

Legal Centre News

Making a Difference in the Community Since 1989

Volume 52

Fall 2018

****SPECIAL EDITION****

The Legal Centre is proud to release the Fall 2018 edition of Legal Centre News. This Special Edition contains eight backgrounders on social issues that will be discussed by the community and Municipal and School Board election candidates on October 2, 2018.

The Legal Centre and community partners invite you to...

PETERBOROUGH CITY & COUNTY

MUNICIPAL

ALL CANDIDATES

ROUND TABLE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

OCTOBER 2ND, 2018

6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.

PETERBOROUGH SQUARE,

LOWER LEVEL

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The purpose of the meeting is:

- ⇒ To provide an opportunity for members of the public to discuss a variety of social issues with City and County candidates for mayor, councillor, and School Board trustees.
- ⇒ To capture key ideas, issues and recommendations from the round-table discussions and share them with the candidates and the public.

Event Sponsors:

Council of Canadians, Health Care Providers Against Poverty, Ontario Public Interest Research Group Peterborough, Peterborough Community Legal Centre, Peterborough District Labour Council, Peterborough Health Coalition, Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network, Peterborough Public Health, Peterborough Social Planning Council, Peterborough Workers' Action Centre, United Way of Peterborough, Youth Political Activist Coalition, and YWCA/Nourish.

Contact the Peterborough Community Legal Centre for information regarding data sources in this Newsletter Volume.

HOUSING SECURITY

BY PAUL ARMSTRONG AND MORGAN CARL

BACKGROUND

The cost of housing continues to consume a large proportion of household income in Peterborough. In lower income households this is of particular concern. A growing number of renter households in Peterborough overspend on housing, having too little money for living after they have paid their rent and other shelter costs. The impact is detrimental to health, especially when people can't afford to buy healthy food or necessary medications. Housing insecurity can have both psychological and physiological effects. Broader community economic implications also accompany our present affordability crisis.

Peterborough has been noted as having perhaps the worst renter affordability crisis of any Census Metropolitan Area in Canada. Coupled with that is a critically short supply of rental units and rent increases that surpass the inflation rate. In addition, relatively low incomes and growing poverty, as measured by the Low Income Measure, combine to create debilitating living conditions for a growing number of people in Peterborough.

QUICK FACTS

Housing Affordability Crisis – Peterborough CMA (City and 5 surrounding municipalities)

- ◆ 53.6% of renter households in the City of Peterborough and 52.5% in the Peterborough CMA spend more than 30% of their income for shelter costs.
- ◆ The vacancy rate in the City of Peterborough is around 1% - one of the lower vacancy rates among major Ontario centres.
- ◆ There is a severe lack of new purpose-built rental homes, or other new rental units.
- ◆ Rent increases in Peterborough average 2.8% per year, despite lower rent guideline amounts. This

is because rents on vacant units are not subject to the guideline amount.

- ◆ Rent increases outpace income increases and the consumer price index.
- ◆ Ontario Works and ODSP rates are inadequate to start, and minimal annual increases of 1.5% (fall 2018) or less in previous years do little to help.
- ◆ Social Housing is inadequate to meet the demand, with long waiting lists and wait times of years (not months or weeks). By December 2017 there were 1,642 names on the list, 179 more than in December 2016.
- ◆ Increases in all types of income are falling behind ownership and rental costs.
- ◆ The Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) program, (federal/provincial funding) provides only modest affordability relief to builders.
- ◆ Many people are unable to transition from renting to home ownership due to housing price inflation.
- ◆ Peterborough has one of the oldest housing stocks in Canada. Much of the rental housing stock in the downtown core of the city is in a serious state of disrepair, and plagued by maintenance and safety problems.
- ◆ Bedbug infestations are now a common problem in Peterborough rental units, and there are few community resources to help tenants deal with this problem.

MUNICIPAL OPTIONS TO SUPPORT HOUSING SECURITY

- ⇒ Create new rental units with federal/provincial funding.
- ⇒ Advocate with the Province to re-instate rent controls on vacant units.
- ⇒ Allocate municipal funds for the Housing Stability Fund (to help low income residents maintain their housing in times of crisis).
- ⇒ Fund additional rent supplements.

- ⇒ Require a certain percentage of affordable units in any new rental supply.
- ⇒ Include affordable ownership homes as mandatory in all new developments.
- ⇒ Include mixed housing types, including smaller, more affordable units, in new developments and existing neighbourhoods.
- ⇒ Incentivize the creation of auxiliary suites (such as basement apartments) with non-repayable monetary grants.
- ⇒ Promote the addition of supportive housing units.

- ⇒ Rigorously enforce the City of Peterborough's Property Standards bylaws.
- ⇒ Enforce provincial and municipal property standards throughout Peterborough County.
- ⇒ Establish a fund to help low income residents deal with bedbugs infestations; co-ordinate community resources on this issue.
- ⇒ Adopt a policy of “eviction as a last resort” in managing the social housing units in our community.

HOUSING SECURITY

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) How does the current housing crisis affect our local economy?
- 2) What are the social costs of the lack of housing affordability in our community?
- 3) What priority should be given to housing in municipal affairs? Explain why, and what should be done. Which of the above options, or others, should be implemented?

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

BY PETERBOROUGH AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL AND THE UNITED WAY OF PETERBOROUGH

Record low unemployment and employment law changes through Bill 148 have made work issues front of mind over the past year.

Research shows that workers in stable and secure employment are more likely to report positive physical and mental health. Stable and secure employment is described as: working for one employer for at least 30 hours per week, with benefits, and being likely to be employed with that same employer in a year's time.

Workers who enjoy employment stability and financial security have more opportunities to engage with their children, their families and their communities.

Did You Know?

According to current research being done by the Peterborough Precarious Employment Research Initiative (PERI):

- ◆ 62% of the workers surveyed fell in the precarious and vulnerable employment categories which was best described as unstable and inse-

cure employment. The instability and insecurity is most related to unpredictable income levels.

- ◆ Workers under the age of 35 and over the age of 55 were more likely to experience precarious or vulnerable employment (64% respectively). Almost all (90%) of the workers earning less than \$30,000/year were in precarious (61%) or vulnerable (29%) employment. Both men and women are experiencing precarious work to the same degree.
- ◆ Precarious and vulnerable employment was found in all work sectors but most notably in the manufacturing, construction, trades and transportation sector (65%) and the service sector (64%).
- ◆ Union membership was far more likely among workers in stable and secure employment, making union affiliation a protective factor in a worker's employment.
- ◆ The level of education held by workers was a good match to the education level needed for their work. Additional training and professional development were more likely to be the responsibility of the worker when workers were in precarious and vulnerable employment.
- ◆ 45% of workers did not receive any employee benefits (e.g., drug plan, vision, dental, life insurance) and 45% also did not have any retirement plan (employer or RRSP).

General Employment Stats

- ◆ The unemployment rate in Peterborough has fluctuated a great deal over the past 10 years, from a high of 11.5% in August and September 2011 to a low of 2.7% in May and June of this year. The last time the unemployment rate was that low was back in 2003. The average unemployment rate for the first seven months of 2018 is 3.8%.
- ◆ The participation rate is the percentage of residents in an area who are working or actively looking for work. Over the past ten years in Peterborough, the lowest participation rate was in March 2013 at 53%, and the highest participation rate was in July 2008 (70%). In the first eight months of 2018, the participation rate averaged 61%.
- ◆ Currently, minimum wage is \$14/hour and Bill 148 would have included an increase to \$15/hour in January 2019. Given the new government, the

future of these changes is unknown.

- ◆ In 2016, the Peterborough Social Planning Council updated its 2012 Living Wage report and declared that for a family of two adults and two children, "each of those parents needs to earn \$17.65 per hour, while working 37.5 hours per week, in order to afford the basics in this city."
- ◆ In 2017, 20% of individuals in Peterborough receiving Ontario Works (OW) also had employment earnings. The Ontario rate is 13%.
- ◆ In 2017, 26% of Peterborough residents who were receiving OW income support left OW due to employment. Not every client who withdraws from OW reports the reason for their exit, and there likely are more individuals leaving for employment than what is reported. However, it is important to note that the number of recipients remains approximately the same year to year.
- ◆ In 2017, approximately 10% of individuals receiving income from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) also earned employment income.

Some things a municipality can do to support decent work:

- ⇒ Be a living wage employer that, at a minimum, pays all employees the current living wage and, when contracting out is necessary, ensures those other businesses are also living wage employers.
- ⇒ Consider using Community Benefit Agreements (e.g., a negotiated agreement between the municipality and private contractor that includes provisions that benefit members of the community).
- ⇒ Adopt a social procurement process that ensures that when purchases are made, the social benefits of that purchase are included in addition to the fiscal considerations.
- ⇒ Ensure that municipal subsidy programs (especially for dental, vision and prescription drugs) are available to people who are precariously employed.
- ⇒ Ensure municipal program subsidies, already

available to low income families, are also available to families headed by precariously employed adults.

REFERENCES:

- i. The results of the research are being released through a series of InfoBriefs, the first three of which can be found here: www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/PERI.
- ii. Data obtained from Workforce Development Board, August 2018.
- iii. Data obtained from Workforce Development Board, August 2018.
- iv. Data obtained from City of Peterborough, Social Services, August 2018.
- v. Data obtained from City of Peterborough, Social Services, August 2018.

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) What can the municipality/school board do to lead the way in increasing stable and secure employment?
- 2) Assuming that precarious work (i.e., temporary, part-time, contract work) is here to stay, what actions should our municipal leaders take to improve the employment and working conditions of these most vulnerable workers, including young and older workers, students and new Canadians?
- 3) If the Ontario government follows through with its promise to roll back the gains made in *Bill 148: the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*, what can we do locally to protect workers from these losses (this includes municipal employees and employees of contractors with the municipality)?

INCOME SECURITY IN PETERBOROUGH

BY PETERBOROUGH HEALTH COALITION AND COUNCIL OF CANADIANS

Too many of our residents are living on very low income and cannot afford adequate housing, regular and nutritious food, or other necessities for a decent quality of life.

Did You Know?

- ◆ The social assistance increase implemented this fall was reduced from 3% to 1.5%, following 22 years of scant or nil annual increases.
- ◆ 15.3% of the residents in the Peterborough CMA are living on low incomes. This number is higher for the City alone where the prevalence of low income is 18.6%. The Low Income Measure (LIM) represents half of the median for all households. The LIM for Ontario in 2016 was \$1888 per month after taxes for a single adult. (See <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tb11/en/>

[tv.action?pid=1110023201](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tb11/en/tv.action?pid=1110023201))

- ◆ Social assistance levels are inadequate. In October 2018 an individual on Ontario Works receives up to a maximum of \$733 per month (\$8,796 annually), plus some additional G/HST credits/benefits of about \$80 per month. An individual on Ontario Disability Support Programs receives up to a maximum of \$1169 per month (\$14,028 annually), plus the additional G/HST credits/benefits, but with added expenses for their disability.
- ◆ The municipal share of Ontario Works benefits costs have been gradually uploaded to the province over the past several years, and as of 2019 the Province will be 100% responsible for these income support expenditures. This upload has resulted in millions of dollars an-

nually in savings to the City and County of Peterborough. The municipality continues to pay a share of the administrative costs of delivering the program.

- ◆ The Ontario Works program has complex rules and procedures relating to income and assets, and as a result overpayments are common. When this happens, recipients are told that their future monthly benefits will be reduced to recover the assessed overpayments that occurred in previous months. Reducing the monthly incomes of families who are already living well below the LIM imposes unnecessary hardship, and can throw a family into financial crisis. Peterborough Social Services staff has discretion to decide not to recover overpayments or reduce benefits, however this discretion is only very rarely exercised.
- ◆ In late 2017 a report titled, “Income Security: A Roadmap for Change” was released which included some encouraging assistance for those in deepest poverty. This report set out a 10-year roadmap and a number of the recommendations were to be rolled out in late 2018. However the new Provincial Government has “paused” implementation of recommendations in this report. They say that their own plan on how “to reform social assistance” will be released by November 8, 2018. (See <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-reform>)
- ◆ The January 1, 2018 increase of the minimum wage to \$14 was a welcome change. However, in 2016 the Peterborough Social Planning Council calculated a Living Wage then for two work-

ing adults with two dependent children to be \$17.65 per hour, with both adults working full-time at that wage. Unfortunately, employment is most often precarious, as job insecurity and part-time work have become increasingly common. In 2011 75% of Peterborough’s labour force worked full year, full time; whereas by 2016 this had declined to 49.8%. (*2018 Housing is Fundamental) (www.pspc.on.ca/peterboroughs-2016-living-wage-report)

- ◆ A federally pledged Housing Benefit will not be introduced, at the earliest, until 2020. It is unclear, at this time, how this benefit will work and the impact it will have on low income households in Peterborough.
- ◆ There are social and health impacts of continuous low income. Life expectancy is lower, mental health needs are higher, and diabetes rates are twice those in the higher income groups as nutritious food has become relatively unaffordable. Children growing up in low income families will carry the negative health effects as they age. (www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca)
- ◆ Municipalities can be partners in initiatives for Peterborough residents living on low incomes. An example is One City Peterborough, initiated by the DBIA and the Warming Room, to hire low income residents to work on improving the appearance of the downtown.

INCOME SECURITY

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) What can the municipality do to improve the low income status of our most vulnerable people (e.g. through discretionary benefits, fee subsidies, rent supplements, affordable transit, property tax relief, provincial advocacy etc.)?
- 2) What should our councillors and school trustees do to address the 1.5% reduction in the planned increases to social assistance on September 30th,

2018?

- 3) What should the municipality do, and what should individual councillors do, to develop employment opportunities and community engagement for the most vulnerable members of our community?
- 4) What further property tax relief or other help would you recommend for the seniors in our community living on low pension incomes?

HEALTHY GREEN COMMUNITIES: THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BY PETERBOROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH

Local governments play an important role in shaping the conditions where people live, learn, work and play, which in turn have a significant impact on their health. There is growing evidence that communities can be planned, designed and built to support important social determinants of health (such as access to secure housing, food and transportation) and to influence healthier lifestyles and behaviours. Healthy, complete, compact, 'green' and equitable neighbourhoods are key design principles for healthy communities.

Both the City of Peterborough and the County of Peterborough are now in the process of updating their Official Plans, which will guide community design and land use planning for many years into the future. Using a health lens to guide the development of Official Plans will allow Councillors to make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of their communities.

Did you know?

- ◆ Chronic disease is pervasive. Cardiovascular diseases, cancers and diseases of the respiratory system are the leading causes of illness and death in Peterborough.
- ◆ Low income residents are more vulnerable to health challenges than others. Low income residents have higher rates of chronic diseases and are more likely to die earlier than individuals

who are better off financially. Roughly 15% of the overall Peterborough population (or about 20,265 people) live in low income households.

- ◆ Over 40% of local residents report being inactive during their leisure time. Seventy-five percent of City and County residents describe walking as their most likely form of exercise in the last three months.
- ◆ 66% of Peterborough residents report a strong or somewhat strong sense of community belonging. People with a strong sense of community belonging are more likely to report having good physical and mental health.
- ◆ Healthy natural environments protect people from noise pollution, poor air quality, and extreme heat and weather events. Exposure to natural environments has physical, mental and social health benefits for people of all ages.
- ◆ The climate is changing – both globally and locally – due to greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere. Even if we reduce the GHGs emitted, current GHGs will still persist in the environment and continue to influence climate change and our quality of life. GHGs are naturally found in the environment, but human-caused GHGs are contributing increasingly large quantities as well. The greatest human-caused contributor is carbon diox-

ide (CO₂) created from the burning of fossil fuels such as gasoline, coal, oil, and natural gas.

Some things a municipality can do to support a healthy green community:

- ⇒ Encourage walkable communities, public plazas, parks and recreation facilities, meeting spaces, and mixed –use destinations for people to meet. These all promote a sense of community belonging and place, reduce social isolation and stress, support good physical and mental health and reduce the emission of GHGs.
- ⇒ Incorporate community design features like wide sidewalks, well-lit streets, and safe open spaces to stimulate higher rates of physical activity.

- ⇒ Adopt a “Complete Streets” approach which provides safe and comfortable access for pedestrians, bicycles, people with disabilities and motorists.
- ⇒ Set specific targets to preserve and enhance natural and green spaces, and ensure green spaces are accessible to a diversity of ages, income levels and abilities.
- ⇒ Involve community members in setting priorities and making land use planning decisions. Use public engagement processes which ensure timely, appropriate and inclusive community engagement.
- ⇒ Lead by example and convert City owned properties and vehicles to high efficiency and/or green energy sources.

HEALTHY GREEN COMMUNITIES

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) Healthy Community Design – What are the key strategies you would like to see used in developing more complete, compact and healthy communities in the City and County of Peterborough?
- 2) Active Transportation - What would make active transportation (walking and cycling) safer and more accessible to all ages (children, youth, seniors) and abilities in Peterborough City and County?
- 3) Healthy Natural Environments – What opportunities are there for municipalities to increase access to natural environments/green and blue spaces such as trails, parks, parkettes, green buildings etc.... for people of all ages, incomes and abilities? What are the greatest threats?
- 4) Climate Change – What can be done at the municipal level to reduce carbon emissions in our communities?

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

BY PETERBOROUGH SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Background

A 2012 twenty-year Comprehensive Transportation Plan will attempt to reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicles.

A Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiative between the City and County hopes to promote and facilitate walking, cycling, public transit, telecommuting and carpooling. TDM's goals include:

- ◆ reduce demand on road infrastructure
- ◆ increase travel efficiencies
- ◆ reduce carbon emissions
- ◆ improve air quality
- ◆ enhance a sense of community
- ◆ improve overall health

City Residents Change Travel Habits 2011-2016

	2011	2016
Share of trips made by active transportation	5.8%	10.2%
Use of personal cars	88.2%	83.7%
Use of public transit	3.7%	4.3%

In 2017, Peterborough Transit provided 4.1-million rides, a record in terms of serviced rides for the city. Public transit is particularly vital to low-income residents, those without cars, and seniors. An affordable transportation system is fundamental to social engagement in the community.

Fare Structure – Peterborough Transit

Adult single-use fare	\$2.50
Daily Pass	\$8.00
10-ride pass	\$22.00
30-day pass	\$60.00
Seniors and Children under 12 (30-day pass)	\$40.00
Student 30-day pass	\$55.00
OW & ODSP clients (30-day pass)	\$26.00

Public Transportation – what's new?

The Community Bus, which started in March 2018, is available to all residents and is designed to provide an additional transit option for people that normally use the Handi-Van or find using the regular bus challenging. The Community Bus has no stairs and seats up to 18 passengers, including two spots for wheelchairs. The service operates Monday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and on Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. The Community Bus route serves malls, grocery stores, seniors' homes, medical clinics and the hospital.

In May 2018 City council approved spending \$1.9 million on a list of upgrades to the transit system to make it a fully digital and automated system, including the implementation of a new GPS app for riders to know when their bus will be picking them up. There are 13 different items within the intelligent transportation system report. Further upgrades include computerized scheduling systems, traffic control upgrades at intersections to keep buses on schedule which will help make the services more efficient, and security cameras which will help make the services more secure for riders and operators.

In addition there is a twelve month service review underway and a land use study is looking at a new bus facility. The City may look at electric buses which would require new facilities for charging.

Selwyn Township has established a rural transportation service with a \$1,488,000 grant from the province's Community Transportation Grant program. The township is working with Curve Lake First Nation, Community Care Peterborough and city social services to develop plans for regular bus service between Bridgenorth, Curve Lake, Ennismore and Lakefield, starting in spring 2019. The routes will be planned to co-ordinate with the city's public transit system to create inter-regional connectivity – riders of the new service will be able to connect to the city and other townships as well as access GO or Greyhound transit services, for example.

**Municipal Public Transportation
Responsibilities**

- ◆ Parking (including parking passes for city parking facilities and parking enforcement)
- ◆ Traffic Operations (including the adult crossing guard program, traffic signals, signs and pavement markings)
- ◆ Transit subsidies (e.g. for seniors, youth and OW and ODSP recipients)
- ◆ Transportation Demand Management Planning (including strategies that result in more efficient use of transportation services)
- ◆ Transit and Handi-Van services
- ◆ Transportation Planning (including the Transportation Plan Review)

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) What needs to be done to ensure the Transportation Plan and the Transportation Demand Management initiatives for the City and County come to completion? What should be prioritized?
- 2) What can the municipality do to ensure public transit is made effective and affordable for all ages, abilities and income levels in Peterborough City and County?
- 3) What could be done to improve accessibility and use of public transit in the City and County?

EDUCATION

BY KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE TEACHER FEDERATIONS

Did you know?

◆ Ontario's education funding formula is based on a model introduced two decades ago that was designed to reduce overall expenditure for public schools. The Liberal government increased education funding while in office between 2003 and 2018 by introducing important initiatives such as primary class size caps and full-day Kindergarten. However, the problems of the 1998 funding model that haven't been adequately addressed include: funding for

English and French as second language programming; funding for basic school level facilities and services such as libraries, guidance, music, art and physical education; funding to support local priorities; and funding for school operations and maintenance. A recent research report documents a backlog in maintenance and repairs of school facilities amounting to \$15.9 billion.

◆ Frontline classroom educators continue to identify small classes as the most important

factor in their ability to work individually with students and meet their diverse needs. Smaller classes improve student behaviour and peer relationships and increase student engagement and achievement in the early grades. Investing in smaller classes will contribute to alleviating antisocial, aggressive behaviour that contributes to incidents of classroom violence.

- ◆ Kids need access to educational assistants, behavioural counsellors, child and youth workers, psychologists, and speech and language pathologists to help them learn and thrive.
- ◆ Teachers have consistently raised concerns about Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) tests. First administered in 1997, EQAO tests have negatively affected elementary classrooms by promoting an overly narrow focus on literacy and numeracy to the detriment of a more holistic program. These standardized tests fail to measure for more complex skills required for problem solving and innovation, lead to “teaching to the test”, demotivate students and are misused to rank schools. The tests and preparation for them consume considerable classroom time and create stress for students and their teachers.
- ◆ Ontario has a diverse population. Our school system should foster mutual understanding and social cohesion where students of all backgrounds learn together and see themselves in the faces of their teachers. The curriculum should be developed based on the whole population, not on the beliefs of one religion.

What Would Improve the Quality of Our Public Education System?

- ⇒ An independent, external review of Ontario’s education funding formula that will provide recommendations on what is required to update the formula so it reflects actual student needs.
- ⇒ Classroom size caps - cap grades 4 to 8 class size at 24 students, and Kindergarten at 26 students.
- ⇒ Introduce a weighting factor that reduces class size in accordance with the number of students with identified special needs integrated into regular classrooms.
- ⇒ Base the special education grants on the actual educational needs of students.
- ⇒ Increase the funding allocation for educational assistants, behavioral counsellors, child and youth workers, psychologists, and speech and language pathologists.
- ⇒ Provide educators with training to assist them to address student behavioral issues and adopt teaching strategies that support students with a wide spectrum of special needs.
- ⇒ Cancel EQAO Grades 3 and 6 tests.
- ⇒ Respect teacher professional judgement and place more emphasis on the role of ongoing teacher assessment of student progress.
- ⇒ Revise the elementary Ontario curriculum by reducing the number of prescribed student outcomes and identifying instead a set of core learning goals.
- ⇒ Provide all elementary classrooms with resources that support hands-on, experiential learning.
- ⇒ Establish one publicly funded education system in Ontario for each of Canada’s official languages.

EDUCATION

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) What could/should motivate a person to run for the position of school trustee?
- 2) What messages should our community send to Queen’s Park about the impacts of provincial education policies?

- 3) Do we know each candidate's position regarding the Ontario government's decision to repeal the sexual health component of the 2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum? How can our elected municipal and school board representatives advocate on our behalf regarding changes to the curriculum?
- 4) What can our elected representatives do: to support the growing diversity in our student population; to facilitate implementation of the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; to obtain additional resources from the provincial government to hire teaching assistants and professional support personnel for students with special needs?

FOOD SECURITY

BY PETERBOROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH AND NOURISH

The cost of healthy eating for a family of four in the City and County of Peterborough area was \$898/month in 2018. As illustrated below, for a family of four on average income, this represents only 11% of their income. For a family of four on Ontario Works or two parents paid at minimum wage, it eats up a sizable component of their monthly income.

Did you know?

Food Insecurity:

- ◆ means not having enough money to buy food. It is a result of inadequate income.
- ◆ greatly increases the risk for developing chronic conditions in adulthood, such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, depression and anxiety.
- ◆ impacts learning and development in children, and increases the risk of developing chronic

conditions later in life.

- ◆ results in higher health care costs.
- ◆ is a serious social and public health problem.
- ◆ requires higher incomes for a sustainable solution.

Who is food insecure?

Provincially, 64% of people who receive social assistance are food insecure, demonstrating that social assistance rates are inadequate. However, 59% of food insecure households have members in the workforce with jobs. There is a lack of quality employment with decent wages, regular hours and health benefits.

Food insecurity is a local concern. 16% of households or almost 1 in 6 report being food insecure. In local low-income households, 38% are food insecure, 1/3 of whom face severe food

How Do We Know Some People Don't Have Enough Money For Food?

A summary of some real life situations for people living in Peterborough appears in Table 1. These scenarios illustrate that after paying for shelter and food, minimum wage earners and households on fixed incomes have little, if any money left over to cover other basic monthly expenses.

Table 1: May 2018 Peterborough Nutritious Food Basket Scenarios

Monthly Income/ Expenses	Single Person Households			Households with Children			
	Single Man (Ontario Works)	Single Man (Ontario Disability Support Program)	Single Elderly Woman (Old Age Security/ Guaranteed Income Supplement)	Single Parent, 2 Children (Ontario Works)	Family of 4 (Ontario Works)	Family of 4 (full-time Minimum Wage)	Family of 4 Average Income (after tax)
Monthly Income including Benefits & Credits	\$810	\$1,251	\$1694	\$2,363	\$2,582	\$3,603	\$7,871
Estimated Shelter Cost	\$705	\$850	\$850	\$988	\$1,190	\$1,190	\$1,190
Cost of a Nutritious Diet	\$303	\$303	\$218	\$678	\$898	\$898	\$898
What's Left?	-\$198	\$98	\$626	\$697	\$494	\$1,515	\$5,783
% Income Required for Shelter	87%	68%	50%	42%	46%	33%	15%
% Income required for nutritious food	37%	24%	13%	29%	35%	25%	11%
REMEMBER: People still need to pay for utilities, phone, transportation, cleaning supplies, personal care items, clothing, gifts, entertainment, internet, school essentials, medical and dental costs and other purchases.							

Note: Shelter costs may or may not include utilities.

insecurity meaning they miss meals, reduce food intake and, may even go day(s) without food.

Leading up to the 2018 Municipal elections on October 22, 2018, the Peterborough Food Action Network is encouraging everyone to champion issues that will build on the vision of a local [Food Charter](#) related to social justice and health. Talk with families, friends, neighbours, candidates running for office in your Ward, Township and City about the importance of food security as a municipal issue. Let them know it's important to:

1) Reduce food insecurity in Peterborough City and County

Communities that have developed Food Charters and local Food Security Strategies have been able to coordinate local actions, advocate for better policy and increase collaboration. We know from years of local programs that food has the ability to bring people together and reduce isolation while they learn first-hand about our local food system. Support and resources for programs where people

learn food skills, feel dignified, and contribute to a stronger food system is critical.

2) Support the development of a Local Food Security Strategy

The Peterborough Food Charter includes pillars of Health and Social Justice including the principles of ‘dignified access to healthy and local food for all’ and ‘income, education, employment, housing and transportation policies and practices that support access to healthy, sustainable food’. An effective food strategy should encompass all these aspects.

*Learn about the Peterborough Food Charter
Our Local Food System: Healthy, Sustainable and Just Food for All:*

Foodinpeterborough.ca/foodcharter

Advocate for change. Speak up. Your voice can make a difference.

FOOD SECURITY

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) How can municipalities and school boards address the high rates of food insecurity in the City and County of Peterborough?
- 2) What can we do to ensure that all local residents, employed or not, have enough money to buy the healthy food they need?
- 3) What can municipalities do to support the growth of our local food system and protection of food producing lands?

BUILDING A COMMUNITY THAT IS AGE-FRIENDLY

BY DAWN BERRY MERRIAM

Our communities are aging. The year 2015 marked the first time that the number of Canadians over the age of 65 accounted for a larger share of the population than children under 14. The shift towards an older population will have profound implications for individuals, families, and communities. With this shift also comes opportunities for community building and social development.

Age-friendly communities are considered one of the most effective policy responses to support an aging population. Age-friendly communities recognize older adults as an asset. They provide programs and services that enable everyone to do the things they value for as long as possible.

The movement to create age-friendly communities is global and growing. Internationally, this work is being championed by the World Health Organization (W.H.O.). Here in Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada (P.H.A.C.) supports age-friendly planning initiatives at the federal level. Provincially, this work is supported by the Ontario

Seniors' Secretariat. Communities around the world and across Canada are following the W.H.O.'s planning framework to create local age-friendly plans for their communities. To date, over 330 communities from 36 countries have committed to this work and joined the W.H.O.'s Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. In 2016, Peterborough was accepted as a member of the network.

Did you know?

- ◆ The population of Peterborough CMA (Peterborough City plus 5 of the surrounding municipalities) is aging: 22.2% of the population is over 65, compared to Ontario where 16.7 % identify as seniors. Of that, Peterborough has 3.4% in the over 85 group, as compared to Ontario as a whole which has 2.2% in the over 85 group.
- ◆ The proportion of Peterborough residents who are over 65 has increased since the 2011 census, going from 20% to 22.2%. And by 2041 it is anticipated that 30% of Peterborough County's

population will be over 65 while 26% of City residents will be over 65.

- ◆ Our average age is 44 in comparison to Ontario at 41.
- ◆ The demographic shift projected for the next 25 years makes this a crucial time to ensure that we have appropriate services, programs, policies, and infrastructure in place to support our residents as they age.
- ◆ In 2011 the City approved two community improvement plans - the Central Area Community Improvement Plan and the Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan - to lend financial support to downtown redevelopment and revitalization projects and to assist in the creation of affordable housing.

Municipal governments can plan communities that support an aging population. They can:

⇒ Support the implementation of sliding scale calculations of development charges. This would make smaller units, which are suitable for seniors, less expensive to build.

- ⇒ Support the development of Community Improvement Plans that provide grants for accessibility upgrades in rental housing.
- ⇒ Encourage the development of new supportive housing units (with personal support and housekeeping services) so that people can stay in their homes longer.
- ⇒ Support co-housing options for seniors.
- ⇒ Advocate for additional funding to support improvement and expansion of transportation services for seniors.
- ⇒ Support the installation of enhanced safety features at intersections and trail crossings where there is high vehicle, pedestrian, and/or cyclist volumes.
- ⇒ Support the co-location of health and social services in integrated community hubs.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY THAT IS AGE-FRIENDLY

QUESTIONS FOR ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION:

- 1) How can municipalities provide the types of housing that are necessary to support aging at home?
- 2) What else can our municipalities do to support older adults who wish to remain in their homes for as long as possible? For example, home maintenance, in-home care, supportive housing etc.
- 3) What can our municipalities do to ensure that our aging rural population can remain in their communities of choice?
- 4) What should our municipalities do to achieve “complete communities” that have a healthy mix of housing, services, and recreation spaces for older adults as they age?

Peterborough Community Legal Centre

The Objects of the Legal Centre

The objects of the Legal Centre are:

- To provide legal services or paralegal services or both including activities reasonably designed to encourage access to such services or to further such services and services designed to promote the legal welfare of the low income residents of the County of Peterborough, on a basis other than fee-for-service;
- To provide legal information and education and to encourage access to knowledge of legal rights;
- To provide legal representation to low-income residents of the County of Peterborough;
- To identify areas of law affecting low-income members of our society and to advocate reform.

Membership

The Centre is directed by its members. If you live in the City or County, and are 16 years of age or older, you can become a member. If you are a member, you can:

- Vote at the Annual General Meeting
- Stand for election to the Board of Directors if you are over 18.
- Get the Legal Centre's newsletter twice a year.

If you want to become a member of the Legal Centre you need to complete the following form and send or bring it to the Legal Centre at 150 King Street, 4th Floor, Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 2R9. If you are already a member, please pass along the membership application to a friend who supports our objects.



Membership Application – Three Years

I support the work of the Peterborough Community Legal Centre. I am 16 or older.

Please PRINT:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ P/C _____

Email: _____

YES, I would like to receive the PCLC Newsletters via email (check box)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please mail or bring this form to our office. Membership takes effect 30 days after approval by the Board. Membership is for three years and a renewal notice will be sent with the newsletters.

There is no fee to become a member. You do not need to be a member to get help from us.