of stakeholders, typically across sectors, coordinate a set of differentiated and mutually reinforcing activities.

Continuous Communication Activities

All partners are engaged in frequent, structured communication to build trust, assure mutual objectives and create common motivation.

Backbone Support

Dedicated staff provide support and key functions for the sustained operation of the collective impact initiative.

Community partners in Thunder Bay have committed to using a Collective Impact approach for CSWB planning and implementation.

What is Community Safety and Well-Being?

SOLGEN defines community safety and well-being as "the ideal state of a sustainable community where everyone is safe, has a sense of belonging, opportunities to participate, and where individuals and families are able to meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income, and social and cultural expression.[6] "

Through Phase 1 and Phase 2 Community Engagement sessions, we learned more about what community safety and well-being looks like to Thunder Bay residents.

Community Safety and Well-Being in Thunder Bay means:

"Knowing where to go for help and accessible services that feel safe and non-judgemental."

"People can live in the community without stigma."

"Respect and equality."

"The ability to enjoy everything that Thunder Bay has to offer without being afraid."

"Being able to be yourself in public."

"Adequate support for mental health and addictions."

"Feeling safe walking in public and in your own neighbourhood."

"Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design."

"Feeling welcome, and a sense of belonging and purpose."

"Community and neighbourhood activities."

"Having access to cultural, recreational and social opportunities (i.e. libraries)."

"Safe spaces for children, youth and families."

"Cultural wellness, and relationship to the land and environment."

"Equitable access to wrap-around community services."

"Actively supporting anti-racism work."

"Increased awareness of Indigenous history in individuals and organizations."

The Municipality's Role

Thunder Bay's Plan establishes a framework using a Collective Impact approach by working alongside service providers and residents to increase safety and well-being. While the municipality is designated by the province to lead of CSWB planning, the province also recognizes that the Plan's development and implementation require the active engagement and participation of key sectors, and the community as a whole.

The City of Thunder Bay is a champion of the Plan, and will play a coordinating and linking role to ensure the success of this inter-sectoral, community-based initiative. The municipality will help guide the Plan's vision, support aligned activities, and help build public will. The City will also assist to mobilize funding, including the development of additional partnerships to bring community resources together to support the Plan, and will advocate to other orders of government, when required. The City will help establish shared measurement practices and communications for the Plan.

Community safety and well-being are shared responsibilities. While the municipality will play an important leading role, the Plan's success will only be realized if Thunder Bay residents are also engaged and active in this work. The Plan provides an important opportunity to come together as a

community to work collectively to address the greatest risks to safety and well-being in Thunder Bay, so that all residents can live a safe and healthy life. This effort will focus on both immediate action and long-term, upstream efforts based on evidence.

The City continues to be responsive and proactive in developing and/or supporting key initiatives and strategies for the community that align with community safety and well-being planning. These initiatives include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee

- Crime Prevention Council

- Thunder Bay Drug Strategy

- Poverty Reduction Strategy

- Thunder Bay & Area Food Strategy

- Anti-Racism and Respect Advisory Committee

- Age Friendly Thunder Bay

- EarthCare Thunder Bay

- Clean, Green and Beautiful

- Accessibility Advisory Committee

- Active Transportation

- SNEMS Community Paramedicine Program

- Climate Adaptation Strategy

- Net Zero Strategy

Identifying Thunder Bay's Six Local Priorities

A combination of methods were used to identify local priorities for the Plan, including diverse community engagement methods and a comprehensive review of local CSWB-related data.

A **CSWB Community Engagement Working Group**, comprised of members of the Crime Prevention Council (CPC), was established to plan, coordinate, and implement two phases of community engagement. Thunder Bay system leaders, service providers and residents – including those with lived and living experience, provided input.

PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The CSWB Community Phase 1 Community Engagement took place between January and March of 2020, and included community forums, focus groups, community conversations and a community survey (distributed online and in paper copy). Through this process, the Community Engagement Working Group captured feedback and identified the six local priorities or challenges of greatest concern to Thunder Bay residents. Participants also identified what they believed were the root causes of these issues, and who they believed is made most vulnerable to these issues in our community. A total of 779 residents were engaged during Phase 1.

For more information, see What We Heard Report (Phase 1).

PHASE 2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Phase 2 Community Engagement took place between March and May 2021, and included virtual community forums and an online 24/7 portal on the City's Get Involved Public Engagement site, where residents could provide input. Through this process, residents were asked to provide further input into the six local priorities. They also provided information about awareness of local programs in Thunder Bay that are aimed to address these priorities, as well as ideas for additional actions and strategies for consideration. A total of 208 residents were engaged during Phase 2.

For more information, see the What We Heard Report (Phase 2).

LOCAL DATA REVIEW

A **CSWB Data Working Group** was also established to conduct a comprehensive review of local CSWB-related data. The Data Working Group compiled and reviewed over 70 local data sets and developed Indicator Selection Criteria, adapted from Halton Region's Data Selection Criteria, to prioritize 30 indicators for Thunder Bay.

THUNDER BAY POPULATION LEVEL INDICATOR REPORT

The 2021 Population Level Indicator Report is organized into seven domains: Community Vitality, Healthy Populations, Community Safety, Living Standards, Education, Environment and Democratic Engagement. These domains all interact with one another and each plays a role in contributing to the overall safety and well-being of Thunder Bay residents.

We are committed to tracking these 30 indicators over time to assess the effectiveness of the Plan. The Population Level Indicator Report provides additional information for each domain, and the data for each indicator, as well information about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that correspond to each domain.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In September 2015, world leaders from all 193 United Nations member states (including Canada) adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to guide global action on the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing our planet[7]. The SDGs set an ambitious target to build a more sustainable, safe, and prosperous world for all humanity by 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere.

The SDGs also provide an important framework for making communities safer and healthier. In order for Canada to meet its targets, municipalities must all do their part to track local indicators and meet their targets.

Inclusion of the SDGs in the Population Level Indicator Report is intended to start a conversation about them and our community's role in helping to achieve them. The CPC has partnered with Lakehead University and other community partners to conduct a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) process for the SDGs, to help assess progress towards specific targets.

See Appendix 2 for the 2021 Population Level Indicator Framework. For more information on the indicators selected and the SDGs, see the 2021 Population Level Indicator Report.

Priority 1: Racism and Discrimination

Targeted Outcomes:

- Decrease in racism especially targeting the Indigenous community

- Increase in number of signatories to the Anti-Racism and Inclusion Accord (the Accord)

- Increase in sense of belonging

13% residents reported **experiencing racial discrimination** in the past year (2019).

89% residents somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement "**I have a strong sense of belonging to Thunder Bay**" (2019) [8].

Over the last several years, there have been increasing and sustained calls to address racism in Thunder Bay – particularly racism targeting the Indigenous community. These calls have also come in the form of several recent reports, including: the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action; the Seven Youth Inquest Jury Report; Broken Trust: Indigenous People and the Thunder Bay Police Service; Thunder Bay Police Services Board Investigation Final Report, and; Reclaiming Power and Place: the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

During our community engagement processes, numerous Indigenous and racialized people, and newcomers shared personal experiences of racism in the community – both interpersonal and systemic, including barriers to accessing services and supports. We also heard about harmful and frightening experiences of discrimination from the 2SLGBTIQ+ and disabled communities.

Racism and discrimination are social justice issues. They create barriers to accessing social determinants of health, thus causing inequities in health, education, housing, employment, wealth, power, and representation in leadership positions, resulting in unfair and unequal outcomes[9]. For example:

- Indigenous people in Thunder Bay are disproportionately experiencing homelessness[10].

- Black and Indigenous populations are over-represented in the criminal justice system in Canada[11].

- 2SLGBTIQ+ communities experience large gaps in access to housing and income with 20 to 40 percent of Canada's homeless youth identifying as 2SLGBTIO+[12].

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought social and racial injustice and inequity to the forefront of public health. COVID-19 has unequally affected many racial and ethnic minority groups, putting them greater at risk of getting sick and dying from COVID[13].

An intersectional analysis must be considered when we work towards addressing racism and discrimination, in order to understand the ways in which gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and other identities intersect and overlap.

Increasing education and awareness about the history of Indigenous people in Canada and the impacts of colonization and ongoing systemic racism were identified as a priority. Including racism and discrimination as a local priority will help prioritize efforts across the community, and bring a collective impact approach to bear on this issue.

Lead Action Table: Diversity Thunder Bay

Examples of Local Initiatives aimed at addressing Priority 1 (not a comprehensive list):

INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND INCLUSION OFFICE (CITY OF THUNDER BAY)

The Indigenous Relations and Inclusion Office (IRI) was established in 2019 in an effort to enhance relationships with Indigenous partners and communities, while advancing Indigenous Peoples' inclusion in the City's opportunities and growth. One of the IRI Office's main priorities is delivering cultural awareness training to strengthen the Corporation's capacity to work more effectively with Indigenous Peoples, as well as advising and providing liaison support to City staff to advance reconciliation. The IRI Office is guiding the City's implementation of the Accord.

ANTI-RACISM AND INCLUSION ACCORD

The Accord is a commitment by local organizations to address racism and foster inclusion. Signatories include local government, First Nations, and both public and private sector organizations. The Accord is guided by recommendations and calls to action stemming from the Seven Youth Inquest Jury Report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, and, Reclaiming Power and Place: the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Local organizations are invited to join the Accord and implement their own plan to demonstrate leadership in addressing racism in Thunder Bay.

ANTI-RACISM AND RESPECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Anti-Racism & Respect Advisory Committee (ARRAC) is an Advisory Committee to Thunder Bay City Council and was established to develop a plan of action to combat racism in Thunder Bay. The ARRAC provides advice on current policies and practices, diversity and racism, and new initiatives.

RACISM INCIDENT REPORTING & REFERRAL SERVICE

This initiative began as a pilot project in 2017, in response to the community's sustained concerns over the prevalence of racism in Thunder Bay and its impacts on individual and community safety and well-being. The service is administered through Lakehead Social Planning Council and provides a mechanism for individuals to report racist incidents (either personally experienced or witnessed) via the phone, internet or walk in service. Referrals for services to support individuals experiencing racism are provided.

DIVERSITY THUNDER BAY

Diversity Thunder Bay (DTB) is a community organization that works towards a culturally aware, inclusive, equitable community free of racism and discrimination of any kind. DTB was established in 2000 and consists of individuals and representatives of organizations working to celebrate difference and end racism and discrimination in Thunder Bay, Ontario. DTB believes that Thunder Bay should be a welcoming and safe place for individuals and groups regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, class, creed, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, education, marital status, source of income, same-sex partnership status, family status or disability.

THUNDER PRIDE ASSOCIATION

Thunder Pride is a 2SLGBTIQ+ Community with the mission to support all people of Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario to grow into an inclusive and diverse community. The organization believes in a world where all people are free to express their gender identity and sexual orientation with pride. They come together to support friends, family, colleagues and neighbours, and coordinate the annual Pride Month activities.

RAINBOW COLLECTIVE OF THUNDER BAY

The Rainbow Collective of Thunder Bay is an inclusive, supportive and empowering home for the Gender and Sexual Diversity (GSD) communities, including those in the Two-Spirit and Intersex community with various forms of attractions and other intersecting identities of Thunder Bay & Northwestern Ontario.

RESPECT. INITIATIVE

The **respect.** Initiative is a joint initiative of the ARRAC and the CPC. It was developed in 2012 to raise awareness in the community that respect is a human right, and to challenge racism and all other forms of discrimination.

YOUTH SOLIDARITY AGAINST RACISM AND HATE PROJECT

This two-year project, funded through SOLGEN, is a youth-led project to address racism and hate in Thunder Bay. This work builds on the efforts of Seven Youth Inquest Recommendation 112, which is focussed on a public education campaign to address the issue of racially motivated crimes targeting the Indigenous community. This new project, will include community conversations, the creation of a large public art mural, and a youth-led education and awareness campaign on racism and hate.

Priority 2: Housing and Homelessness

Targeted Outcomes:

• Reduce Indigenous homelessness by 50 percent by 2027

• Increase transitional and supportive housing opportunities in Thunder Bay

474 people experiencing **homelessness** in Thunder Bay (2018)[14]
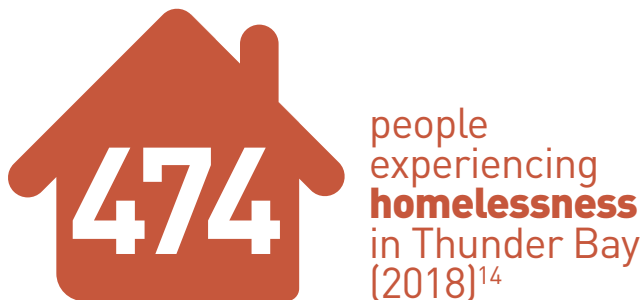
66% of those surveyed **self-identified as Indigenous**. (2018)[14]

The right to shelter, to have one's own bed to sleep in, a roof over one's head, a place where one's person and possessions are safe is a human right[15]. Adequate housing is essential to one's sense of dignity, safety, inclusion and ability to contribute to the fabric of our neighbourhoods and societies; without it, it is often not possible to get and keep employment, to recover from mental illness or other disabilities, to integrate into the community, to escape physical or emotional violence or to keep custody of children[16].

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual or household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination[17].

Many individuals and families experiencing homelessness often face complex and concurrent challenges related to mental health, addictions, trauma and poverty[18]. Individuals facing homelessness are more likely to become victims of crime and/or become involved in the criminal justice system[19].

Since 2013, Thunder Bay's Emergency Shelter system's Average Shelter Occupancy has exceeded 100 percent[20]. In 2018, the Thunder Bay Point in Time (PIT) Count enumerated 474 individuals experiencing homelessness. Of these, 59 percent were chronically homeless and 21 percent were episodically homeless. A total of 66 percent of those surveyed self-identified as Indigenous[21].

Indigenous homelessness is best understood as the outcome of historically constructed and ongoing colonization and racism that have displaced and dispossessed Indigenous people from their traditional governance systems and laws, territories, histories, worldviews, ancestors and stories[22]. This context must be understood in order to address Indigenous homelessness.

During our community engagement sessions with both residents and diverse service providers, it was identified that increasing transitional and supportive housing was the greatest need. Currently, there is a large population of individuals who would benefit by having access to transitional housing, which would help bridge the gap from homelessness and the use of the emergency shelter system to permanent housing and would provide structure, supervision, support (i.e., for mental health and substance misuse), and life skills. Transitional housing is more long-term, service-intensive, and is meant to provide a safe, supportive environment where residents can overcome trauma, begin to address the issues that led to homelessness or kept them homeless, and begin to rebuild their support network[23]. Youth specifically identified the challenges faced when aging out of care, and needing additional supports to navigate barriers to access safe and affordable housing.

Lead Action Table: Housing and Homelessness Coalition, who will explore partnerships with the Indigenous Community Advisory Board and the Coordinated Housing Access Table Steering Committee

Examples of Local Initiatives aimed at addressing Priority 2 (not a comprehensive list):

REACHING HOME: THUNDER BAY HOMELESSNESS PLAN 2019 – 2024

Thunder Bay's homelessness plan is an investment plan that identifies the allocation of Reaching Home funding towards addressing homelessness in Thunder Bay. The plan includes information on allocations for housing placement, prevention and shelter diversion, client support services, capital investment and coordination of resources and data collection.

COORDINATED HOUSING ACCESS TABLE

A Coordinated Housing Access Table (CHAT) committee was established in 2018 with 11 community partners who are committed to developing and implementing a coordinated housing access system in Thunder Bay for individuals experiencing homelessness, and those at imminent risk of homelessness. The committee is co-chaired by Alpha Court Community Mental Health and Addictions Services, and the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB). The CHAT has a target of housing those individuals most widely represented in the PIT Count through proportional allocation of resources. The target is to reduce Indigenous homelessness by 50 percent by 2027/2028.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COALITION

The Housing and Homelessness Coalition acts is an advocacy organization for housing and homelessness issues in Thunder Bay. The Coalition focuses on identifying barriers to affordable, accessible and supportive housing and explores community solutions to overcome those barriers. The Coalition functions as the Designated Community Advisory Board (CAB) to meet the directives of Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy with Service Canada, and works in collaboration with the Indigenous CAB.

NIHDAWIN

Ontario Native Women's Association's Nihdawin program assists Indigenous women in Thunder Bay that are at risk of homelessness, and those experiencing homelessness. Nihdawin provides culturally grounded services, geared to individual needs, to empower community members to reach attainable goals.

URBAN ABORIGINAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Thunder Bay Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee (UAAC) provides advice on urban Aboriginal issues, gaps and barriers in services, priorities, other initiatives in Thunder Bay. The UAAC also functions as the Indigenous Community Advisory Board (CAB) to meet the directives of Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, and works in collaboration with the Housing and Homelessness Coalition.

HOME FOR GOOD

Home for Good was developed in 2017, by the Ministry of Housing Ontario. The program supports the province's goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025, by providing housing assistance and supports to individuals and families in four provincial priority homelessness areas: chronic homelessness; youth homelessness; Indigenous homelessness; homelessness following transition from provincially-funded institutions and service systems (e.g. hospitals, prisons). The TBDSSAB received funding to support some initiatives in Thunder Bay to reduce homelessness.

LODGE ON DAWSON

The Lodge on Dawson is a 30-bed transitional housing program that opened in October 2019 through Home for Good Funding. The Lodge is a partnership with St. Joseph's Care Group, St. Joseph's Foundation of Thunder Bay, Alpha Court, Dilico Anishinabek Family Care, and the TBDSSAB. Staff are on-site 24 hours, seven days per week providing services and supports. A clinical team is comprised of nurses, psychotherapists, counsellors and physicians. The Lodge aims to stop the cycle between time limited crisis services and provides an extended stay in a stable environment, providing residents time to set personal goals and long-term plans with proper support.

ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY OF NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO – TRANSITION HOME

Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario (EFryNWO) has recently opened a transition house for three women, trans and non-binary people who have been discharged from the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre. The townhouse has been leased from the TBDSSAB. The residents are allowed to stay for up to a year; however, it is expected that they will move on within three to six months. Numerous studies have revealed that women leaving prison face numerous barriers to finding and maintaining housing. One of the main elements of the new transition house is the support provided by the circle of care team at EFryNWO who attend on a daily basis to assist with multiple issues that are arising as the women settle back into the community.

Priority 3: Mental Health and Substance Misuse

Targeted Outcomes

- Establishment of an integrated mental health and addiction crisis centre to support people across the lifespan

- Increased education and awareness about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma and resilience

68%

71%

TBDHU
Ontario
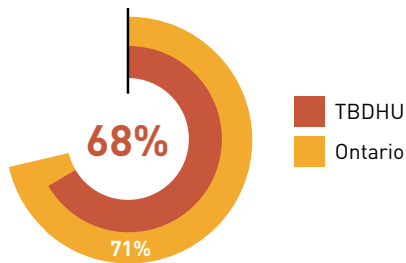
residents who rated their own mental health as very good or excellent (2015-2016)[24]

54%

44%

TBDHU
Ontario

residents aged 19 and older exceed at least one of Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines[25]

Mental health and substance misuse were identified as key concerns during the community engagement processes, across all groups and demographics, and also in the local data review. Between 2015 and 2018, there was a 237% increase in mental health calls to Thunder Bay Police Service.

Themes emerged around the need for increased awareness of available programs and services, increased supports and services at all stages along the continuum of care, including detox and treatment capacity and options, counselling and harm reduction support, and social supports. Alcohol and its impacts, including public intoxication and social disorder, were also identified as key challenges, and local health data supports this. The prevalence of opioid use and poisonings in Thunder Bay are included in this priority area, and continues to be a significant concern.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic challenges have negatively affected many people's mental health and created new barriers for people already suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders[26]. Long-term mental health impacts of COVID-19 on children and youth was identified as a significant concern.

Social isolation was also identified as a significant issue for many during our engagement sessions, particularly for seniors and people living in poverty who have little or no access to technology.

Lead Action Table: Thunder Bay District Mental Health & Addiction Network, in partnership with the Child & Youth Mental Health Planning Table

Examples of Local Initiatives aimed at addressing Priority 3 (not a comprehensive list):

THUNDER BAY DRUG STRATEGY

The Thunder Bay Drug Strategy, a coalition of over 35 partner organizations, is a five-pillar approach that sets direction for a collaborative and cohesive manner to address substance related harms to individuals, families, and the community at large. It was developed with extensive consultation and accepted through a formal motion of Council as the official Drug Strategy of the City in April 2011. The strategy proposes actions that are based on an international body of research that ensures they are supported by evidence to positively reduce the harms associated with substance use.

THUNDER BAY DISTRICT MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS NETWORK

The Thunder Bay District Mental Health & Addiction Network (TBDMHAN) exists to improve the mental health and addiction system of services, and to improve client experience and health outcomes for individuals and families living in the city and District of Thunder Bay. The TBDMHAN is a collaborative service planning table comprised of nearly 20 regional, district and local mental health and addiction organizations. It is currently renewing its strategic plan and have identified the goals of: meaningfully engaging individuals and families in service system planning; securing a qualified, healthy, diversified, and sustainable workforce; ensuring safe and efficient transitions in care; creating an accessible, timely, effective service system informed by evidence; and, responding to emerging needs through innovation and continuous quality improvement

CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH PLANNING TABLE

Across Ontario, Child and Youth Mental Health & Addiction (CYMHA) services are provided by a number of organizations crossing numerous sectors including mental health and addictions, child welfare, youth justice, health and education, to name a few. In 2016, a community Child and Youth Mental Health Planning Table for the City and District of Thunder Bay was formalized. The CYMHA Planning Table provides a forum and mechanism to examine, assess, and repair the child and youth mental health and addiction system of services in the District of Thunder Bay. The CYMHA Planning Table meets monthly and implements various projects and activities related to improving the system of care.

JOINT MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

The Joint Mobile Crisis Response Team (JMCRT) has been in operation since June 2018. The JMCRT is a partnership between Thunder Bay Police Service and the Canadian Mental Health Association. The CMHA operates a two-person crisis response mobile team from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m., seven days a week.

IMPACT PROJECT

Launched officially in January 2021, the Integrated Mobile Police Assessment Crisis Team (IMPACT) is an expansion of the Joint Mobile Crisis Response Team (JMCRT), which started operation in June 2018. The project is scheduled to be in place for a year and will feature a team comprised of one police officer and one crisis worker. These teams will respond to all Mental Health related calls for service on a 24-hour and seven-day-a-week schedule. The goal of the program is to divert individuals from having to attend the emergency department and to provide supports for individuals in the community. It is about supporting individuals at the right time, in the right place and with the right service.

THE FAMILY HEALING WELLNESS CENTRE

The Family Healing Wellness Centre (FHWC) is a culturally based family treatment service provided by Dilico Anishinaabek Family Care. The FHWC offers services to families who are seeking support to address issues related to unresolved trauma within the home. Parents, along with their children and/or youth reside in therapeutic environment that enhances the family's understanding of how their behavior impacts the family system. The 28-day Residential Program supports the healing process through healthy stabilization and coping techniques, psycho-education, traditional and holistic treatment, and individual and group sessions that allow the family to begin a sustainable healing journey. The program is rooted in Anishinaabe culture, ceremony, and land-based teachings.

Priority 4: Community Violence and Gender-Based Violence
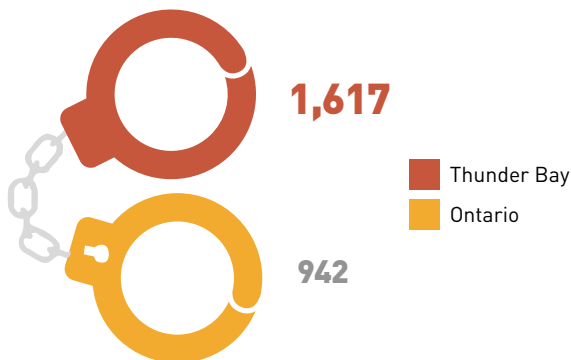
Targeted Outcomes

- Reduction in violence

- A systemic response to domestic violence that holds everyone to account, and works to keep women and children safe

- Increased education and awareness about gender-based violence, human trafficking, gangs and home takeovers

- Increased perception of safety

3,469

the number of **domestic violence** incidents reported to TBPS (2019)[27]

1,617

942

■ Thunder Bay

■ Ontario

incidents of **violent crime** per 100,000 population[28]

Community violence and gender-based violence were both identified as priority issues during community engagement sessions. The increase in gang-related activities in recent years, including violent assaults, home take-overs and increases in human trafficking have left many residents fearful. The consistently high rate of gender-based violence in Thunder Bay, and its increase during the pandemic were particularly alarming. Street level violence, public drinking and aggressive panhandling were also identified as areas of significant concern, particularly in core business areas.

Gender-based violence is violence inflicted upon a person or persons due to their gender identity, gender expression, or perceived gender[29]. The culture of gender-based violence is pervasive, and is rooted in gender inequality, misogyny, patriarchy, the abuse of power, and harmful norms[30]. Gender-based violence can include sexual, physical, mental and economic harm inflicted in public or in private, and also includes threats of violence, coercion, control and manipulation[31]. Gender-based violence violates human rights and is a major barrier to achieving gender equality. The United Nations regards violence against women as one of the most significant violations of women's rights across the world[32].

Indigenous women and girls in Canada are three times more likely to experience gender-based violence than non-Indigenous women[33]. Reclaiming Power and Place: the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls revealed that persistent and deliberate human and Indigenous rights violations and abuses are the root cause behind Canada's high rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people[34].

Reports from around the world show the rates of domestic and intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 pandemic continue to rise[35]. Local data shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased rates of domestic violence in Thunder Bay. In June 2020, Thunder Bay Police Service responded to 366 family violence calls compared to 292 calls in June 2019[36] (pre-pandemic).

Several enforcement investigations have also led to the arrests of numerous gang members from Southern Ontario and the seizure of large quantities of drugs, weapons, and money. This gang activity is also believed to be connected to many instances of human trafficking in Thunder Bay, which is known to be one of the top six hubs for human trafficking in Ontario[37].

Lead Action Table for Community Violence: Thunder Bay Police Services Project Prevent Initiative.

Lead Action Table for Gender-Based Violence: Thunder Bay & District Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse.

Examples of Local Initiatives aimed at addressing Priority 4 (not a comprehensive list):

THUNDER BAY & AREA COORDINATING COMMITTEE TO WOMAN ABUSE

The Coordinating Committee is an independent, non-profit, cross-sectoral committee that works with a network of individuals, groups and organizations to establish and support a comprehensive and effective community response to end woman abuse. They advocate for the safety and well-being of women and children, for the accountability of men who use violence, and for a safer, healthier community for everyone. They envision a community where women and children are safe, valued and free from abuse.

NAADMAAGEWIN

Naadmaagewin is an Indigenous domestic violence committee. Their purpose is to work collectively towards the elimination of Indigenous family violence by promoting, advocating, sharing, supporting and facilitating holistic approaches and responses. Their vision is to reclaim their traditional and rightful place in the Sacred Circle of Life, by promoting ownership, accountability and self-determination in keeping with their teachings, values and roles as Indigenous women, men, and youth within our families, communities and Nations.

THUNDER BAY COALITION TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Thunder Bay Coalition to End Human Trafficking was created in June of 2018 to bring together local partners from law enforcement, health, education and social service providers. The Coalition works collaboratively to address the issue of human trafficking and to streamline supports for survivors/victims of human trafficking. Community service providers and law-enforcement come together to help prevent victimization, enforce human trafficking laws and ensure that survivors and victims have adequate supports and services to begin to put their lives back together. Organizations within the Coalition provide support and education to survivors and victims and their families, as well as for local organizations and the public.

ANALYSIS TO ACTION ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PROJECT

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre launched this four-year project in August 2019. This project is funded by the Women and Gender Equity (WAGE) Capacity Building Fund and aims to enhance the systemic advocacy work being done in the community to improve the status of women and increase the capacity of the Women's Centre, as well as other women's organizations in Thunder Bay and across NWO, to continue promoting social and systemic change towards gender equality.

HIGH RISK NAVIGATION PROJECT

The High Risk Navigation Project (HRN) Project is tasked with the development of a dedicated, advocacy-based and common protocol across legal and social service systems to respond to cases of gender-based violence where there is high risk of harm. The overarching goal of the HRN Project is to develop a more coordinated and effective social system response for those who experience gender-based violence in the Thunder Bay district. The project is being run out of the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre.

THE YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT

The Youth Violence Prevention Project (YVPP) in Thunder Bay and District is a five-year initiative funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada's (PHAC) Preventing Gender-Based Violence: The Health Perspective stream, and coordinated by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU). The project is based on implementing the Fourth R program – a comprehensive school based, skills-focussed teen dating violence prevention program being implemented in local and district schools. This is an important prevention initiative, as teen dating violence is a significant risk factor for intimate partner violence. A comprehensive third party evaluation of the program is being conducted with the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Lakehead University.

INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND INCLUSION OFFICE (CITY OF THUNDER BAY)

The Indigenous Relations and Inclusion Office was established in 2019 in an effort to enhance relationships with Indigenous partners and communities, while advancing Indigenous Peoples' inclusion in the City's opportunities and growth. The Office is conducting a review of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' 231 Calls for Justice to identify key actions that the City could implement.

RELEASE FROM CUSTODY PLANNING TABLE

The Release from Custody Planning Table was established as part of the community's response to COVID-19, recognizing that enhanced discharge planning was required for incarcerated individuals being released from custody. The Planning Table engages in planning for the needs of individuals, including housing and sheltering, for those being released from custody from the Correctional Centre, Thunder Bay District Jail and Thunder Bay Police Service, who could be at imminent risk of criminalization, victimization and/or harm. The table fosters inter-sectoral partnerships, collaboration and decision-making to advance a collective response to the needs of individuals being released from custody in Thunder Bay, identifies local and system-level gaps, and advocates for efforts to address these.

THUNDER BAY POLICE SERVICE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

The Thunder Bay Domestic Violence Unit was established in June 2013. The Domestic Violence Unit was created to allow for a more thorough investigation of domestic violence incidents where charges are to be laid. The Domestic Violence Unit also offers an enhanced investigation for the safety of domestic violence victims.

FAYE PETERSON HOUSE

The Faye Peterson House provides a safe and secure 24-bed shelter for survivors/women and their children who are experiencing abuse or are at risk of abuse. They offer crisis services, counselling, outreach, transitional support, advocacy, early childhood education and support groups. Food, clothing, and medical attention are also provided. They offer a 24 hour, 7 days a week crisis line and counsellors.

NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE

The Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre (NWOWC) is a non-profit, community-based feminist organization based out of Thunder Bay, Ontario. Their mission is to create and advocate for safe and supportive environments so that self–identified women can fully engage in their lives and communities. NWOWC works with women to increase their access to knowledge, skills and resources so they can make informed and strategic choices.

BEENDIGEN

Beendigen's mission is to provide safety and shelter to indigenous women and children experiencing violence, and to facilitate the cycle of healing through the delivery of culturally appropriate programs and services to individuals and families. They assist women to gain a strong foundation, based on the Medicine Wheel Teachings and core social work values, to enable them to move ahead in a positive manner. Beendigen is an Ojibway word for "come in".

SEXUAL ABUSE CENTRE THUNDER BAY

The Centre is a non-profit, incorporated organization that has provided service since 1975. The agency provides specialized help, support, counselling, and information for women and men who have difficulties overcoming the traumatic effects of sexual assault, sexual abuse, and/or sexual harassment they experienced at any time in their lives. The role of the agency is to counteract the damaging effects of violence on individuals, families, and the community as a whole.

PARTNER ASSAULT RESPONSE (PAR) PROGRAM

The Partner Assault Response (PAR) program is a Domestic Violence Court initiative. Referrals to the program are received through the criminal court system, and Probation and Parole. The PAR program delivers specialized community-based group education and counselling to clients who have been mandated by the court to attend the program in response to a criminal charge involving domestic violence. The program is funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General's Ontario Victim Services and administered through Catholic Family Development Centre.

CENTR'ELLES

Centr'Elles is a non-profit, francophone organization in northwestern Ontario providing services in French in the field of violence against women. Their objectives are to prevent, counter, alleviate and end all forms of violence against women by offering women services such as a welcoming environment, listening, counselling and support, accompaniment and practical assistance and by referring them, as needed, to competent authorities. They also work to ease poverty for families of women who come to the centre by offering them food, clothing, a community kitchen program and help with the costs of transportation and essential personal hygiene products.

Priority 5: Poverty Reduction and Financial Empowerment

Targeted Outcomes:

- Reduction in percentage of people living in poverty

- Decreased unemployment rate for Indigenous people

13.8%

$

residents in Thunder Bay live **below the Low-Income Measure-After Tax** (LIM-AT) (2018)[39]

7.7%

the **unemployment rate** in Thunder Bay (May 2021)[40]

Poverty is defined as the condition of a person who is deprived of the resources, means, choices and power necessary to acquire and maintain a basic standard of living and to facilitate integration and participation in society[38]: The World Health Organization calls poverty the single largest determinant of health[41].

Many of the social issues in Thunder Bay and the District are directly related to poverty and issues surrounding poverty[40]. Poverty affects community strength and resilience. People living in poverty are more likely to face health issues, have difficulty finding and keeping a job, find themselves in the criminal justice system, and need various social supports[42].

Data continues to show that Indigenous peoples in Thunder Bay live in poverty at a much higher rate than their non-Indigenous counterparts. Almost 50 percent of the people living below the Low Income Measure-After Tax in Thunder Bay are Indigenous, while this demographic makes up only 14 percent of the total population[43].

The rise in housing costs, food prices, childcare fees and costs of prescription medication along with other necessities means families are left to make difficult choices every day about what they can afford and what they must do without[44]. Inequality and poverty are rooted in systemic discrimination and stratified along lines of Indigenous identity, race, gender, and immigration status, among other social, cultural and economic conditions that result in specific populations being unable to access opportunities available to all other Canadians[45].

Poverty was identified as a critical barrier to safety and well-being during CSWB community engagement. Related issues include homelessness, mental health, discrimination, unemployment, food insecurity, and challenges meeting basic needs and other social determinants of health.

During the pandemic, household food insecurity was identified as a significant concern, with more individuals and families accessing food banks and other feeding programs. The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy received funding to develop a Community Emergency Food Response plan to better plan to future emergencies. Addressing this priority challenge will help address other aspects of community safety and well-being.

Lead Action Table: Thunder Bay Poverty Reduction Strategy

Examples of Local Initiatives aimed at addressing Priority 5 (not a comprehensive list):

THUNDER BAY POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) includes community-specific recommendations for immediate, medium, and long-term community poverty reduction. Since its inception in 2013, the Poverty Reduction Strategy committee has worked diligently to ensure that the goals and recommendations of the Strategy are being met. The PRS focusses on five key areas: 1) Children and Youth; 2) Indigenous People; 3) Housing and Homelessness; 4) Income Security; 5) Health and Wellness.

POVERTY FREE THUNDER BAY

Poverty Free Thunder Bay is an advocacy coalition of concerned individuals, groups and organizations working for change at the local, provincial and national level to eliminate poverty and its impact on our community. They envision all people working together to create a community free from poverty. They provide a forum for members to advocate and promote social change that will lead to the elimination of poverty; educate the broader community on the issues relating to poverty through various outreach methods, consult with all orders of government and other community leaders in the fulfillment of the mission, engage individuals directly affected by poverty (lived experience) to identify issues and solutions to income insecurity, and address systemic change in the long term.

KINNA AWEYA LEGAL CLINIC

Kinna Aweya Legal Clinic provides legal advice and assistance to low-income residents in the District of Thunder Bay. Their services are offered at no cost to people with low-incomes who meet the financial eligibility criteria. They focus on assisting people in receiving income maintenance benefits and maintain access to housing. They also organize and present community legal education workshops and work with the community for organized, positive change.

LAKEHEAD SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Lakehead Social Planning Council (LSPC) is dedicated to building a better community through strategic alliances, social research and the provision of valid, reliable information. LSPC is home to 211 Ontario North which provides information and referral services to residents across Northern Ontario. They also offer a Free Income Tax Clinic and public computer access site.

THUNDER BAY COUNSELLING

Thunder Bay Counselling offers free one-on-one financial counselling to help individuals achieve their future goals, among other counselling services. Professional counsellors take the time to understand individual situations and recommend supports that will improve finances for the learn term. They also offer financial counselling services to help individuals to understand and access COVID-19 financial supports and payment relief options.

THUNDER BAY AND AREA FOOD STRATEGY

The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy is a coordinated approach of over 40 partners to achieve food security through planning, policy, and program development. They implement the Thunder Bay Food Charter and are committed to creating a healthy, equitable and sustainable food system that contributes to the economic, ecological and social well-being and health of the City and area. They are currently coordinating a comprehensive outreach and needs assessment to develop a Community Emergency Food Response Plan to better meet the emergency food needs of the most vulnerablized populations in Thunder Bay.

UNITED WAY THUNDER BAY

The United Way Thunder Bay's Community Impact Plan includes three core goals to help lift local people out of poverty. Their community investment strategy is focused on achieving the elimination of poverty by funding initiatives in the community that address the root causes and impacts of poverty, build a more inclusive and connected community, and support all children and youth to succeed in school.

Priority 6: Supports for Children, Youth and Families

Targeted Outcomes:

- Establish and support neighbourhood hubs

- Increased numbers of youth graduating from high school in Thunder Bay

75%

81%

■ Thunder Bay   ■ Ontario
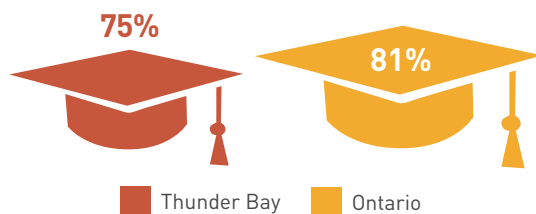
residents aged 25-64 in Thunder Bay that have a high school diploma[46]

More opportunities for children, youth, and families were identified as top priorities during community engagement sessions. A stronger focus here could include more upstream approaches to support children, youth and families to access the social determinants of health, efforts to prevent and mitigate the impacts of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and opportunities to improve outcomes across the lifespan. A focus here include becoming a trauma and violence-informed community.

The 2019 Wellesley Institute Report identified that one of Thunder Bay's strengths is its numerous programs and resources for the early and middle years, and that children from families living in poverty benefit from the many free sports, recreation and arts programs offered throughout the year[47]. The report goes on to explain how transitioning between life-stages can be a particularly difficult and vulnerable time, and is further exacerbated when children and youth 'age out' of systems of care[48]. We also heard this during in our engagement sessions. Children and youth from marginalized groups are more likely to fall through gaps in systems and the report recommends developing an integrated and inclusive system of support and continuum of care that can help to achieve better outcomes[49].

During the consultation processes, we heard clearly that many families – particularly in some priority neighbourhoods, have struggled to meet basic needs during the pandemic. Community partners have stepped up to provide additional supports, including food, where possible.

The development of neighbourhood hubs in priority neighbourhoods is underway to bring services, supports and additional resources to people where they live. Development of a neighbourhood strategy will be explored with community partners.

Lead Action Table: Healthy Kids Steering Committee

Examples of Local Initiatives aimed at addressing Priority 6 (not a comprehensive list):

HEALTHY KIDS STEERING COMMITTEE

Healthy Kids Thunder Bay is a collective impact initiative that follows on the Healthy Kids Community Challenge Initiative and Keeping Kids Healthy Initiative, led by the TBDHU in partnership with community agencies and organizations. The project's goals are to increase collaboration with community partners to enhance health and well-being for all kids in Thunder Bay. Currently they are implementing a project with Our Kids Count in four neighbourhoods and have a number of priorities including food security, physical activity, service provision, policy work and project evaluation.

THE YOUTH INCLUSION PROGRAM

The Youth Inclusion Program is a five-year initiative funded through Public Safety Canada's Crime Prevention Action Fund. This is an evidence-based initiative to support youth in Thunder Bay who are at risk of poor outcomes. The program offers neighbourhood pro-social, recreational and cultural programming in priority neighbourhoods, and one-on-one supports through Youth Navigators. A comprehensive third party evaluation of the program is being conducted with the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Lakehead University.

ROOTS TO HARVEST

Roots to Harvest offers young people the opportunity to engage meaningfully in the food system as growers, market gardeners and lifelong learners. They use food as a tool to connect people to one another and build belonging and dignity through meaningful programs, initiatives and advocacy. They envision a reality where people are welcomed, inspired and involved in an equitable and resilient community.

PROKIDS

PRO Kids is a registered charity that was created by social agencies, recreation providers, youth and other community members in Thunder Bay in 1998. To date, they have made over 25,000 placements of kids into activities. Every child deserves the opportunity to participate in recreation which helps them learn leadership and teamwork skills, make healthy lifestyle choices, build self-esteem, have exposure to positive role models, and follow the rules.

TRIPLE P PARENTING

Triple P is a parenting program supported by 30 years of research. It follows a helpful, positive approach to raising children. The goal of Triple P is to help create a positive, caring relationship between parents and their children. Triple P is for every parent, whether they have a specific problem or are just looking for advice on common, everyday parenting issues. It provides easy to use tips and new ideas that will help build confidence and new skills. Triple P offers information and tips on developing positive relationships; encouraging desirable behaviour; teaching children new behaviours and skills; and managing misbehaviour. The program is offered by the TBDHU, Children's Centre Thunder Bay and Dilico Anishinabek Family Care.

CHOICES PROGRAM

In partnership with Thunder Bay Counselling and Sister Margaret Smith Centre, Children's Centre Thunder Bay offers the CHOICES program, which is designed to support youth between the ages of 12 and 17 in building self-esteem, and learning about a variety of relevant topics.

THUNDER BAY SITUATION TABLE

The Situation Table brings together more than 30 representatives from a variety of sectors – including mental health, addiction, justice, social services and education – to help those at acutely elevated risk of imminent harm or victimization. This diverse table of service providers helps prevent negative outcomes from occurring by providing individuals at risk of criminalization, victimization and/or harm with rapid, wraparound intervention that is short-term and time limited.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS PLANNING TABLE

As the City and (TBDHU) began establishing their Emergency Response Teams early during the pandemic, it was quickly identified that a pandemic plan was needed to meet the needs of vulnerable individuals in Thunder Bay and reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 among those individuals and the community at large. Their mandate is to share information and address gaps in meeting the needs of vulnerable individuals in the District of Thunder Bay during the global pandemic; fostering inter-sectoral relationships, collaboration and decision making; contribute agency resources, where possible; report to community partners of progress and seek out funding opportunities to support this work.

BIWAASE'AA

Biwaase'aa is one of Shkoday's programs, and has the goal of increasing the life skills of Indigenous children, youth and their families through strategies of academic improvement, emotional development, cultural awareness and nutritional support. Biwaase'aa partners with seven elementary schools and one high school to provide a safe place for students ages 7-18 years of age to access academic and life skills, including cultural teachings. All programs are based on the teachings of the Medicine Wheel and is designed to meet cultural, mental, physical, and emotional needs.

Moving Forward Together

Thunder Bay's CSWB Plan establishes a framework and coordinated approach to work collaboratively with community partners to promote safety and well-being for all residents. As we move into implementation, we will track our progress through monitoring and evaluation, data collection and data sharing. Throughout the four-year term of the plan and in future iterations, we will continue to be responsive to emerging needs in our community and create ongoing opportunities for community engagement and involvement.

The Action Tables will work to identify key actions for implementation to achieve the outcomes identified in the plan. The CSWB Advisory Committee will continue to provide the backbone support and oversee coordination of various implementation activities. The CSWB Advisory Committee will review the CSWB Plan annually and develop a progress report highlighting successes toward achieving outcomes.

Throughout the planning process, the community expressed their interest in staying involved in this initiative. We encourage all residents, service providers, and local organizations to stay connected, and collaborate on new initiatives that contribute to community safety and well-being. We all have a role to play in making Thunder Bay a safe, healthy and connected community where everyone is valued and has opportunities to thrive.

Definitions

Community violence
Exposure to intentional acts of interpersonal violence committed in public areas by individuals who are not intimately related to the victim.

Equity
The removal of systemic barriers and biases enabling all individuals to have equal opportunity to access and benefit from the program.

Diversity
Differences in race, colour, place of origin, religion, immigrant and newcomer status, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age.

Inclusion
The practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are equitably supported.

Low Income Measure
The Low Income Measure defines low income as being below a fixed percentage of income. A household is considered low income if its income is below 50% of median household incomes. It is, therefore, a relative measure of low income.

Misogyny is the hatred of, contempt for, or prejudice against women and girls. It enforces sexism and manifests in numerous ways, including social exclusion, sex discrimination, hostility, patriarchy, male privilege, belittling of women, disenfranchisement of women, violence against women and sexual objectification.

Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold primary power.

Social Determinants of Health
The social determinants of health (SDH) are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. Examples include education, employment, income, housing, food security, social inclusion, access to healthcare, early childhood development.

Social Justice
Social justice is an ideal condition in which all members of a society have the same basic rights, protections, opportunities, obligations, and social benefits.

Structural violence
Structural violence refers to any scenario in which a social structure perpetuates inequity, thus causing preventable suffering. Structural violence describes how social structures (economic, political, medical, and legal systems) can have a disproportionately negative impact on particular groups and communities.

Systemic Racism

Systemic racism consists of organizational culture, policies, directives, practices or procedures that exclude, displace or marginalize some racialized groups or create unfair barriers for them to access valuable benefits and opportunities. This is often the result of institutional biases in organizational culture, policies, directives, practices, and procedures that may appear neutral but have the effect of privileging some groups and disadvantaging others.

Upstream

When we talk about "upstream" we are seeking to change fundamental social and economic structures that distribute wealth, power, opportunities and decision-making. This change is meant to happen at the source, and should result in greater equity and a reduction in the root causes of inequity. This is sometimes also referred to as addressing the causes of the causes.

APPENDIX 1: CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL – MEMBERSHIP

Mayor, City of Thunder Bay

Chief of Police, Thunder Bay Police Service

Detachment Commander/Designate Ontario Provincial Police - Northwest Region

Chief/Designate, Fort William First Nation

Deputy Grand Chief/Designate, Nishnawbe Aski Nation

Métis Nation of Ontario

Ontario Union of Indians

Medical Officer of Health

Crown Attorney, Ministry of the Attorney General

City Councillors (2)

Citizen Representatives (2)

Youth Representatives (2)

Matawa First Nations Management

Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service

Ontario Native Women's Association

Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre

Urban Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Lakehead District School Board

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

Northern Nishnawbe Education Council

Conseil Scolaire De District Catholique Des Aurores Boréales

Recreation and Culture Division (COTB)

Age Friendly Thunder Bay

Shelter House

William W. Creighton Youth Services

Kairos Community Resource Centre

John Howard Society

Elizabeth Fry Society

Thunder Bay Parole Office (Correctional Service of Canada)

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care

Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay

Chamber of Commerce

BIAs & Business Areas of Thunder Bay

Children's Centre Thunder Bay

St. Joseph's Care Group

Thunder Bay Drug Strategy

Lakehead Social Planning Council

Thunder Bay Sexual Assault Centre

Thunder Bay Counselling

Thunder Bay & District Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse

Thunder Bay District Crime Stoppers

APPENDIX 2 – 2021 POPULATION LEVEL INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

The Framework is organized into seven domains: Community Vitality, Healthy Populations, Community Safety, Living Standards, Education, Environment and Democratic Engagement. Thirty indicators have been identified to tell the story about safety and well-being in Thunder Bay. For more information on the domains and indicators, see the 2021 Population Level Indicator Report.

Domain	Indicator	Sustainable Development Goals
Community Vitality	Sense of Belonging	
	Quality of Life	
	Perception of Racism and Discrimination	
	Population Experiencing Racism	
	Perception of Safety	
Healthy Populations	Self-reported Overall Health	
	Self-reported Mental Health	
	Adult Smoking Rate	
	Hospitalizations for Chronic Disease	
	Alcohol Consumption	
	Opioid Poisonings	
	Premature Mortality	
Community Safety	Crime Severity Index	
	Overall Crime Rate	
	Violent Crime Rate	
	Thunder Bay Police Service Calls for Service	
	Domestic Violence Calls to TBPS	
	Hate Crime	
Living Standards	Prevalence of Low Income	
	Lone Parent Households	
	Homelessness	
	Housing Affordability	
	Unemployment Rate	
	Participation in Labour Force	
	Food Security	
Education	High School Graduation	
Environment	Proximity and Use of Greenspace	
	Greenhouse Gas emissions	
Democratic Engagement	Voter Turnout-Municipal Election	
	Opportunities to participate	

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