



Ignace Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

2021

Message from Mayor Penny Lucas Township of Ignace

I am very pleased and honoured to be part of this group of dedicated Ignace residents, supporters, and Township staff who have committed so much time and effort to bring this document together. This is the kind of effort we get in the community of Ignace and our Northwestern Ontario supporters in everything that we do. It is part of being a small community that actually cares about each and every one of us. “No sparrow or lost lamb is worth any less than the largest whale when it comes to taking care of each other”.

The Healthy Community Working Group has been meeting in the community for some time so it was not a stretch to ask our members to become involved in the Ignace Community Safety and Well Being Plan when it became a requirement of the Solicitor General to produce this document. We took this on as a continuation of the work that was already being done in the community. In small communities, sometimes we do things because it is the right thing to do, not because someone tells us that we should do it. Sometimes it just takes the larger communities and governing bodies time to catch up.

As you go through this document, you will see that we are quite proud of the work and collaborations that we have been able to come up with over the years, most times with little monetary support and not from want of asking.

The culmination of this document is the next steps and implementation: commitment, collaboration, risk assessment, planning strategy and measurable outcomes. As always, we look forward to the future.

Penny Lucas, Mayor



Ignace Community and Well-being Safety Subcommittee:

Jeff Lederer

Wyatt Mantle

Helena Clark

Josee Mantle

Zack Whitcroft

Katelyn Hamre

Keith Roseborough

Ignace Healthy Community Working Group:

Twyla Berube, Co-Chair

Lisa Ferrara, Co-Chair

Caitlin Burley

Cheryl Manchulenko

Chantelle Gason

Charlie Mackey

Chelsey McNally

Dana Caines

Les McGrayne

Debbie Hart

Heidi West

Janet Griffiths

Jeanne Bryan

Jennifer Ealey

Joanne Armstrong

Jody Waldock

Josee Mantle

Rylie Hamre

Adele Marth

Patricia Brusset

Rachelle Davenport

Tim Barker

Todd Smith

Wyatt Mantle

Helena Clark

Yvonne Romas

Zack Whitcroft

Township Support:

Penny Lucas, Mayor

Debbie Hart, Councillor

Jeff Lederer - Manager of Planning, Development, and Engagement Services (Author/Editor)

Kimberly Richards - ICNLC Project Coordinator

Keith Roseborough - Economic Development Coordinator

Petrina Taylor-Hertz - Communication Specialist

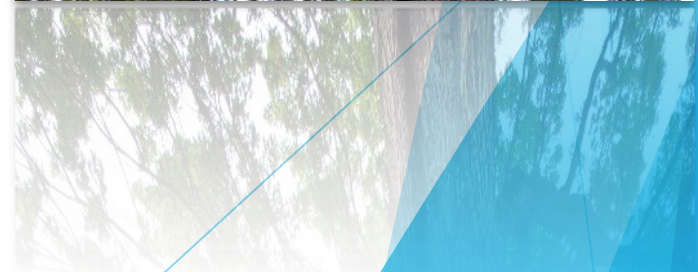
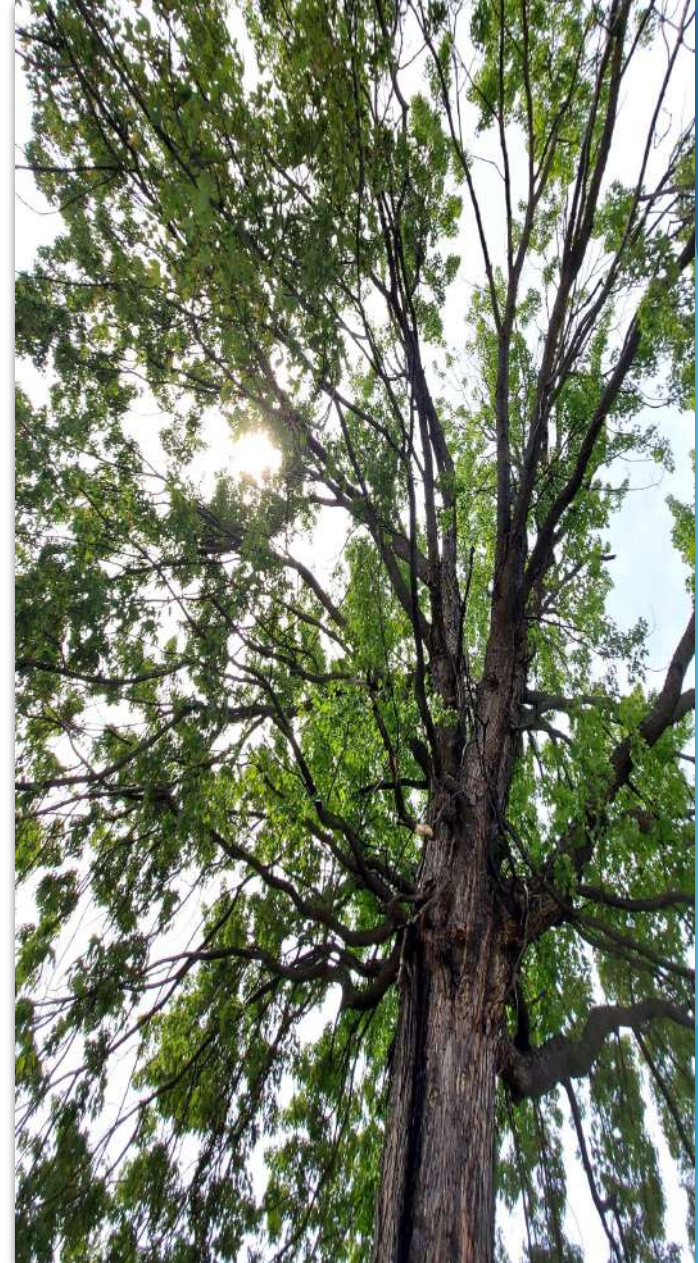
Katelyn Hamre - Recreation Coordinator

Table of Contents

1. Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and Why Does it Matter to Ignace?	pg. 5
2. Benefits of Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWBP)	pg. 6
3. It's the Law - Municipalities MUST have a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan	pg. 7
4. Ignace Safety and Well-Being Sub-Committee	pg. 8
5. Goal, Mission, Focus, and Challenge	pg. 9
6. Ignace Community Profile	pg. 10
7. Community Survey Results	pg. 14
8. Ignace Priority Areas	pg. 16
9. Priority Lenses	pg. 17
10. Priority One: Support for Our Seniors	pg. 18
11. Priority Two: Employment	pg. 22
12. Priority Three: Mental Health	pg. 24
13. Priority Four: Accessibility	pg. 26
14. Next Steps and Implementation	pg. 31

1. Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and Why Does it Matter to Ignace?

Well-being and safety are measures of your quality of life and the things that are important to you and our community. Better quality of life has been shown to result in improved physical and mental health. Safety and well-being include such things as feeling secure and a sense of belonging with your family, neighbourhood, and/or community. Your access to quality food and shelter, walking trails, the Internet, parks and the natural environment, clean water and health care impact your safety and well-being. Your community has a role to play in your well-being by providing services. By determining community priorities, we can better develop a plan that is representative of our needs.



2. Benefits of Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWBP)

Collaborative and cross-sector community safety and well-being planning leads to a number of benefits for individuals, the broader community, and participating partner agencies and organizations, including but not limited to:

- greater collaboration and dialogue among government sectors, service agencies, and community-based organizations
- stronger families and improved opportunities for healthy youth development
- healthier, more productive individuals who contribute positively to their community
- increased awareness and understanding of priority risks, vulnerable groups, and neighbourhoods
- a realignment of resources, roles, and responsibilities to better respond to priority risks and needs
- enhanced feelings of safety and well-being by supporting an environment that will encourage community cohesion and good citizenship
- better coordination in accessing services for community members and vulnerable groups, and
- a sharing of multi-sectoral data and resources to better help understand community trends, gaps, priorities, challenges, and successes.



3. It's the Law - Municipalities MUST have a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

New legislative amendments outlined under part XI, Section 143 of the current Police Services Act (1990) mandates every municipal council to prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWBP).

Municipalities have the discretion and flexibility to develop joint plans with surrounding municipalities or First Nation communities [s. 143(2)], although First Nation band councils are not required to engage in Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWBP) Planning by legislation. This new legislative requirement came into force on January 1, 2019 [s. 143(2)]. Additional legislative requirements related to the CSWBP process include:

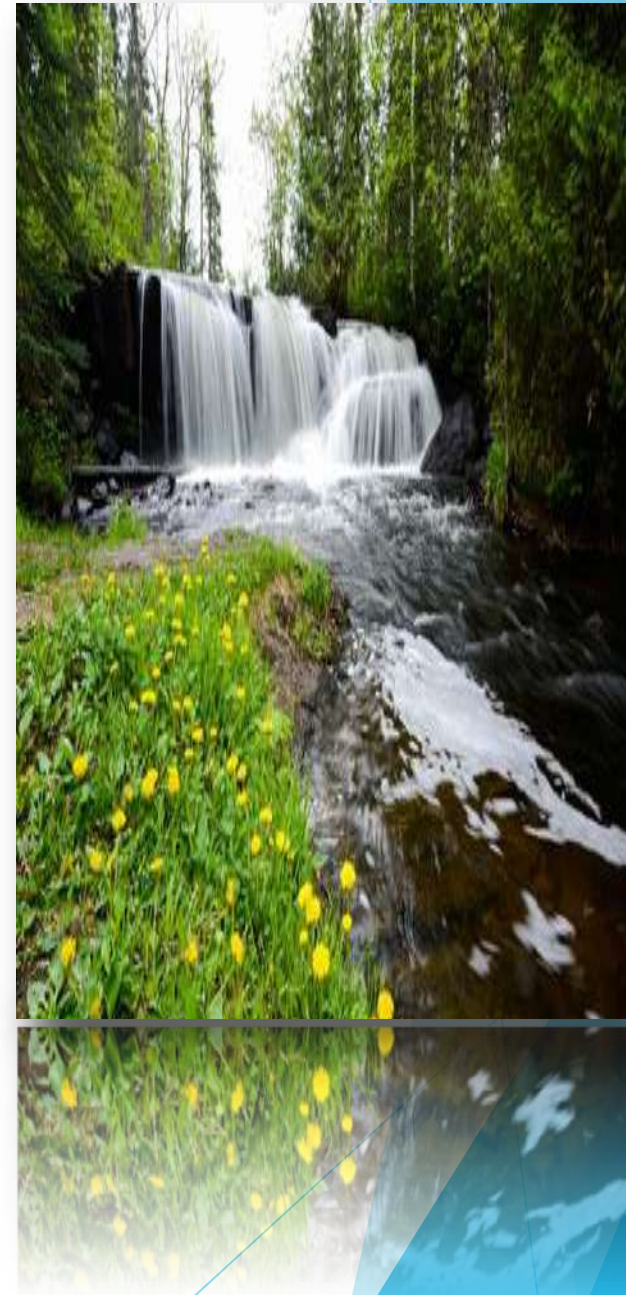
- Establishing a multi-sector advisory committee [s. 145(3)].
- Conducting consultations with the advisory committee, members of the public
- Identifying priority risk factors (e.g. including, but not limited to, systemic discrimination and other social factors that contribute to crime, victimization, addiction, drug overdose and suicide);
- Identifying strategies to reduce the prioritized risk factors (e.g. new services, changing/coordinating existing services); and
- Setting measurable outcomes and action plans.

There are also requirements to publish a completed CSWBP – online, in print for review by anyone who requests it, and in any other manner or form determined by the municipality – within 30 days after adopting the plans. 149(2), O. Reg. 527/18].

4. Ignace Safety and Well-Being Subcommittee

Under the auspices of the Council of the Township of Ignace and with support from the Ignace Healthy Community Working Group (IHCWG), the Ignace Safety and Well-Being Subcommittee (ISWBS) was formed. This committee, consisting of representatives from various age cohort groups as well as community and service agencies took the lead to help bring a Community Safety and Well-Being Planning forward. Collaboratively, they ensured that the following phases of work was implemented:

- Community and organization engagement
- Identifying areas of risk and strategies to reduce those areas as identified as “priorities” by community members
- Community consultation with residents
- Achieving greater coordination and collaboration between existing organizations and supporting consolidation where appropriate, and
- Providing progress reports to the IHCWG and the Township of Ignace during the preparation of the plan.



5. Goal, Mission, Focus, and Challenge



This Community Safety and Well-being Plan establishes a course of action for community safety and well-being planning in Ignace. It provides a model for collaboration, planning and action to shape how we identify and respond to current and emerging issues, especially that of the unknown, through ongoing engagement with community stakeholders. Everyone belongs so no one is left behind.

6. Ignace Community Profile

Incorporated in 1908, the Town of Ignace encompasses a unique historical and cultural background that is tied intrinsically to its natural surroundings. As a single resource-based community in succession – stemming from railway (early 1900s) and natural resources (mid-1950s) activity to mining (early 1970s) and forestry (1970s to present), Ignace has experienced and dealt with both the positive and negative impacts associated with “boom-bust” communities. Having peaked at a population of 3,300 in 1978, Ignace population gradually declined to a present level of approximately, 1,200 residents.

Since 2012, however, the community of Ignace has faced a multitude of challenges that consequently, poked holes in its socioeconomic fabric: a 16.0 % decrease of population (from 1,431 residents (2011) to 1,202 residents (2016)); a 15-20% increase of aboriginals (since 2008); and a senior population increased 25 percent since 2006. Until recently, Ignace has had little opportunity to continue its focus on economic development initiatives - especially in addressing the changing demographics and needs of the community. Town Council’s main focus had to deal with challenges relating to maintaining/keeping essential community services and replacing/upgrading infrastructure. This priority continues today.



In 2018, the community has had a heightened sense of optimism that is evoked by the strategic planning that is currently underway along with the potential of becoming a host to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) for the construction and operation of a deep underground repository for spent nuclear fuel. The reopening of the Resolute Mill, expanding forestry-related operations, transportation (i.e. Trans-Canada Highway and CP Rail) and new mining prospects by Wabigoon and Bending Lakes all provide added economic benefit to Ignace. In 2018, the Township has rebranded itself and adopted a new strategic direction that will take the community beyond a short term and reactive approach to one that is more long term, proactive and sustainable.

Fortunately, Ignace is served by a number of volunteer and community-based organizations and provincial agencies such as the Ignace Volunteer Fire Department, Ignace Silver Tops, Ignace Recreation Committee, Local Church Groups, Ignace Public School, École Immaculée-Conception, Ignace Nursery School, Tikinagan Child and Family Services, Crossroads Employment Centre, Ontario Provincial Police, Service Ontario, Ignace Lions Club, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Dryden Regional Mental Health and Addictions Services, Ignace EarlyON Child and Family Centre, Northwestern Health Unit, Northwords Preschool Speech and Language, Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child & Family Services, Anishinaabe Abinoojii Child and Family Services, and the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub (MBCHCH).

In addition, the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) continues to play a pivotal role in helping to support the community at large – particularly funding for child care (i.e. Ignace Child Care and Ignace Kids Care), Social Assistance, Paramedics, and Paramedicine. The Township of Ignace, in partnership with Ignace Silver Tops and KDSB, is presently working on developing a new 20-unit Senior's Housing Development and Centre where the construction phase is anticipated sometime in late fall 2021.



While the MBCHCH also provides excellent health care to our residents, there is unfortunately no longer an emergency centre supported by on-call doctors – even though the facilities still exist. Most emergency care situations are handled by both the Emergency Medical Services (i.e. Ignace Ambulance) and/or MBCHCH (during their scheduled hours of operations). However, the closest hospitals to deal with emergencies and other specialized/acute health matters are located in neighbouring communities such as Dryden (110 km), Sioux Lookout (140 km), and/or Thunder Bay (245 km).

Given the high proportion of seniors living in the community (25%), Indigenous (20%), and other vulnerable groups (10%), new directions in planning and support this population is required – especially when considering safety and well-being¹. Plans must be, therefore, supportive, inclusive, aspiring, and complementary to existing (and new) services and related work/programs found throughout the community. The development of a Community Safety and Well Being Plan, through community input, is essential to not only identifying and prioritizing community challenges but providing appropriate direction towards their mitigation accordingly.



¹ Vulnerable populations as defined by Statistics Canada is “a group of individuals within the general Canadian population who, due to greater susceptibility, may be at greater risk than the general population such as the Elderly, Disabled, Sick, Single Parents, Racial/Ethnic Minorities, LBGTQ, Low Income, Immigrants, Low Income, Transient, and Abused Persons. Statistics synthesized from Stats Canada Community Profile, Ignace Official Plan, Community Strategic Plan, and Ignace MMP.

Township of Ignace "Infographics"

DEMOGRAPHICS

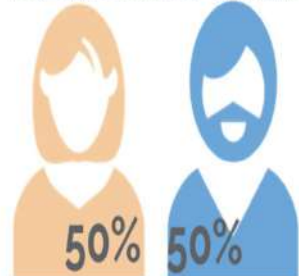
CENSUS POPULATION



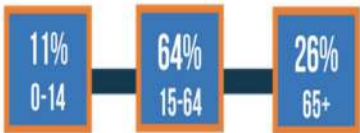
MEDIAN & AVERAGE AGE



BREAKDOWN BY GENDER



AGE PROFILE



10%

1 YEAR MOBILITY

Residents that had moved within the previous year



29%

5 YEAR MOBILITY

Residents that had moved within the previous 5 years

HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL

36% SECONDARY | **45%** POST-SECONDARY



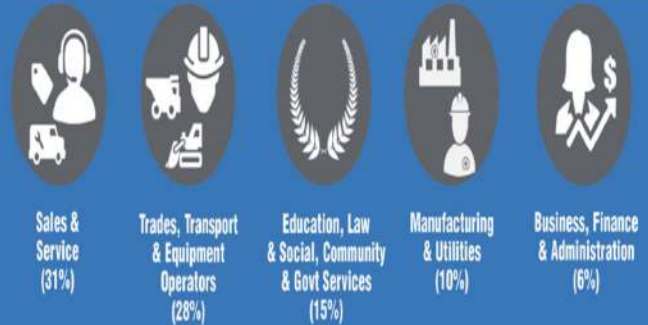
LANGUAGE

87% English

13% Bilingual

All data sourced from Manifold SuperDemographics unless otherwise specified.

Top 5 Sectors by Occupation*



* by labour force employment

All data sourced from Manifold SuperDemographics unless otherwise specified.

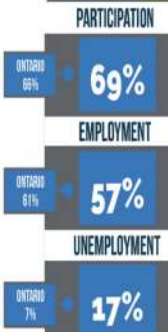
LABOUR FORCE

\$ Median personal income **22,336**
Average personal income **36,741**

ONTARIO MEDIAN INCOME: 34,243
ONTARIO AVERAGE INCOME: 49,938

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD TOTAL INCOME \$63,853

MEDIAN TOTAL INCOME OF ONTARIO HOUSEHOLDS: \$74,648



7. Community Survey Results

As part of the Ignace community safety and well-being plan, a resident questionnaire survey was administered by ISWBS and reviewed by IHCWG to help identify and prioritize areas of consideration. During a series of meetings from January to April, 2021, IHCWG and ISWBW both identified main priorities relating to community health, well-being, service provision and delivery, communication, outreach, and Covid-19. The questionnaire design consisted of 15 questions ranging from demographics and housing/employment barriers to perceived community issues and safety and well-being priorities. The online survey was opened from May 27 to June 2, 2021 and completed by 85 participants.

The majority of participants (42%) indicated that they lived in a primary residence with, on average, 2-3 members in the household. Most participants (37%) were between the ages of 35-54 years old with the majority (73%) being female and having obtained a post-secondary degree (48%). In addition, most respondents (55%) are employed fulltime, where 11% of the younger cohort are not working due to lack of suitable employment and opportunity, work-life balance challenges, and discrimination. Although 92% of respondents indicated that their housing needs are being met, issues around affordable rent, limited housing choice, and low building standards were made known.





Most respondents (78%) indicated that they have accessed services at the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub (MBCCHC) over the last year followed by the Northwestern Health Unit (45%). When further questioned about community services, 31% of participants felt that inaccessibility was an issue due to Covid-19, unavailable services (i.e. x-rays, MIRs, prenatal care), feeling embarrassment, limited hours, mobility, distance, crumbling infrastructure, distance, and limited policing.

Community perception of safety yielded an overwhelming majority (85%) of those surveyed believing that Ignace is a safe place to live. In contrast, 15% cited the TransCanada Highway (i.e. transient in nature), increased criminal activity, and limited police presence as reasons for feeling unsafe. When asked about priorities, “Support for Seniors” (58%), “Employment” (46%), “Mental Health” (39%), and “Accessibility” (37%) all ranked high. Covid-19 has also impacted Ignace with 47 % of survey participants citing “Loss of family and/or family connection”, “Feelings of increased anxiety/depression”, and “Increased Loneliness”. When asked reasons to not accessing health care and social service during Covid-19, some of them (29%) thought that services were closed, unavailable, and/or inaccessible.

8. Ignace Priority Areas

The Community Safety and Well Being Plan consists of four priority lenses as identified through the community engagement survey. These following priorities will help not only to provide focus but also improve safety and well-being for the community:

- **Support for Seniors (58%)**
- **Employment (46%)**
- **Mental Health (39%)**
- **Accessibility (37%)**

These lenses also reflect the ongoing collaboration, inclusion, and engagement that converge into a dynamic and adaptive spectrum of evolving community needs.



9. Priority Lenses

For each lens, strategic priorities and the community overall as shown in the graphic. Details for each pillar is provided in the following sections and includes):

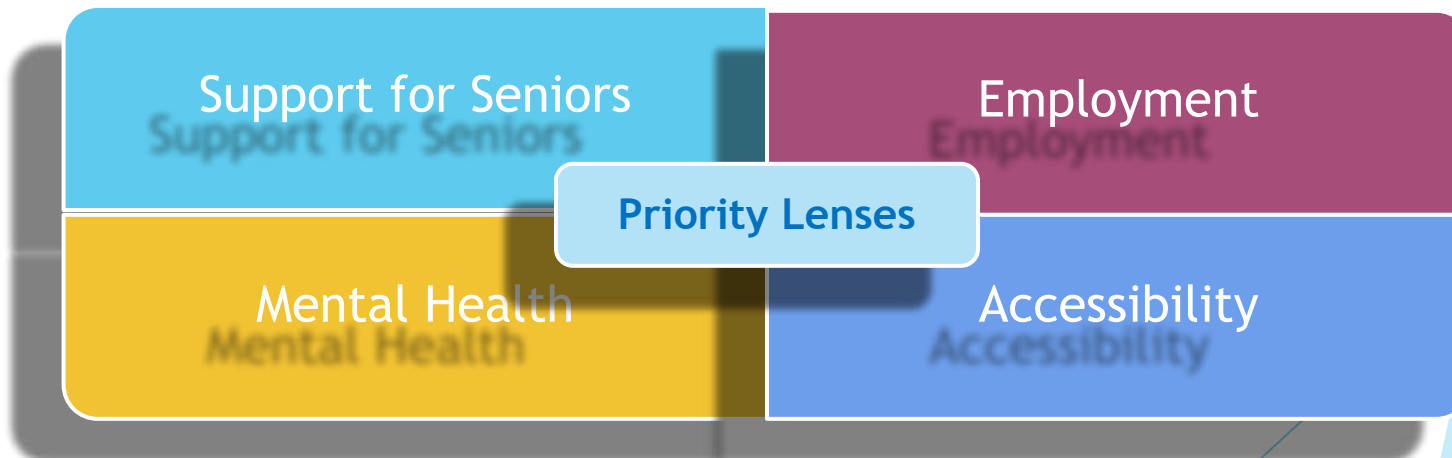
Strategic Priorities: Areas identified by IHCWG and community residents as a “priority” need to help mitigate issues that are adversely impacting the ability of community members to meet their needs;

Targeted Outcomes: Areas identified by IHCWG and community residents as a “priority” need to help mitigate issues that are adversely impacting the ability of community members to meet their needs;

Key Activities: What we intend to achieve by addressing factors both risk (i.e. circumstances that increase vulnerability/negative consequences) and protective (i.e. elements of positive influence on community safety and well-being); Improvements we expect to see as the result of our actions;

Lead: Who will be primarily responsible for overseeing the Strategic Priority; and

Partners: Who will work collaboratively to lend support to the Lead Partner



10. Priority One: Support for Our Seniors

Ignace demographics now make up to almost 30% of residents over the age of 60 years old. Given this high proportion of seniors living in the community, the need to respond to a new direction in planning that support this population's safety and well-being is required. Plans must be supportive, inclusive, aspiring, grounded, and complementary to existing and new services, support, and work found throughout the community. Over the last five years, new directions achieved for active living, especially those programs offered by the Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub and Ignace Silver Tops hold great promise in helping to develop and implement plans.

Aging-in-place requires access to medical services, community programs, social programs, and other services that provide basic life necessities (e.g. food and medication). This challenge is commonplace in small communities that do not have population bases needed to support the provision of services. Innovative approaches involving partnerships with service providers, educational institutions, local and regional businesses, and the volunteer community is needed to address gaps in local service provision. Mobility is one of the key concerns for seniors while the other is housing.



With respect to mobility, many seniors have been driving for years without a serious collision. But as part of the natural process of aging, individuals begin to see changes in their hearing, vision, and reaction time. Because these changes occur over time, it can be difficult to recognize how they affect personal driving abilities. A driver training program can assist seniors in compensating for these impairments. In addition, walking and mobility devices (e.g. electric wheelchairs, bikes, walkers, and scooters) are also becoming an essential part of daily life for our seniors – especially those with mobility impairment. Seniors, in particular, are increasingly using mobility devices every year. The higher prevalence of chronic conditions and subsequent disability among the elderly also results in an increased use of these devices. In Ontario, for example, the number of individuals aged 65 and older who received funding assistance from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for power mobility devices through the Assistive Devices Program rose by 340% between 1995 and 2001.

Housing options, from affordability and access to assisted care housing, are pressing issues for both seniors and community as a whole. Ignace has a uniform housing stock that is largely characterized by single-detached dwellings with limited options for semi-detached, row housing, and apartments. There is also limited rental stock available, which has been further reduced by the rise of vacation and temporary rentals. Many seniors in the community indicated that they would like to downsize and remain in the community but have been unable to find suitable housing. Diversifying the housing stock will allow seniors to access desired housing forms and remain in the community, while freeing up single-detached housing that could be absorbed by younger families and new residents. This includes pursuing senior housing and assisted care living options for the community that can enable seniors to have routine assistance or care included in their housing.



Strategic Priorities:

- To create, strengthen, and support the well-being and safety for our seniors.
- To support seniors in maintaining their independence and social connections.
- To encourage and support seniors' safe mobility, transportation, and independence.
- To provide diversity in housing stock that meets the unique needs of seniors enabling them to transition to new housing as their needs evolve.

Targeted Outcomes:

- Participants will have skills and strategies to adjust and accommodate for age-related changes in their driving abilities.
- Potential for fewer accidents involving older drivers.
- Extend older drivers' ability to drive safely.
- A diversified housing stock to allow not only “aging in place” but support transition to new housing options.



Key Activities:

- Promote the 55 Alive Mature Driver Refresher Course developed by the Canadian Safety Council and delivered locally to increase awareness of age-related risks, highlight specific driving conditions and situations that are most hazardous to older drivers, and encourage strategies for coping with or avoiding these risky driving conditions.
- Identify and correct bad driving habits.
- Ensure that future development proposals include affordable, rental and senior housing.
- Consider granting tax exemptions for non-profit seniors and affordable housing developments for seniors housing, purpose-built rentals, and/or housing that incorporates accessible design as incentives to encourage development.
- Develop a comprehensive Housing Strategy that includes housing needs assessment as well as strategies to address seniors and low-income housing.
- Lobby public and private sectors to engage in measures to improve the housing stock in Ignace.
- Advocate that market priced housing alone will not be sufficient to meet the needs of the community and that significant investments in subsidized housing will need to be made.
- Advocate to provincial and federal governments and the private sector for continued and increased investment in affordable housing.

Lead:

Ignace Healthy Community Working Group and Township of Ignace.

Partners:

Northwestern Health Unit, OPP, Ignace Fire Department, Silver Tops, Economic Development Committee, MTO, and Kenora District Services Board.



11. Priority Two: Employment

Education is critical to enhancing and retaining local talent and creating opportunities for residents to fill job openings as they become available. Ignace residents need to see not only the value but the local demand for skilled professionals as career opportunities. The pursuit of appropriate education and training can be fostered with the intent of retaining and recruiting local residents for employment. Youth, Indigenous, adult learners, and young professionals, in particular, each have varying needs for employment, education, and related training.

Strategic Priority:

- To provide employment recruitment and retention opportunities for in-demand skilled workers, youth, Indigenous, adult learners, and young professionals.

Targeted Outcomes:

- Articulate and measure the community's skilled human resource needs.
- Increase the opportunities available for youth and young adults to pursue further education opportunities.
- Increase the supports and resources for those individuals with mental health challenges to acquire and retain employment.
- Support local youth and adult learners to acquire skills/education to fill sought local positions to provide the level of services to meet community needs.



Key Activities:

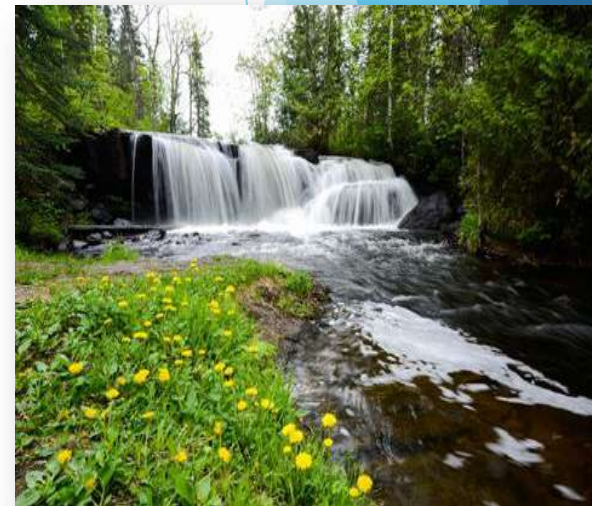
- Monitor community skilled human resource gaps by collecting the status of stagnant job vacancies from local employers.
- Support the Youth Engagement Strategy to help grow and develop local youth education and skills-training opportunities.
- Welcome young professionals to the community and support their network of associations that support their skills training and career development.
- Meet with local school boards, post-secondary educational institutes and employment agencies to promote career pathways and trades for Ignace youth and adult learners.
- Lobby employers to engage in measures to provide Ignace residents access to education and job training for in-demand jobs, apprenticeships, and trades.
- Support employers on recruitment, mentoring, retainment and incentive packages for employment opportunities.

Lead:

- Crossroads Training and Employment Centre.

Partners:

- Township of Ignace, Economic Development Committee, Contact North, Ignace Public School, École Immaculée-Conception, Youth Advisory Committee, and Ignace Area Business Association.



12. Priority Three: Mental Health

Mental health and well-being contribute to our quality of life and to our ability to enjoy it. Good mental health is tied to improved physical health, educational attainment, and economic participation as well as enriched social connections and relationships. Estimates suggest that about one in every five people living in Canada will experience diagnosable either mental health problems or illnesses. No one is immune – no matter where they live, what their age, or what they do in life. This means that just about every family in Ignace will be directly affected, to some degree, by mental illness. Addiction to substances and/or unhealthy choices can lead to serious personal, family, school, and work issues.

While mental illness impacts individuals of any age, they are especially pronounced in youth, indigenous, and senior groups. In Ignace, there are added pressures of increased poverty, discrimination, cultural barriers, and lack of extracurricular activity. As a result of Covid-19, isolation and boredom and the resulting impacts on mental health can often progress to addiction and lifelong struggles. Many of the issues facing Ignace are interdependent and intertwined. It is important to look at how impacting one area such as housing will create stability and support for those dealing with mental health issues.

Generally associated with mental health issues is substance abuse that could lead to addiction challenges. The causes of addiction vary considerably and are not often fully understood and can occur by a combination of physical, mental, circumstantial and emotional factors. The harmful impacts of substance use can range from mild (e.g. feeling hungover and/or being late for work) to severe (e.g. homelessness and/or disease). Consultations with the community and local service agencies reveal that mental health & addictions and access to services are growing concerns in Northwestern Ontario. No single organization has the people, skills, knowledge and/or capacity to do everything. It must be a shared responsibility in working collaboratively to help improve the outcomes and experiences for residents living with mental illness and/or addiction.



The misuse of opioids is a growing public health concern across our country. Unfortunately, Ignace is not immune. Its impacts to our vulnerable groups (e.g. youth, Indigenous groups, homelessness) are real and has had devastating consequences. The trend appears to have continued to grow over the years. Data from local partners confirm significant number increase in our region with respect to emergency visits, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) involvement related to mental health, self-harm, and addictions.

Strategic Priorities:

- To improve the outcomes and experiences of people living with mental health and/or substance use issues in Ignace.
- To promote mental wellness and positive relationships among community members and families through fostering supportive environments.
- To improve access to mental health and wellness services and supports for “at risk” and vulnerable groups by simplifying pathways and coordinating efforts.
- To promote healthy living and addiction treatment options available to **ALL** residents.

Targeted Outcomes:

- More youth, indigenous, and seniors feel safe, connected and supported in the community.
- Improved health and wellness outcomes for community members through a better “streamlined” system in navigating among mental health and addiction services and supports (i.e. barrier-free, umbrella of care, cost management approach).
- Improved access to mental health services and supports for youth, seniors, and Indigenous groups.
- More situations of acutely elevated risk are mitigated.
- Increase in awareness and acceptance of mental health challenges.
- Reduced stigma and discrimination.
- Enhanced communication among local and regional agencies.
- Reduced police involvement in non-criminal calls.



Key Activities:

- Recreational facilities and events are available to youth, indigenous, families/parents, and seniors in the community.
- Social supports are incorporated into the fabric of the community (inclusiveness, community gatherings, welcoming events).
- Mental Health services are provided to youth, indigenous, and seniors in an environment they are comfortable in.



Lead:

- Dryden Regional Mental Health and Addiction Services and Mary Berglund Community Health Centre Hub.

Partners

- Ontario Provincial Police, Ignace Healthy Community Working Group, Ignace EarlyON Child and Family Centre, Recreation Committee, Township of Ignace, Northwestern Health Unit, Tikinagan Child and Family Services, Ignace Silver Tops, and Kenora District Services Board.



13. Priority Four: Accessibility

Accessibility is important for many reasons. It allows people to reach other people, places, and services - including medical appointments, grocery stores, pharmacies, physical and social activities, and family events. There are benefits regardless of destination, including a sense of autonomy. All residents of Ignace have the right to go about daily life feeling safe, without fear or risk of harm or injury. Assaults, break and enters, drug trafficking are known incidents in Ignace. Community safety and security is not only the responsibility of our police service. The community needs to work together to help understand its strengths, challenges, and responsibilities - taking collective and impactful action. In practice, it means developing and implementing strategic actions so that the broader public and those most vulnerable are better engaged.

Moreover, our vulnerable population can find themselves in a free-falling situation where they must navigate through complex systems with next to no money - often in an emotional spiral that makes it hard to think clearly. They feel isolated from a sense of community because they lack trust and social cohesion. Engaging with peers through productive and supportive community-led activities, such as social events, learning circles, and support groups not only promotes healthy living but provides emotional support and creates social cohesion. Community support for individuals helps them stay on track and is a necessary component in achieving self-sufficiency.



While access to services is vital, the physical environment (i.e. outdoor spaces and buildings) must also lend well to our community residents. Sidewalks, parks, and buildings must be in good condition with safe utilizing design features that accommodate seniors and individuals with mobility impairments and avoid tripping hazards. This can have a large impact on the independence and quality of life of aging residents and the broader community. Enhancing the accessibility of the spaces and buildings in a community improves the ability of residents and those especially with mobility impairments to move about the community freely. The poor availability of accessible public washrooms and appropriate rest areas can hinder ability to move about the community.

Feelings of discomfort in accessing public and private spaces and buildings can reduce opportunities to remain socially active in the community and access needed services. Winter elements can also have both a positive and negative impact on the physical and mental health of an individual and the broader community. This particular season is often associated with high levels of discomfort resulting from colder temperatures, snow, ice, and decreased daylight hours. People are often less physically and socially active during the winter season. Winter can present challenges to moving around the community due to ice and snow, reduced social participation, and increased housing costs arising from heating costs.

Strategic Priorities:

- To increase residents' sense of belonging and safety (resilience).
- To increase vulnerable residents' experiences regarding ease of access to services and critical supports, as well as positive and sustainable outcomes.
- To expand community-wide education and awareness on safety and belonging.
- To improve accessibility to service and supports.



Targeted Outcomes:

- Increased opportunities to build new relationships and strengthen social support networks reducing isolation and feelings of loneliness.
- Increased awareness among residents of existing services available to the community.
- Wider range of group peer support that includes sharing of experiences/information and mutual learning.
- Improved accessibility/mobility through improvements to physical environments (i.e. outdoor spaces and buildings).
- Decreased incidents of falls and related injuries for Seniors .

Key Activities:

- Develop a municipally supported communication strategy that increases access to economic and community supports for vulnerable populations in Ignace.
- Develop, maintain, and distribute an inventory (paper, electronic) of local services to service agencies.
- Enhance 211 directory for Ignace by ensuring that every agency is included and their listings are updated regularly.
- Undertake and implement a Community Safety Audit.
- Develop a peer mentor network of persons with lived experience to act as coaches in navigating the system, identifying and accessing services, in addition to reducing the intimidation factor that may be associated with the process.



- Recruit and train (if necessary) individuals with lived experience to act as peer mentors
- Develop accessible design guidelines to apply to new development in the community.
- Ensure all public buildings are equipped with accessible design features, such as accessible washrooms, ramps, railings and other features.
- Ensure additions or replacements of public seating (e.g. benches and picnic tables) in public spaces have accessible design.
- Work with the Ignace Area Business Association to help improve the accessibility of their spaces, including benches outside of stores, ramps, automatic doors, use of washrooms, and accessible parking spaces.
- Ensure all future sidewalk development maintains widths of at least 1.5 metres to accommodate persons using mobility aids and walkers.
- Identify key pedestrian routes to receive additional winter maintenance (e.g. snow and ice clearing) with a priority focus the Senior Walk/Urban Art proposed route.
- Work with Township of Ignace and Ignace Public School for community exercise activities such as daily seniors' walks.
- Identify opportunities to provide additional lighting and remove tripping hazard along main walking routes and pathways throughout town.
- Consider providing free sand or salt for residents to use to reduce slippery ice conditions on their driveways and sidewalks, and in front of local businesses.

Lead

- Ignace Healthy Community Working Group.

Partners

- Ontario Provincial Police, Dryden Regional Mental Health and Addiction Services, Church Leaders, Recreation Committee, Citizen Engagement Advisory Group, Economic Development Committee, Ignace Area Business Association, Township of Ignace, Northwestern Health Unit, Tikinagan Child and Family Services, Anishinaabe Abinoojii Child and Family Services, Ignace Silver Tops, and Kenora District Services Board.



14. Next Steps and Implementation

1. Commitment at the highest level

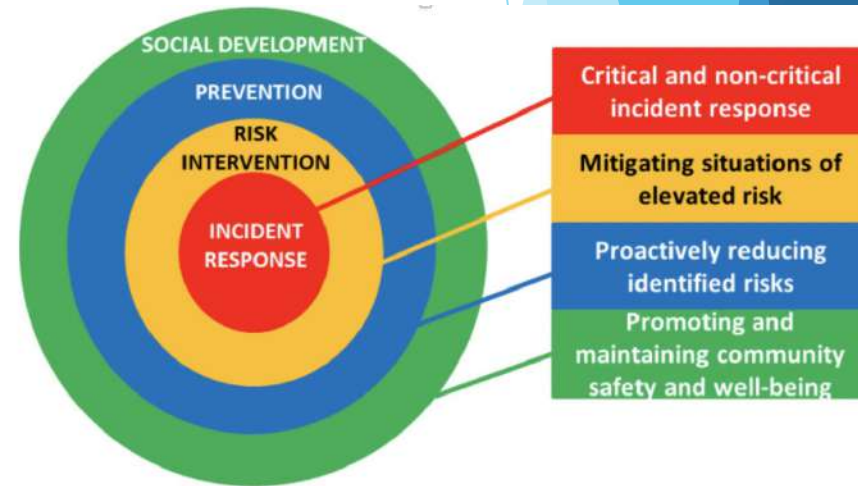
Safety and well-being are a community-wide initiative. As such, it requires dedication and inputs from every agency, organization, group, and citizen. Sometimes it is difficult to get some of these constituents to the planning table. Therefore, leadership, vision, and inspiration are key to success.

2. Collaborative Safety and well-being are everyone's responsibility

This plan is multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary requiring full transparency as everyone shares responsibility for the common good. Collaboration is not without its challenges and needs to be addressed in a candid and trusting atmosphere. It builds capacity among the partners and understanding of community issues by supporting different perspectives and opinions.

3. Risk-focused

Responding/Identifying risks (Red Zone) is an imperative component of this Safety and Well-Being Plan. It applies equally to all three planning levels. Risks appear obvious in the Amber Zone where harm is imminent; they may subtler in the Blue Zone where we are looking for opportunities to prevent harm; but they are most challenging in the Green Zone not the least because the requisite efforts to reduce them can seem daunting. Many risk factors are intertwined or connected and may have a multiplying effect on one another.



4. Asset-based

The most positive planning strategy presumes that every neighbourhood and municipality is full of assets that can be productively mobilized to achieve safety and well-being. This requires an “asset inventory.” Important elements of that inventory are the individuals, families, community groups in marginalized neighbourhoods who possess lots of energy, skills, and strong desires to contribute to the collective goal of community safety.



5. Measurable Outcomes

The Plan must draw upon the specialized knowledge and technical capacities of all our agencies and organizations. Moving forward into action, there will be a need to specify objectives, set benchmarks, and measure outcomes. Establishing a community-wide profile will require inter-sectoral collaboration.



A primary goal of this Plan, therefore, is to strengthen how we work together to address issues currently affecting the safety and well-being of our community. It is equally important to remain well-positioned to identify and respond to emerging issues in a proactive manner by continuing to seek input and active participation from community partners. The CSWBP articulates very specific community priorities and strategies necessary for improving the safety and well-being for residents in Ignace.

These strategies range from those that leverage existing initiatives and may realize immediate outcomes to strategies requiring innovative approaches with much longer-term commitments. Discussion of the Ignace Healthy Community Working Group have already led to several actions being taken to address aspects of the priority issues. As always, the challenge remains to maintain the momentum and to ensure that these words become actions. It will require effort and commitment with an unwavering focus on the long-term goals.

To achieve these goals, a community must understand not only the challenges associated with safety and well-being but the cause of them as well. This collective and collaborative work must be achieved together with other agencies both locally and regionally. It requires commitment, leadership, creativity, and innovation in learning new ways of working together on behalf of Ignace. Successful planning for safety and well-being, therefore, entails, a number of principles that influence every planning decision. They originate from research, experience, and lessons-learned about what works in community safety.



Science North
2019



Ignace Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

2021