



## WECOSS Project Proposal – Enforcement and Justice

**Project Name: Strengthening Community Safety and Well-Being**

### **Background & Purpose**

*Provide context for what conditions exist that have created the need for this project. Why is the project being undertaken? Describe an opportunity or problem that the project will address.*

In 2024, the Substance Supports in Neighbourhoods Accessed through Police Partnerships (SSNAPP) team released a set of [neighbourhood safety plans](#) targeted to high-risk areas for opioid overdose in the City of Windsor, including the N9A, N8X, N8Y, and N8W postal code areas. The safety plans were informed through community engagement with organizations, businesses, and residents in the target neighbourhoods and provide guidance to support community members in responding to various scenarios, such as mental health and substance use crises, conflicts, discrimination/racism, housing issues, and other situations. Anti-stigma messaging with stories of lived experience were also incorporated to support neighbours in addressing situations with compassion, openness, and respect.

To promote the launch of the initiative, in late 2024, the safety plans were distributed to BIAs, City Councillors, the WECOSS membership, and direct to impacted settings (e.g., businesses) in the target neighbourhoods. Mass marketing also occurred through a media launch, social media, and transit advertisements. As of November 20<sup>th</sup> of 2024, the safety plans have been downloaded online over 1,000 times and feedback has been received from 22 residents through the online evaluation (SSNAPP, 2024). Early evaluation results suggest that in addition to distribution, further engagement with the target neighbourhoods would be beneficial to ensure that safety plan strategies are well-understood by community members and can be practically integrated into their lives. Expansion of the plans to other neighbourhoods has also been cited by residents as an area to improve for the future.

In consultation with SSNAPP partner agencies, it has been discussed that locally-resourced efforts can help to support continuity and sustainability of this work following the completion of the SSNAPP grant in March of 2025 and until further grants are pursued. This will help to ensure that the safety plans are implemented as intended, achieve the desired impacts, and are extended equally to other high-risk areas for opioid harms. As highlighted through the community consultation phase of the safety plan project, ongoing action and engagement with the community is critical to demonstrate commitment to this work and to continue to advance the goal of enhancing community safety (SSNAPP, 2024). Priority groups/areas that have been identified for additional engagement around the safety plans in 2025 are as follows:

- **Community Housing Units** – An opportunity to partner with the Windsor-Essex Community Housing Corporation in 2025 has emerged to bring additional training and supportive strategies to community housing that can assist residents/staff in adopting existing safety plan strategies for Windsor neighbourhoods. Community housing has been identified as an ideal setting to reach high-risk residents and staff who support them with training and preventative services, as demonstrated through successful

response efforts coordinated at Glengarry housing in 2024 (e.g., Glengarry Community Care Fair, Community Overdose Prevention Training Event).

- **High-Risk Areas in Essex-County** – From 2020-2023, locally-available data demonstrates that the Municipality of Leamington (N8H postal code area) also continues to be impacted by opioid overdose deaths (WECHU, 2024), observing 11-20 deaths over these years. As per consultation with WECOSS partners, there are gaps in available supports for Leamington residents to respond to substance use issues occurring in their area, being distant from many of the supports and services located in the City. The WECOSS Enforcement and Justice Working Group (EJWG) is well-positioned to support safety plan expansion efforts to areas in Essex-County, being a key partner of SSNAPP since the project’s inception and given that SSNAPP’s projects are focused to the City of Windsor.

As a result, the WECOSS EJWG project for 2025 will focus on supporting implementation of existing safety plans within community housing units located in target neighbourhoods across Windsor and developing a tailored safety plan targeted to the Leamington area. These activities will continue to be implemented in partnership with SSNAPP partner agencies, including the Windsor Police Service, the City of Windsor, and the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit.

### Goals & Objectives

*What goal(s) does the project aim to accomplish? List the achievements/objectives that can be attained/met along the way to your goal.*

- Strengthen community safety and well-being across Windsor-Essex County.
- Address opioid and substance use-related crime across Windsor-Essex County.

### Strategic Alignment

*Which Modernization Recommendation(s) does this work support?*

- **Priority # 6:** Build a shared understanding of community safety and well-being by strengthening public safety and public health partnerships that support vulnerable and marginalized populations.

### Target Audience

*Who will realize the benefits of the project (e.g., people who use drugs, service providers, etc.)? In other words, whose needs will be met from the project meeting its pre-defined goal(s)?*

- Community housing residents/staff in the safety plan target areas across the City of Windsor (N9A, N8W, N8Y, N8X)
- Residents living in Leamington

## Project Activities

*What activities or deliverables are within scope for this project?*

1. Collaborate with partners to identify community housing units to target within safety plan areas in Windsor for additional training and implementation support.
2. Develop and deliver training and support strategies to community housing based on identified needs for units.
3. Engage and gather endorsement from key stakeholders to develop a neighbourhood safety plan targeted to the Leamington area (e.g., Municipality of Leamington, OPP).
4. Develop and distribute a neighbourhood safety plan for Leamington based on area needs.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of safety plan engagement and expansion activities in meeting project goals.

## References:

- Substance Supports in Neighbourhoods Accessed through Police Partnerships (SSNAPP). (2024). Neighbourhood Safety Plans Presentation – WECOSS-LC Meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024.*
- Substance Supports in Neighbourhoods Accessed through Police Partnerships (SSNAPP). (2024). SSNAPP Neighbourhood Safety Plans Feedback Summary Report – As of November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.*
- Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU). (2024). Opioid Surveillance Dashboard for Windsor and Essex County. Accessed on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Retrieved from <https://wecoss.ca/statistics>.*
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