
Report of the Acting Commissioner of Community and Health Services
**Update on Implementation of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
for York Region 2022 to 2026**

1. Recommendations

1. The Regional Chair write letters to:
 - a. The Solicitor General of Ontario requesting dedicated provincial funding to support implementation of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for York Region.
 - b. The federal Minister of Public Safety requesting dedicated federal funding to support Community Safety and Well-Being Plan initiatives.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report for information to Clerks of local municipalities, York Regional Police Service Board and the Human Services Planning Board of York Region.

2. Purpose

To provide an update on progress and outcomes of the second year of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for York Region 2022 to 2026 (Plan).

Key Points:

- Under the [Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019](#), York Region is required to develop a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and report on progress
- In [June 2018](#), Council designated the [Human Services Planning Board of York Region](#) to advise on the Plan's development

- Community Action Tables established in 2021 are having a positive impact in each of four focus areas: northern Georgina, central Newmarket, south-central Richmond Hill and south-central Markham
- Council approved a place-based Plan in [May 2022](#), which identifies 122 local actions across the four focus areas to address priority risks
- 116 or 95% of actions are projected to be completed or underway by the end of 2024
- Federal funding further enhances the work of the Community Action Tables with six social development, prevention and risk intervention initiatives
- Implementation of the Plan is supported in part by external, time-limited funding
- Staff have begun efforts to refresh the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan in 2026

3. Background

Council approved the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan in 2022

Under the [Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019](#), municipalities are required to develop and implement a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan that enhances safety by focusing on well-being. This provincial framework focuses on upstream social development and reducing risks through prevention and risk intervention initiatives, which can reduce reliance on emergency responses.

In [June 2018](#), Council designated the [Human Services Planning Board of York Region](#) to advise on the Plan's development. In [May 2021](#), four communities were approved by Council as focus areas for the Plan: northern Georgina, central Newmarket, south-central Richmond Hill and south-central Markham. Council approved York Region's first [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan](#) in May 2022.

The Human Services Planning Board continues to advise on the Plan's implementation.

Community Action Tables were established in 2021 and are implementing local action plans

In [May 2021](#), Council also approved establishing a Community Action Table for each of the four focus areas. Community Action Tables proactively address local priority risks. Each table includes representatives from local municipalities, York Regional Police (YRP), school boards, service providers, grassroots agencies and resident leaders.

Launched in fall 2021, each Community Action Table developed a local action plan to address top priority risks: mental well-being and housing stability in central Newmarket, south-central

Richmond Hill and south-central Markham; and mental well-being and economic stability in northern Georgina.

A total of 122 actions from the four local action plans were included in the first iteration of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, approved by Council in May 2022.

York Region receives external funding to support Plan implementation

A time-limited Community Safety and Policing Grant for \$750,000 (2022 to 2025) was secured in collaboration with YRP to support the Region's capacity to implement and manage the plan effectively.

Through Public Safety Canada's Building Safer Communities Fund, York Region receives \$7.3 million over four years (2022 to 2026) to support initiatives aimed at reducing underlying risk factors that lead to gun and gang prevalence. Six initiatives (Attachment 1) have been developed to enhance implementation of the Plan through the Community Action Tables.

United Way Greater Toronto contributed \$140,000 in 2023 and 2024, providing Quick Action Grants for Community Action Tables to allocate to grassroots, resident and agency-led initiatives.

4. Analysis

Community Action Tables continue to serve as important points of community mobilization

The Community Action Tables continue to provide the infrastructure to enhance community capacity to identify and respond locally to challenges that impact safety and well-being. An important measure of this progress is resident and community partner engagement to implement the local actions. Currently, 281 residents and community partners participate as members across the four Tables. In 2023, 59% (72 of 122) of local actions were completed or in progress, and by the end of 2024 95% (116 of 122) of local actions are projected to be completed or in progress.

Since 2022, 39,207 residents were engaged through the Community Action Tables. Some examples of local actions and community engagement in the four focus areas include:

- **Central Newmarket:** To address mental well-being and support after-school engagement, partnered with JumpStart and Boys and Girls Club to offer a four-week subsidized sports camp for youth aged 6-15 at JLR Bell Public School, attracting around 30 participants weekly
- **Northern Georgina:** To find more accessible spaces for communities, created a Garden of Inclusion at The Link in Sutton with various partners. This project engages residents

to improve physical and mental health, grow food, and build friendships. The launch had over 50 attendees, with six residents in leadership roles

- **South-Central Richmond Hill:** To address mental well-being by making services more culturally relevant and accessible, organized regular service awareness and resource events, and outreach tables in schools and cultural festivals, engaging 179 residents
- **South-Central Markham:** To support resident navigation of services, partnered with 211, Access York, Alzheimer's Society York Region, ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency, York Region Centre for Community Safety and Milliken Wesleyan Methodist Church. Community ambassadors help with housing and mental health resources, enhanced by workshops attracting 178 residents on civic engagement and advocacy in collaboration with Institute for Change Leaders, and engaging 33 partner organizations.

Details regarding progress on Community Action Tables actions are provided in Attachment 1.

Collaboration with York Regional Police and community partners is showing promise in reducing potentially serious incidents

York Region and YRP continue to collaborate across a number of projects:

- YRP officers participate on each of the four Community Action Tables and Children, Youth and Families Situation Tables
- Children, Youth and Families Situation Tables are co-chaired by York Region and YRP
- YRP provides real-time data to identify locations where services such as the [Mobile Youth Hub](#) are needed most
- YRP works with York Region to determine whether a serious incident in the community is considered traumatic, activating the [Traumatic Incident Response Protocol](#)
- York Region and YRP co-facilitate presentations and events, including a Youth Summit in Georgina, in March 2024 which attracted about 100 youth who shared their views on community safety and well-being through creative engagement activities

YRP and York Region collaborate with community partners through Children, Youth, and Families Situation Tables in each focus area. These tables include 42 community organizations working collaboratively to resolve situations of acutely elevated risk (defined as imminent risk of crime, harm or victimization). Since January 2023, 546 situations involving 1,195 individuals were brought forward to the tables. In 78% of situations, collaboration among partners resulted in reductions of acutely elevated risk. YRP reported a 65% decrease in calls for service comparing six months before and after a situation was brought to a Children, Youth, and Families Situation Table.

The Building Safer Communities Fund has enhanced opportunities for social development, prevention and risk intervention

The six projects supported by the Building Safer Communities Fund (Attachment 1) enhance the work of Community Action Tables, creating additional opportunities for social development, prevention and risk intervention. Federal funding for these initiatives is time-limited and will expire in March 2026, with a reduced amount available in the final year. Community organizations delivering these projects across the four focus areas are secured through March 2025. The Building Safer Communities Fund is administered following Council's authorization in [October 2021](#) to direct external funding through the Community Investment Fund.

The latest project, Traumatic Incident Response Protocol, supports timely, coordinated responses to communities impacted by traumatic events such as shootings, stabbings, hate-motivated crimes, or school-related violence. The protocol was first activated in Keswick in September 2024 following a double homicide. With York Region and YRP, Routes Connecting Communities coordinated a community healing event at Bayview Park to facilitate community conversations and share resources.

8,374 individuals have been served by the six Building Safer Communities Fund projects since these launched in early 2023.

As implementation of the current Plan continues, staff aim to update the Plan and address sustainability of initiatives

York Region is preparing for the next term of the Plan by considering new trends influencing safety and well-being (YRP crime statistics, 2024 Spring Pulse Community Opinion poll results), updated social determinants of health data, community feedback, and input to maximize impact of current initiatives, inform evaluation and potential future direction of the Plan.

Regional staff continue to socialize key initiatives and aspects of the current Plan at events such as the 2024 Safety of Our Cities Conference and 2024 Ontario Municipal Social Services Association conference. Staff are collaborating with funders to extend support and build a sustainability network while advocating for policy change and increased investments based on local learnings.

The Plan supports the Healthy Communities priority of the 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan and York Region's Vision of strong, caring and safe communities

The Plan aligns with the Support Community Well-Being priority of the [2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan](#), which focuses on the livability, health, safety and social well-being of our communities. It also supports Council's [Vision](#) of strong, safe, caring communities by developing strategies to help mitigate risks and improve the overall well-being of communities.

5. Financial Considerations

This report does not present current financial changes to the Region's budget or fiscal position.

Despite a provincial mandate for the Plan, the Province does not provide dedicated funding to support the Plan. Regional Council has allocated approximately \$0.45M through 2024 budget approval to support the Plan's implementation, and this was included in the proposed 2025 Community and Health Services department budget. Community agencies also received funding from the Community Investment Fund to lead the Community Action Tables. An update on Community Investment Fund will be provided to Council in December 2024.

To date, \$7.3M has been allocated from Public Safety Canada's Building Safer Communities Fund for the first iteration of the Plan (2022 to 2026, expiring in March 2026). Public Safety Canada has indicated that the Building Safer Communities Fund will not continue past March 2026. A Community Safety and Policing Grant for \$0.75M (2022 to 2025, expiring March 2025) was secured in collaboration with YRP to support staffing. YRP and staff are monitoring renewal of this provincial grant in early 2025.

This report recommends the Regional Chair advocate to senior levels of government for sustained support to implement Plan initiatives. Any additional resources that may be needed will be identified as part of future budget processes.

6. Local Impact

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is making a real difference in York Region fostering proactive and community-driven actions to address priority risks. Through Community Action Tables and various events, many residents and community partners have been engaged. The initiatives funded by the Building Safer Communities Fund have successfully contributed to reduced risks and improved safety, decreasing emergency calls for service. These efforts collectively enhance public safety, increase access to services, and support the well-being of residents.

The Region continues to work closely with YRP, focus area mayors and local councillors, local municipal staff, United Way Greater Toronto, other community partners, and residents to learn more about risks and priorities, leverage resources, and collaborate on implementing actions under the Plan. The partners will be consulted further to inform the future direction of the Plan.

7. Conclusion

The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan continues to serve as a mobilizing force for stronger, caring, safer communities. Community Action Tables in four focus areas are actively implementing local actions to improve access to timely supports addressing priority risks. This work is further enhanced by six federally funded projects focused on social development, prevention and risk intervention. Emerging evidence suggests these upstream interventions

may be mitigating serious downstream incidents. As current funding is time-limited, sustainability will be a key consideration when updating the Plan in 2026.

For more information on this report, please contact Mary Boushel, Director, Strategies and Partnerships at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 78389. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



Recommended by:

Lisa Gonsalves

Acting Commissioner of Community and Health Services



Approved for Submission:

Erin Mahoney

Chief Administrative Officer

November 19, 2024

#16389378

Attachment 1 – Community Safety and Well-Being Plan 2022-2026 Update