

City of London SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

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BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to outline a social policy framework for the City of London. This social policy framework is intended to identify the key issues that play a role in the well-being and quality of life of Londoners, and to define the municipal role in responding to these social issues.

What is Social Policy?

"A policy is a course of action or inaction chosen by public authorities to address a given problem or interrelated set of problems" (Wolf, 2000). Social policy focuses on the issues and responses that affect the quality of life and welfare of individuals. In doing so, social policy efforts often seek to protect or promote the material well-being of individuals, families, or groups on the grounds of equality, compassion or justice. As such, social policy is tied to economic policy (source: Online Guide to Social Policy in Ontario).

What is a Social Policy Framework?

A social policy framework formalizes a way of thinking about and responding to the social impact of changes in a community. In doing so, the framework defines the role of the municipality in responding to current and future social issues. This may include opportunities for the municipality to engage in:

- Needs assessment and evaluation to identify unmet or partially met social needs in the community;
- Community-based strategic planning efforts to bring together local government with citizens and community organizations to develop short- and long-term responses to identified needs;
- Policy development activities;
- Advocacy to and partnership with senior levels of government in order to best respond to identified policy, funding, and strategic needs;
- Awareness-raising activities that broaden the public's understanding of social issues, policies, and services in the community; and
- Other leadership activities related to capacity building, partnering and the development of innovative local solutions to social issues.



This policy framework does not immediately define all needs and solutions to social issues in our community. Rather, the framework establishes an ongoing mechanism to evaluate local needs and to consider appropriate responses by working together with key local stakeholders.

Why Does the City of London Need a Social Policy Framework?

The City of London's corporate strategic plan seeks to position London among the top rank of Canadian municipalities. A social policy framework is an essential tool in achieving this goal.

The City of London's mission statement is "*proudly providing valued services to our community.*" The planning, funding, and delivery of these services is significantly influenced by social policy at municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government.

On a policy stage, municipalities have new opportunities to partner with senior levels of government to address issues that impact how quality of life is affected at the local level. By establishing a mechanism to identify social policy issues and responses, the City of London can actively advocate for, lead, and champion strategies that meet the social needs of all Londoners.

A social policy framework is central to the City of London's success in our strategic priorities of *economic prosperity, enriched cultural identity, and community vitality*. For example, the work of Richard Florida (2000) highlights that amenities and the environment are vital to attracting knowledge workers and supporting leading-edge technology firms and industries to a community. As London faces new demands to attract investment and the "creative class," we must pay more attention to social factors in promoting our community as a business and quality of life destination.

Cities Represent the Foundation of Quality of Life

There are a number of significant reasons for municipal investment in social issues:

- Cities are the place where individuals and families receive services and participate in their community;
- In many cases, services are cost-shared between levels of government but delivered locally;
- Municipal government is the level of government that is closest to the people it represents. This offers a first-hand knowledge of the needs of the community and its residents;
- The local level is where the integration of services occurs. The most typical areas of integration include schools, recreation, health, child care, and social housing; and
- It is at the local level where public-community partnerships are likely to be built.



Municipal Role in Service Delivery and Policy Making

Now, more than ever, the role of cities in service delivery and policy making is receiving increasing attention. For example:

- The C.D. Howe Institute (2006) suggests that cities are poised at a "new threshold of prominence" in policy making;
- The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2006) advocates that "cities and communities are the keys to Canada's well-being and prosperity. They are the main drivers of economic growth for the country. They are where most Canadians live, and they set the markers by which our success as a nation is measured."

As a result, senior levels of government are turning their attention to ensuring that cities have the necessary resources to develop and maintain their infrastructure. However, according to the Caledon Institute of Social Policy (2003), while municipalities typically focus on physical infrastructure, government investment in "social infrastructure" has generally received little attention.

"Many municipalities have not assumed an active or explicit social role in the past. Their responsibilities and interests have focused more upon physical infrastructure and the 'nuts and bolts' of city operations such as roads, sewers, waste disposal and water works. The extent of their social role involved the sponsorship of recreation programs, summer day camps, and selected community events...

As it turns out, recent literature is pointing to the importance of these activities both for individuals and for healthy communities. But the social role of local governments has expanded well beyond these domains – primarily in response to the evolving economic, social, and political context that has created new pressures and new opportunities."

"The Social Role of Local Government," Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 2003, p.2.

The Changing Landscape of Social Issues

One of the challenges for a progressive and responsive municipality is to identify and respond to changing social trends. A social policy framework facilitates this process.

Recent work by the Canadian Council on Social Development (2005) describes a new "social architecture" - a series of demographic and social changes that are impacting the social policy landscape. The most significant of these trends include:



- *Changing families.* Over the past decades, the Canadian family has changed in many ways. Among these changes:
 - An increased proportion of working-age couples without children;
 - A growing number of people live in one-person households;
 - Marriages are less stable, with at least four in ten marriages today ending in divorce;
 - More couples living in common-law relationships;
 - More complex households as a result of more stepfamilies; and
 - Lone parent led households now make up 25% of all families.

Together, these family shifts have led to increased economic vulnerability and instability for many households, particularly among lone parent households and singles. Recent immigrants, visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and people with disabilities are also impacted. According to Campaign 2000's 2005 Report Card on Child Poverty in Ontario (2006):

- One in every six children in Ontario lives in poverty. The child poverty rate in Ontario has remained at 15-16% since 2000 despite strong economic growth;
 - The average low-income family lives far below the poverty line. Low-income lone mother families in Ontario are living (on average) \$9,600 below the poverty line;
 - 33% of low-income children are in families where the parent/s work full-time, full year. The percentage of poor children living in working families has doubled in the past ten years;
 - 70% of Ontario's low-income families with children live in unaffordable housing where they pay more than 30% of total income on shelter;
 - The cumulative impacts of cuts to social assistance rates and inflation mean welfare benefits now have purchasing power equivalent to 1995. Over 50% of single parents on social assistance have used food banks, paid their rent or mortgage late, and cannot afford to take their children to a movie or sports and lessons outside school. Children represent 43% of the people using food banks across Ontario.
- *Challenges for newcomers and immigrants.* The profile of Canadian immigrants is changing. Today's immigrant is more likely to come from Africa and East Asia. He or she is more highly educated than ever before, but is having great difficulty breaking into the labour market and making financial gains. Undervaluing of foreign education, training and work experience have been identified as significant barriers to economic success among immigrants, leading to high rates of poverty among immigrants.

Because immigrant settlement is most likely in urban centres, this is becoming a significant issue for larger municipalities.

- *Changing labour market.* There are a number of significant challenges impacting today's workforce:
 - Today's labour market is increasingly characterized by part-time, temporary, casual, and self employment;
 - Both earnings and access to non-wage benefits (like extended medical, dental, life, and disability insurance) are more unstable, leaving families more vulnerable to disruptions in income or unemployment; and
 - The composition of the workforce continues to change. For example, women's workforce participation has doubled, new immigrants are struggling to receive recognition for their foreign training or work experience, and youth are postponing careers and families until later in life.

These labour market challenges are only expected to continue: within ten years, the aging population will generate more skill and labour market shortages.

- *Growing income inequality.* While strong growth continues at the highest end of the income scales, median incomes (representing the "typical family or household") are generally declining. For example, between 1991 and 2001, the average household income for Londoners increased by 2.3% to \$47,705, while the typical (median) family income declined by 2.6% to \$38,232.
- *The aging population.* Fifteen years from now, London's seniors' population will be 40% greater than it is now, while the City's population will have only grown by 15%¹. Major growth is projected for the population aged 65 – 69 which is projected to grow 31% by 2011. A 15% increase in residents 55 and over (11,500 seniors) is expected by 2011².

In addition to impacting the labour market, an aging population is expected to have significant effects on service delivery at the municipal level. This includes long-term care and home care, as well as recreation and leisure, transportation, health care, and other service areas.

¹ Clayton Research. Employment, Population, Housing and Non-Residential Construction Projections, City of London, Ontario. February, 1, 2003.

² City of London Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan, 2003.

Changing Relationships Between Municipal, Provincial, and Federal Governments

Demographic changes have been impacted by policy and funding decisions from senior levels of government. A social policy framework helps to provide a roadmap for municipalities to work with the federal and provincial governments.

Two of the most significant developments impacting municipalities in the past decade have been:

1. The change from the Canada Assistance Plan to the Canada Social Transfer that defines policy relationships between federal and provincial governments; and
2. New provincial-municipal responsibilities and cost-sharing arrangements introduced through Local Services Realignment in Ontario.

The Canada Social Transfer³

In the 1990's, the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) and Established Programs Financing was the framework that guided the relationship between the federal government and the provinces related to health, post-secondary education, social assistance and social services. In 1990, the federal government restricted its cost-sharing of social assistance programs with provincial governments. Driven by this new funding formula, provinces sought to reduce their own share of social assistance costs by tightening eligibility requirements and reducing benefits.

On April 1, 1996, the CAP was replaced by the federal Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). The CHST combined the funds for social assistance and social services with those for health and post- secondary education into a single block transfer. This measure fundamentally changed the social safety net and, by implication, the role of the federal government in the social policy field by introducing the opportunity for significant policy variations across provinces.

For example, under the CAP, funding for social assistance and services was governed by 50/50 cost sharing between the Federal and Provincial governments. As part of this funding relationship, all provinces were required to meet several service delivery standards. With the new CHST legislation, four of five standards previously outlined under the CAP were dropped, allowing for significant shifts at the Provincial level (such as the introduction of "welfare to work" initiatives in Ontario).

³ Effective April 1, 2004, the CHST has been replaced by two new funds: the Canada Health Transfer and the Canada Social Transfer. The Canada Social Transfer, which combines post-secondary education and social transfers, was created by default from what was left over after creation of the health fund. Policy advocates, such as the Canadian Council on Social Development, suggest that the combination of social programs with post-secondary education continues to muddy the policy waters, and that a further distinction between the two areas is still required.



The fall-out of the CHST at the municipal level saw cuts in transfers from their provincial governments, as the provinces passed on the cuts in the federal transfers. At the same time, municipalities were left to take on an increasingly important role in implementing and even designing social policy. In Ontario, these new relationships were defined through the Local Services Realignment process.

Local Services Realignment

In 1997, the Province of Ontario introduced a Local Services Realignment (LSR) process. LSR represented a major shift (or "downloading") of the funding and service delivery relationship between the Province and municipalities in key social policy areas: social assistance, child care, social housing, land ambulance, and public health. According to the Province, these changes created the opportunity for a more integrated system of social and community health services under municipal leadership.

Under LSR, the Province created a series of 47 Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) across Ontario. The London CMSM includes the City of London and the County of Middlesex. While the County is responsible for the delivery of land ambulance, the City of London assumed responsibility for social assistance, child care, and social housing.

Prior to the LSR, the Province administered financial assistance to people with disabilities and to sole support families⁴. With the 1998 LSR implementation, all sole support cases at the Province were transferred to the City under the Ontario Works (OW) program and the income support programs were divided into two groups: OW and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

While the City of London previously cost-shared 20% of the cost of OW assistance and 50% of administration costs, we took on a new 20% cost-sharing of assistance for sole support cases. In addition, where the Province previously provided 100% of the costs of financial assistance for people with disabilities, the City of London was now responsible for 20% cost-sharing of income support, 50% of administrative costs, 20% of ODSP supports to employment, and 20% of the Ontario Drug Benefit Program.

As part of LSR, the City of London also took on the full funding and administration responsibility for social housing.

Over time, the increased costs associated with the municipal delivery of these programs have added significant pressure to the municipal tax base. For example, the City of London is responsible for 20% of the cost of service delivery and 50% of administrative costs of child care. The cost of the child care program has increased from \$1.7 million in 1999 to \$4.4 million in 2005⁵.

⁴ During this time, the City administered financial assistance to sole support parents in emergency need until they were transferred to the Province. Caseload costs incurred by the City for sole support parents were funded 100% by the Province.

⁵ In 2000, the Province no longer allowed child care parent fees to offset the City share of child care programs.



In 2005, the City of London received \$13.1 million from the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund. While this Provincial funding was welcomed as a tool to offset some of the burden of cost-shared social programs, the grant formula is based on eligible costs and municipal assessment, so the grant is dynamic and will increase if cost increases as not offset by increased assessment revenue.

Financial Impact on Municipalities

Local governments are constrained in their ability to tackle complex and changing social issues. Municipalities generally have three options to respond to these growing pressures: (1) raise property taxes; (2) cut programs; or (3) increase user fees.

Municipalities, as well as their collective voice through organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), and the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA), argue that these are not appropriate options for adequately responding to the complexity of social changes being experienced in communities. For example, the property tax base is too limited, nor should it be the appropriate tool for funding social programs such as social assistance or housing. Similarly, increasing user fees excludes vulnerable populations who often cannot afford services to begin with.

The C.D. Howe Institute (2006) suggests that "a sensible approach to municipal funding problems would be to: (i) shift most social service costs to the provinces; (ii) pursue municipal property tax reforms to reduce the scope for tax competition and exportation; (iii) raise more municipal revenue from user fees where reasonable; and (iv) reduce provincial transfers to municipalities" (p. 2).

Current Thinking about Social Policy in Canada

Two of the leading social policy organizations in Canada are the Caledon Institute of Social Policy and the Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN). Their work includes an examination of the role of municipalities in the development and implementation of policy. Some important principles from their recent work are highlighted below.

The Social Role of Local Government

According to the Caledon Institute of Social Policy (2003), local governments have significant opportunities to engage in social policy and planning initiatives. Local governments are in a position to promote awareness of the pressing social needs in the community, and of the importance of social investment. This includes fostering a sense of responsibility for social well-being among all sectors, including business, community groups, and other levels of government.

Roles for municipal government may include service provider, investor, leader and champion, convenor and partner, and exemplary employer, as outlined below.

- *Service Provider.* Delivering services including child care, social assistance, public health, and recreation. As part of service delivery, municipalities also have the opportunity to better integrate and coordinate the services that fall within the responsibility of the municipality;
- *Investor.* While municipalities are important investors in community programs, they have an opportunity to work with other funders and service providers to improve coordination of service delivery. Municipalities also have new opportunities for establishing innovative public-private partnerships;
- *Leader and Champion.* Working in collaboration with key partners to undertake focused programs and initiatives in order to tackle major social issues (i.e., poverty reduction);
- *Convenor and Partner.* Local governments are in a unique position to convene diverse community stakeholders around social issues. Where appropriate, this can include business, labour, the education/training sector, social organizations, and anti-poverty groups, and the federal and provincial governments; and
- *Exemplary Employer.* Acting as an "exemplary employer" through progressive training and employment practices, family friendly workplace policies, supporting volunteerism, and promoting opportunities for low-wage earners, individuals with disabilities, and recent immigrants.

The Best "Policy Mix"

Individual government policies do not operate in isolation. When multiple policies from different levels of government intersect, they may have unintended or contradictory results. The CPRN advocates that individual policies must be considered as a "policy mix" that maximizes the positive impact for the most number of people. The need for such a policy mix is taken into consideration in developing the City of London's social policy framework.

How was the City of London's Social Policy Framework Developed?

The City of London social policy framework was developed based on a comprehensive review and analysis of materials that included:

- Key documents that represent current thinking about social and economic policies on the local, provincial, and national landscapes;
- Existing City of London reports, initiatives, and activities related to community vitality, community development, and quality of life; and
- Social policy models from other municipalities across the country.

A. Review of Key Policy and Research Documents

Among the key documents considered in the development of the social policy framework were:

- Recommendations from the London Coalition for Social Justice to the Community and Protective Services Committee (2005);
- The work of the Task Force on Modernizing Income Security for Working Age Adults (MISWAA) and the recommendations of the TD Economics report on welfare to work (2005);
- Recommendations outlined in rational campaigns to reduce poverty (i.e., Make Poverty History), including those focusing on eliminating child poverty (i.e., Campaign 2000);
- Policy papers developed by the CPRN, the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, and the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD);
- The Honorable Deb Matthews' "Review of Employment Assistance Programs in Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program" (2004);
- Reports by the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) including "Investing in Economic Security Makes Sense for Building Healthy Communities" (2005) and the Emergency Shelter Task Force report (2005);
- The local study, "Protecting Children is Everybody's Business" (2003), which looks at factors impacting the rise of the number of children in care of the Children's Aid Society;
- The Community Plan on Homelessness in London (2004);
- The Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition's, "Lives in the Balance: Ontario's Social Audit" (2004), which included feedback from the City of London and local service providers; and
- Research on social determinants of health (Raphael, 2004).

Appendix A provides an overview of the key policy issues and recommendations from each report, and includes information on how to access each document.

B. Review of City of London Strategies and Activities

The City of London has adopted a number of strategic efforts that inform and support the development of a social policy framework. Most importantly, these include the strategic area of community vitality, the endorsement of a community development framework, access to a comprehensive system of quality of life indicators, and community social planning processes.

Community Vitality

One of five strategic areas of priority established by Municipal Council in 2004 is "community vitality." Community vitality is about our neighborhoods in London, and the people who live in them. A cross-section of Londoners were invited together to form a "Community Starts With Me" discussion group that challenged participants to answer: *"if London was one of the best places to live, describe its people and the places where they live, work, and play."*

The Community Vitality vision framework defines the following theme areas necessary to positioning London in the top rank of Canadian municipalities:

- Core essence
- Sense of community
- Neighborhoods
- Diversity
- Safe communities
- Services for everyone
- Activities for everyone
- Innovation and economics
- Green and healthy environment
- Quality infrastructure and physical planning
- Community leadership

The next steps in the process will be to identify the indicators that will provide concrete measurements for each of the outcomes. Londoners will be engaged to help develop an action plan for community vitality which will include a series of recommendations that will ensure that the outcomes are achieved.

Impact for London's Social Policy Framework

The Community Vitality framework recognizes that all Londoners deserve to have access to services and activities. "Increased accessibility to services for Londoners" and "increased social interaction/ connection/ engagement of all Londoners" were two priority outcomes to be achieved if our community was to be one of the top places to live.

The social policy framework identifies the municipal role in social policy, and provides the means for the implementation of the Community Vitality vision.

City of London Community Development Framework

In response to recommendations from the City of London's Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan (2003), Municipal Council endorsed a community development framework in 2004. The community development framework defines a city-wide, coordinated framework designed to identify the overall capacities, needs, and progress of London's neighborhoods.



The goals of this community engagement strategy are:

- To engage neighborhoods to build on their capacities and increase their quality of life through community development;
- To assist neighborhoods with the development of skills and tools needed to develop community-based plans;
- To ensure community development resources are allocated equitably and by the highest priority; and
- To develop community-based resources to serve the community.

The Department of Community Services is actively engaged in the implementation of the community development framework.

Impact for London's Social Policy Framework

Where the Community Vitality framework defines the key issues and ideal outcomes for people and neighborhoods in London, the City of London's community development framework provides a strategy for implementing capacity building activities at the neighborhood level. This includes engaging Londoners in new ways to support themselves and one another.

Quality of Life Reporting System

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS) is a tool for measuring, monitoring, and reporting quality of life in Canadian urban centres. The City of London has participated in the QOLRS since its first report in 1991. Data is based on the Statistics Canada Census, as well as data collected at the municipal level. Quality of life "domains" defined in the QOLRS include:

- Affordable, appropriate housing
- Civic engagement
- Community and social infrastructure
- Education
- Employment
- Local economy
- Natural environment
- Personal and community health
- Personal financial security
- Personal safety

These indicators supplement other social data available to the City of London (i.e., neighborhood-level data compiled as the "Profile of London's Neighborhoods" report every five years, and data available as part of our participation in the CCSD's "Urban Poverty Project."



Impact for London's Social Policy Framework

Social indicator data available to the City of London through our participation in the Quality of Life Reporting System allows us to measure our success as a community in implementing the social policy framework. These indicators are valuable for communicating our progress with key stakeholders, and for comparing our progress to that of other urban municipalities across Canada.

Community Social Planning Processes

The last most comprehensive municipal social planning process was completed in 1997 through the Mayor's Anti-Poverty Action Group (MAPAG) Report. MAPAG identified recommendations related to the following issues:

- Communication strategy
- Strategic change process
- Policy/ red tape
- Utilities/ telephone
- Clothing/ furniture
- Food
- Housing
- Transportation
- Economic development
- Medical/ dental needs

Since that time, the Department of Community Services has continued to work in partnership with community service providers and funders to develop community action plans in a number of areas. Most recently, these plans have included:

- *The Community Plan on Vulnerable Youth* (June, 2004);
- *Working Together to Support London's Seniors* Community Action Plan (Fall, 2005); and
- *Welcoming Cultural Diversity in London* Community Action Plan (draft, Winter, 2006).

In addition, the City of London has led or contributed to community planning in the following areas:

- The development of the Implementation Plan for the Best Start initiative (January, 2006) and previous annual municipal child care service plans. These plans have included significant consultation and partnership with child care and early learning service providers, and groups such as the Early Years Council and the Early Years Advisory Committee;
- Working with the London Homeless Coalition in the development and regular updates of the Community Plan on Homelessness in London;

- Working with the Hunger Relief Action Coalition in implementing the recommendations related to emergency food programs from the MAPAG Report (1997); and
- Working with the London Mental Health Alliance in developing a position paper on mental health issues in London (December, 2003).

Impact for London's Social Policy Framework

Community planning processes related to specific social issues and populations of interest provide another tool for working together to identify local needs and to build collective strategies to respond to these needs.

Building from the key themes identified in Community Vitality framework, the community plans and other resources identified above provide a road-map and strategies that can be followed as part of the community development framework.

Information about social indicators and data projects, as well as links to access many of the community planning documents highlighted above, can be accessed on the City of London's Research and Community Building Launch Pad at www.london.ca/launchpad.

C. Other Municipal Social Policy Models

The social policy activities of other Canadian municipalities also informed the development of the social policy framework for the City of London. Among the municipal leaders in this area are the cities of Vancouver, Ottawa, Hamilton, and Edmonton.

Highlights from their respective approaches to social policy are outlined below.

Municipality	Highlights of the Social Policy Model
City of Vancouver	<p>The City of Vancouver adopted a definition and principles for sustainability as a basis for municipal actions and operations. They defined three components to sustainability: economic, social, and ecological. According to this model, "social sustainability" deals with complex issues such as quality of life, health, equity, and social inclusion.</p> <p>Vancouver's model outlines that, for a community to function and be sustainable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The basic needs of its residents must be met; and ▪ The community must have the ability to maintain and build on its own resources and have the resiliency to prevent and/or address problems in the future.

Municipality	Highlights of the Social Policy Model
City of Ottawa	"Ottawa 20/20" is a municipal strategic framework for growth management. One component of the plan is the Human Services Plan. The Human Services Plan includes an affordable housing strategy, a community infrastructure plan, and a "talent plan" that addresses local job creation and participation in the workforce. Ottawa's Human Services Plan explicitly identifies poverty as one of the issues to address in order to achieve economic, environmental, and social well-being for all residents.
City of Hamilton	Hamilton's "Vision 2020" aims to weigh social, health, economic and environmental costs, benefits, and risks equally in municipal decision-making. As part of Vision 2020, a "Social Development Strategy" was designed to advance a social agenda that addresses challenges that are specific to their community. The Social Development Strategy includes three "flagship initiatives": Children and Families, Skills Development, and Affordable Housing.
City of Edmonton	The "Edmonton Social Plan" is developed as a tool for planning, resource allocation, and local policy development and decision-making. The Plan contains broad-based information from a series of sources which is intended to offer a holistic picture of Edmonton residents and their communities.

While the implementation of these models varies in each municipality, the general intention of the models is to provide:

- A way to formally capture and define the need for the municipal role in social issues;
- A guidepost for developing local strategies;
- A tool to engage community stakeholders to respond to the issues; and
- A framework for information sharing back to municipal Councils, community members, and other stakeholders regarding activities and progress in areas of strategic effort.

City of London Social Policy Framework

The City of London social policy framework defines guiding principles and a model outlining the key social issues to be addressed. The role of the municipality, as well as other community stakeholders, is defined.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The City of London's social policy framework is based on the guiding principles of equity and inclusion, dignity and self-sufficiency, and partnerships and accountability.

Equity and Inclusion

- Services, opportunities, and community activities should be accessible to all Londoners. Affordability is one of the most important factors in accessibility.
- All Londoners should have access to basic needs including adequate and appropriate food, and safe and affordable housing.

Dignity and Self-Sufficiency

- Policy solutions must work with people's whole lives, and respond to the interconnections of life issues and experiences, such as health, mental health, housing, employment, family supports, social inclusion, and quality of life.
- One size of service delivery does not fit all. Service providers need to empower and work with individuals, families, and communities to identify solutions that will meet their unique needs.
- Income security alone is not the solution to ending poverty. Social policies should not be "band-aid" approaches that simply help people to pay the bills, but should promote opportunities for long-term self-sufficiency.

While poverty is thought of only in terms of financial resources, financial resources alone do not explain why some individuals may achieve success in exiting poverty, where others do not. In reality, there are a number of other resources that support people leaving poverty. These include emotional, mental, spiritual and physical resources, as well as support systems, relationships and role models, knowledge of hidden social rules, and coping strategies.

Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities, 2003.

Partnerships and Accountability

- All three levels of government play a role in establishing and implementing a system of social and economic policies that support self-sufficiency.
- Government, or the public sector, cannot address social policy issues alone. The remaining two "pillars of society" - the private sector and the voluntary sector - have important expertise and resources to contribute to developing local responses to community issues.

Key Components of London's Social Policy Framework

Overview

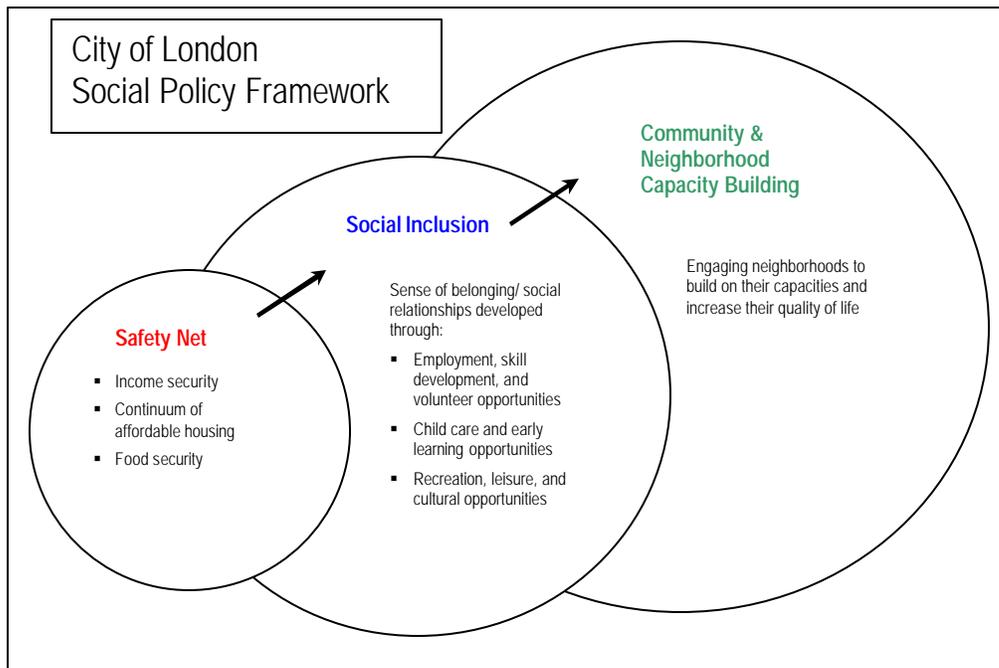
The quality of life, health, and well-being of our community depends on the opportunities that are available for all Londoners. All Londoners deserve to have meaningful opportunities to participate in and contribute to our community.

However, not all individuals and families in our community are on an equal playing field. This may be due to short-term, situational adversity (such as job loss, family break-up, or medical problems) or longer-term poverty experienced by multiple generations of a family. These people may require increased supports or opportunities to ensure their ability to feel a sense of belonging to and engagement in their neighborhood and community.

The three primary components of the City of London's social policy framework include:

- Safety Net
- Social Inclusion
- Community and Neighborhood Capacity Building

Figure 1 below outlines how these three components intersect.



Further details about each of these social policy components and the linkages between them are outlined below.

How do the components of the social policy framework fit together?

The core foundation to quality of life for all Londoners is the **safety net**. Specifically, having adequate income to meet the basic needs of the household - or *income security* - is a fundamental need for all households. Similarly, being able to access a safe, stable, affordable place to live along a continuum of housing, and accessing enough food for health and well-being, are the remaining basic needs to which all Londoners are entitled.

Once basic needs are securely met, Londoners also require opportunities to be included in our community, or **social inclusion**. We believe that employment, skill development and volunteerism, child care and early learning activities, and recreation, leisure, and cultural opportunities are key entry points for developing a sense of belonging in our community.

Finally, strong individuals are strong contributors to the health and well-being of our community as a whole. When individuals come together at the neighborhood level, we build **community and neighborhood capacity** for Londoners to support ourselves and one another.

How does the social policy framework address populations with unique needs and challenges?

While the social policy framework does not focus exclusively on vulnerable populations, there will be opportunities to work with community stakeholders in order to respond to a number of existing identified needs and issues. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Newcomers, immigrants and refugees who often face increased barriers to accessing adequate employment and participation in the community;
- Individuals with moderate or serious mental health issues;
- Individuals for whom an addiction is a barrier to success in their work or family life;
- Individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless;
- Families who have inter-generational involvement with child welfare services;
- Individuals and households who are receiving income supports through Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program;
- Low wage earners, especially among households with young children;
- Seniors who may be isolated from family or other community supports, including an increasing number of low-income seniors; and
- Vulnerable youth, including street youth or other youth at risk.

Safety Net

An individual's basic needs are the core foundation of their health and well-being. These needs must be met before capacity can develop in other areas, such as job skills, parenting, and self-development.

In the City of London's social policy framework, the three basic elements of the safety net are (1) income security; (2) access to a continuum of safe, affordable housing; and (3) food security.

1. Income security

Income security ensures that a household has adequate and consistent income to meet its basic needs. Income security can be achieved through one or more of the following income supports: employment earnings, social assistance, and income supplementation that can be unconditional or based on an income or needs test.

The major policy issues related to income security include:

- Social assistance rates (Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program);
- Income support payments and employment and case management supports for social assistance participants;
- Employment Insurance policies;
- Minimum wage and taxation supports for low-wage earners; and
- The National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) and the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB).

The Municipal Role in Income Security

The most significant municipal role in the area of income security is the delivery of OW and its related policies (including the NCBS). The municipality also cost-shares the delivery of the ODSP with the Province. It is important to note that the legislation regarding these programs (including social assistance rates and NCBS policies) is established by the Province, not the municipality. Other policies related to income security fall within the scope of the Provincial (i.e., minimum wage rates) and Federal governments (i.e., Employment Insurance, taxation supports).

Further details regarding each of these policy issues and the role of the City of London in responding to them will be outlined in a subsequent City of London policy paper on income security.

2. Continuum of safe, affordable housing

The City of London's Affordable Housing Task Force set out a vision of "a City of London where all members of the community have access to housing that is safe, secure and suitable to their needs and ability to pay." In the subsequent "Affordable Housing Strategy for the City of London" (2005), affordable housing, in general, is defined as housing in which the rent or mortgage costs/property taxes account for no more than 30% of the household's income. This measure of affordability is used in most federal and provincial government programs.



There are a number of stages along the continuum of housing in London, each with social policy implications. These components include:

- Outreach services;
- Emergency shelter;
- Crash beds for homeless individuals with mental health barriers;
- Transitional housing;
- Supportive housing;
- Affordable housing;
- Low income housing; and
- Social housing.

The Municipal Role in the Continuum of Housing

The City of London has a role in the delivery or funding of a number of these components. For example:

- The municipality administers and allocates 100% Provincial funding through the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program to initiatives that provide housing outreach services and crash beds. Provincial and municipal funding for housing support services intended to prevent homelessness is also administered by the City of London;
- The City of London funds emergency shelters \$42.95 for each person staying in the shelter (per diem amount of \$39.15 plus a personal needs allowance of \$3.80) for up to 42 days⁶;
- The City of London's Affordable Housing Strategy (2005) outlines a strategy for the creation of 1,200 affordable housing units in the next five years, as well as introducing other opportunities to promote housing affordability in our community; and
- The City of London has been identified as the Service Manager responsible for the funding (since January 1, 1998) and administration (since February 1, 2002) of the delivery of social housing.

Further details regarding each of these policy issues and the role of the City of London in responding to them (including detailed municipal funding investments) will be outlined in a subsequent City of London policy paper on the continuum of housing.

3. Food security

According to the Middlesex London Health Unit (2006), food security is defined as "the state in which all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preference for an active and healthy life." Food insecurity prevents individuals and families from having sufficient resources to obtain food without need for emergency food supplies from food banks, meal programs, collective kitchens or other food security programs and services.

⁶ After 42 days, individuals may remain in the emergency shelter, however, the amount received by shelters may be reduced and varies according to shelter type (board and lodging or special boarder). Criteria for special circumstances for extensions beyond 42 days include settlement, health or mental health concerns, or waiting for housing or a long term care option.

Policies directly related to food security include:

- Food banks and emergency food programs; and
- Food security initiatives including community gardens, collective kitchens, and other capacity building initiatives.

However, food insecurity is the result of a complex number of social factors, including but not limited to insufficient income and unaffordable housing.

The Municipal Role in Food Security

While the City of London does not directly deliver programs related to food security, the municipality has a significant history of investing municipal funds in a number of local food security initiatives. For example, 100% municipal funds available through the MAPAG Fund have been invested in community gardens and collective kitchens for a number of years.

In addition, the City of London has been an active participant in the Hunger Relief Advisory Committee (HRAC), which was formed to address the need for and delivery of "emergency" food and coordination of related services.

Further details regarding each of these policy issues and the role of the City of London in responding to them will be outlined in a subsequent City of London policy paper on food security.

Social Inclusion

Over the past 25 years, research has clearly established a positive relationship between social relationships and health. Individuals who have a sense of belonging, or "social inclusion," are more likely to experience positive health and mental health outcomes (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Opportunities for social inclusion can take place in many areas, from early childhood experiences, to workplace and volunteer experiences, and engaging with others in community activities. Social inclusion contributes to building individual capacity - the strengths and resources an individual needs to contribute to their own well-being and to the well-being of the community as a whole.

The City of London's social policy framework defines three primary areas for social inclusion: (1) employment, skill development, and volunteer opportunities; (2) child care and early learning opportunities; and (3) access to recreation, leisure, and cultural opportunities.

1. Employment, skill development, and volunteer opportunities

Employment is the most fundamental tool for self-sufficiency. Opportunities for training and skill development that allow earners to improve their employment are important not only for increasing and sustaining earnings, but to promote feelings of self-worth and community engagement through the workplace. Volunteerism is another important tool for individuals to gain valuable experience and contribute to their community.

The Municipal Role in Employment, Skill Development, and Volunteer Opportunities

The City of London plays a number of roles related to employment, skill development, and volunteerism. For example:

- As an employer, the City of London itself has opportunities to provide career opportunities for full-time, part-time and casual staff. In its human resources function, this includes mechanisms to invest in professional and skill development for the municipal workforce. In some service delivery areas, volunteer opportunities are also available;
- Through the Ontario Works program, the municipality works with local employment service providers to purchase employment support programs for OW participants. The City also works in partnership with employers and other stakeholders to identify and respond to local labour market needs; and
- Through its partnership in the London Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), the City of London works to attract new investments and grow existing investments in our community.

Further details regarding employment and skill development policies and the role of the City of London in responding to them will be outlined in a subsequent City of London policy paper on social inclusion.

2. Child care and early learning activities

Children from all socio-economic backgrounds benefit from exposure to high quality child care. The child care experience results in positive social, academic and language skill outcomes. Specifically, children attending higher quality child care are better prepared for school, or have a higher "readiness to learn." Children who enter school ready to learn are also more likely to complete high school, find employment, and make positive contributions to society as caring, productive citizens. At the same time, when a family has access to quality child care, parents are better able to maintain employment or participate in school or training activities.

Examples of policies that promote healthy child development include:

- Access to quality, affordable child care that meets the needs of all families (including fee subsidies for eligible families);
- Wage subsidy policies to promote and attract quality licensed child care professionals;
- Resources for families with children with special needs; and
- Expanding opportunities in the community for families with young children to access comprehensive early learning supports in a way that responds to the changing needs of today's families.

Early learning opportunities can take place in child care centres, preschools, nursery schools, and other settings. Early learning programs may include activities such as parent education programs, toy lending, and health and nutrition programs.

The Municipal Role in Child Care and Early Learning

Through the Local Services Realignment process, the Province transferred responsibility for four prescribed child care services to the CMSM: fee subsidy, wage subsidy, special needs resources, and resource centres. CMSMs contribute 20% of the cost of child care delivery and



50% of administrative costs to these services. Municipal child care fee subsidies make affordable child care opportunities available to eligible low-income Londoners and social assistance participants. These supports promote families' ability to take part in employment and educational activities and promote healthy child development. Annual child care planning allows the municipality to engage the community in changing needs in the local child care system.

As a result of the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement signed between the Federal and Provincial governments in 2005, municipalities in Ontario have been responsible for increased leadership roles in planning and delivery related to early learning. This has included working with community stakeholders to develop local implementation plans related to Ontario's Best Start initiative. London's Best Start plan was submitted in January, 2006.

The City of London also allocates funding to local children's service providers under the Children's Services Fund. \$162,500 in 100% municipal funding and another \$162,500 available through the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) reinvestment are available in 2006 for eligible community projects that respond to local children's needs.

Further details regarding child care and early learning policies and the role of the City of London in responding to them will be outlined in a subsequent City of London policy paper on social inclusion.

3. Recreation, leisure and cultural opportunities

Extensive research has identified the social, emotional, and cognitive benefits of participating in recreation, leisure, and cultural activities (Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario, 1992). These opportunities not only benefit the individual and family, but also build strong communities, promote integration, and create a source of community pride.

Access to recreation, leisure and culture are especially important for at-risk populations, such as low-income children. For example, work from McMaster University in Hamilton (1998) demonstrated that children who participate in organized recreation tend to have higher self-esteem, enhanced relationships with friends, and stronger school performance. Similar benefits are proven for other populations including seniors and newcomers. Affordability is a significant barrier for many vulnerable populations to take part in these activities.

The Municipal Role in Recreation, Leisure and Cultural Opportunities

The City of London Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan (2003) outlines a framework for the wide range of parks and recreation programs and services delivered by the municipality. One of the supports available through the municipality to ensure that municipal recreation and leisure programs are available to all Londoners is the City's recreation subsidy policy. In addition, the City's system of bike paths, trails, and parks provide no cost opportunities for all Londoners to be physically active.

Beyond recreation opportunities, London's Creative City Task Force Report (2005) and Community Vitality framework (2005) also highlight the need for increased access to arts and cultural experiences for all Londoners. One of the Creative City's strategic goals is that "London broadens public access to the excellence and diversity of our local arts sector, and aggressively



promotes policies to attract and retain the creative class" (p. 29). The implementation of the Task Force Report will enhance existing municipal investments in local arts initiatives, festivals and other cultural events in our community.

Further details regarding recreation, leisure, and culture policies as they relate to social inclusion and the role of the City of London in responding to them will be outlined in a subsequent City of London policy paper on social inclusion.

Community and Neighborhood Capacity Building

By building increased community and neighborhood capacity, all Londoners have enhanced opportunities and places for social interaction. When services and supports are available at the neighborhood level, we promote social inclusion and provide Londoners with ways to engage with others in a location that may be more comfortable or acceptable to them. Best practices also suggest that services related to the safety net, such as accessing basic needs supports like emergency food programs, are also better delivered at the neighborhood level.

Municipalities support community development when staff work with community members, service providers, and grassroots organizations. Municipalities are well positioned to facilitate processes that identify local strengths, issues, and resources in response to issues facing neighborhoods (i.e., according to geography) or communities of interest (i.e., ethno-cultural groups).

The Municipal Role in Capacity Building

Community development is an important municipal role outlined in the City of London's Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan (2003). According to the Master Plan, community development efforts work to help or enable communities to help themselves and one another.

One of the key strategic directions of the Master Plan is "to build on the existing community development framework and take it to a higher level" (Consultants' letter of introduction, p. 2). This included the need for a city-wide, coordinated framework designed to identify the overall capacities, needs, and progress of London's communities. In response, staff recommended a community development framework that defines a city-wide, coordinated framework designed to identify the overall capacities, needs, and progress of London's neighborhoods.

The Council-approved community development framework provides the basis for engaging Londoners at the neighborhood level to build on their capacities and increase their quality of life through community development.

Further details about the activities and progress of the community development framework will be reported regularly to the Community and Protective Services Committee. Details about municipal funding investments in community organizations and initiatives are reported regularly as part of the annual budget process and in additional reports to the Community and Protective Services Committee as appropriate.



Implementing the Social Policy Framework

Implementation of the City of London social policy framework will involve a number of opportunities for the municipality to play a leadership role in social issues. However, there are significant opportunities for other levels of government, the private sector, and the voluntary sector to support social policy work in our community. In fact, such partnerships will be critical to the success of implementing the social policy framework.

The City of London Role

The role of the City of London in implementing the municipal social policy framework should include the following activities:

- Working with the community (including Londoners, service providers, grassroots organizations, and the private sector) to provide regular and meaningful input into social needs and priorities in London;
- Continuing to establish creative and responsive community partnerships to respond to local social issues and to build capacity across volunteers, service providers, and the private sector;
- Advocating to senior levels of government to support policies and investments that promote the best interests of individuals and families;
- Making strategic municipal financial investments in key social areas that promote the quality of life of Londoners;
- Promoting London as a key destination for individuals and families as a place to call home; and
- Using data to measure and track the progress of our community related to social issues and quality of life, reporting these outcomes to community stakeholders, and engaging stakeholders in evaluating and adjusting identified needs and responses.

The Role of Provincial and Federal Governments

Senior levels of government play a significant role in establishing social policies - primarily those related to income security. For example, minimum wage and social assistance rates are established by the Province, while policies related to Employment Insurance and taxation are set by the Federal government. At the same time, partnerships between the Provincial and Federal governments have an increasingly important social policy role: in the past year alone, the Canada-Ontario Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA), the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement, and the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement have represented key economic and social policy opportunities.

At the local level, municipalities typically have the most at stake from the introduction of these policies. Municipalities have a clear opportunity for advocacy to ensure that such policies are best reflective of the needs of their residents, have adequate resources for successful implementation, and are complementary across all levels of government.



The Role of London's Voluntary Sector

Within communities, the voluntary sector is a critical partner in the social policy arena. The voluntary sector includes volunteers, grassroots organizations, not-for-profit service providers, as well as umbrella networks and organizations including the United Way of London and Middlesex and the Pillar Voluntary Sector Network.

London's voluntary sector is well versed in understanding and advocating for the needs of our community, especially for their program participants and neighborhoods. In addition, this sector can often bring unique resources and expertise to address local social issues. At present, however, community service providers are struggling to deliver services to increased volumes of clients with more complex needs. The environment for these organizations is one challenged by the need for core funding and a decline in the number of volunteers (CCSD, 2004; FCM QOLRS, 2005).

The Role of London's Private Sector

Private sector involvement is pivotal to the implementation of the social policy framework. If social policy is intended to promote the quality of life and well-being of Londoners, the private sector has key leadership roles in engaging new business to our community and in attracting and retaining the best and brightest employees to make London their home.

The work of London's Pillar Voluntary Sector Network (2004) has been valuable in articulating the need for London's private sector to work with government and the voluntary sector to successfully respond to community issues. With recognition of how social issues impact the corporate bottom-line, and with increasing attention to the concept of "corporate social responsibility," the private sector role can move beyond simply contributing financial resources to social issues. Elements of social responsibility include community outreach and volunteerism, employee relations, creating and maintaining employment, environmental stewardship, and financial performance.

Engaging Stakeholders in the Implementation of the Social Policy Framework

While each of the "three pillars" - public, private, and voluntary sectors - have clear roles in the success of local efforts to identify and respond to social issues, one of the notable gaps in our community is the absence of a coordinated community body that guides this work. While other communities across the country may have social planning councils or similar mechanisms that work to address broader social issues (such as poverty or quality of life) in a more coordinated way, this does not exist in London.

It is important to recognize the significant efforts of a number of service provider networks and coordinating groups that are operating in London to address specific social issues. These groups include, but are not limited to, the:

- London Homeless Coalition;
- London Mental Health Alliance;
- Hunger Relief Action Coalition;
- Early Years Council;
- Employment Sector Council of London and Middlesex; and



- Standing committees of the City of London including the Early Years Advisory Committee, the London Housing Advisory Committee, the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and the London Diversity and Race Relations Advisory Committee.

In addition to the advocacy efforts of individual organizations, organizations such as the United Way of London and Middlesex and the Pillar Voluntary Sector Network also work on behalf of a number of community service providers in the not-for-profit sector.

The municipal social policy framework introduces an opportunity to re-explore the creation of a Social Planning Council for London. Specifically, the framework can guide a more formalized role for community stakeholders to inform and advise the City of London related to important social issues at the local level, and for the community to adopt responses to social issues.

Next Steps

The issues outlined in London's social policy framework are complex and intersecting. The framework offers a comprehensive way of thinking about and responding to social issues in a way that makes our community an inclusive and vibrant place to live. As such, the social policy framework provides the City of London with an unprecedented opportunity to lead and engage the community related to quality of life for all Londoners. A Social Planning Council would provide a formal mechanism to support these efforts. This work will significantly advance our strategic goal of positioning London among the top rank of Canadian municipalities.

In order to fully advise Municipal Council and the community on the unique issues outlined within the policy framework, staff will prepare a series of policy papers on the safety net and social inclusion. These policy papers will include: income security, the continuum of housing, food security, and social inclusion (including employment and skill development, child care and early learning, and recreation, leisure, and cultural opportunities). Council will also receive regular reports on the progress of the City's community development framework and other related activities, as appropriate.

As part of the implementation of the social policy framework, ongoing partnership with community stakeholders identified in the framework will be a focal activity. This will include work related to exploring the formation of a Social Planning Council in London.

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OVERVIEW OF KEY REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS USED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

REPORT	BACKGROUND	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS/ POLICY ISSUES
<p>London Coalition for Social Justice (LCSJ)</p>	<p>At its meeting on October 17, 2005, the Community and Protective Services Committee (CPSC) heard a delegation from members of the LCSJ. The delegation requested that the City of London advise the Province as to a number of issues regarding Ontario Works and supports for the working poor in London.</p> <p>http://council.london.ca/Community%20and%20Protective%20Services%20Reports/2005-10-17%20Report/1item%208.pdf</p>	<p>Continue to call on the Province of Ontario to assume 100% of Social Welfare and Social Housing costs</p>
		<p>Increase social assistance rates</p>
		<p>Increase the minimum wage to \$10 an hour</p>
		<p>Expedite the creation of more safe affordable housing</p>
		<p>End the National Child Benefit Supplement clawback</p>
<p>TD Economics Report/ Task Force on Modernizing Income Security for Working Age Adults (MISWAA)</p>	<p>"From Welfare to Work in Ontario: Still the Road Less Travelled" (September, 2005).</p> <p>TD is a member of the Task Force on Modernizing Income Security for Working Age Adults (MISWAA). This report was written as a background study to assist the Task Force with the work it is doing to develop policy recommendations for the transformation of Ontario Works (OW).</p> <p>Access the report at: http://www.td.com/economics/special/welfare05.jsp</p>	<p>Increase the asset limits allowable for welfare recipients</p>
		<p>Introduce a working income supplement and refundable tax credit for low-income adults</p>
		<p>Complete the National Child Benefit (NCB) initiative</p>
		<p>Employment Insurance (EI) reform</p>

REPORT	BACKGROUND	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS/ POLICY ISSUES
<p>Make Poverty History</p>	<p>www.makepovertyhistory.ca</p>	<p>Raise the annual Canada Child Tax Benefit to \$4,900 per child</p>
		<p>End provincial claw-back for families on welfare</p>
		<p>Deliver a universal system of quality, affordable and inclusive early learning and child care</p>
		<p>Build 25,000 new affordable housing units per year over the next five years</p>
		<p>Take action on the creation of good jobs with living wages</p>
<p>Campaign 2000</p>	<p><i>Pathways to Progress: Structural Solutions to Address Child Poverty</i> (May, 2004) http://www.campaign2000.ca/res/discussions/PathwaysENG.pdf</p> <p>In 1989, the House of Commons unanimously resolved to eliminate poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000.</p>	<p>Increase availability of good jobs at living wages, raise minimum wages, and provide better protection through EI</p>
		<p>Create an effective child benefit system that provides enough income support to keep working parents, including single parents, out of poverty that is not clawed back from social assistance recipients</p>
		<p>Build a universally accessible system of quality early childhood education and care to support optimal early development of children and to enable parents to work or receive training</p>
		<p>Expand affordable housing significantly to end adult and family homelessness and enable parents to raise their children in healthy community environments</p>
<p>Renew the national social safety net through the new Canada Social Transfer, with increased federal funding and improved accountability for provincially delivered social services, including social assistance</p>		



REPORT	BACKGROUND	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS/ POLICY ISSUES
<p>Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN)</p>	<p><i>Lifting the Boats: Policies to Make Work Pay</i> (June, 2005). http://www.cprn.org/en/doc.cfm?doc=1255</p>	Higher minimum wages (\$9/hour)
		Working income supplement (\$200-\$250/month)
		Public drug coverage and basic dental care
		Affordable child care
		Renewed investment in affordable housing
		Improved access to Employment Insurance (EI) benefits
		Better access to learning opportunities
		Removing or reducing asset-based clawbacks in government programs
		Encourage firms to voluntarily embrace decent pay and working conditions for their employees
<p>Review of Employment Assistance Programs in Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program (Deb Matthews' Report)</p>	<p>December, 2004 http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/NR/MCFCS/OW/Report/EmploymentAssistanceProgram.pdf The City of London and local community service providers participated in consultations with Ms. Matthews in 2004 that informed the development of the report.</p>	Understand and respond to caseload diversity
		Eliminate barriers and disincentives to work
		Provide the range of tools that people need to get to work
		Simplify program rules and streamline administration
		Eliminate punitive rules that act as disincentives to economic independence
		Change attitudes about social assistance recipients
		Improve relationships with employers,

REPORT	BACKGROUND	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS/ POLICY ISSUES
		<p>partners, other Ministries, and other levels of government</p> <p>Evaluate programs and policies</p>
<p>Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA)</p>	<p>"Investing in Economic Security Makes Sense for Building Healthy Communities"</p> <p>www.omssa.com</p>	<p>Simplify the structure and administration of the adult benefit for Ontario Works</p> <p>Improved measures to sustain people in work</p> <p>Introducing an income tax-based earned income supplement</p> <p>Strengthening the employment focus of the OW program</p> <p>Meeting the labour force needs of employers</p> <p>Creating a separate child benefit program using the NCB as the foundation</p> <p>Creating a supplementary health benefit program</p> <p>Reforming the EI program so that it can be accessed by self employed and temporarily employed</p>
<p>Social Determinants of Health</p>	<p>Raphael, D. (Ed)., (2004). <u>Social Determinants of Health: Canadian Perspectives</u>. Canadian Scholars' Press, Ltd.</p>	<p>Social determinants of health are the socio-economic conditions that influence the health of individuals, communities and jurisdictions as a whole. These determinants also establish the extent to which a person possesses the physical, social and personal resources to identify and achieve personal aspirations, satisfy needs and cope with the environment.</p>

REPORT	BACKGROUND	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS/ POLICY ISSUES
		<p>Health of individuals and families is impacted by a series of social issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal status ▪ Early life experiences ▪ Education ▪ Employment and working conditions ▪ Food security ▪ Health care services ▪ Housing ▪ Income and its distribution ▪ Social safety net ▪ Social exclusion ▪ Unemployment and employment security