



AGENDA

Strategic Priorities Committee

March 16, 2021

9:00 am

Video Conference

Click the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzuUpFqxcEl8OG-dOYKteFQ>

Pages

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**
3. **AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the March 16, 2021 Strategic Priorities Committee agenda be accepted as presented.

4. **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REVIEW**

- 4.1. **DEV 09-2021 St. Marys Community Improvement Plan Update**

3

RECOMMENDATION

THAT DEV 09-2021 St. Marys Community Improvement Plan Update report be received; and

THAT the Strategic Priorities Committee recommends to Council:

THAT Council direct staff to circulate the draft Community Improvement Plan to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review; and,

THAT upon receipt of comments from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, that Council direct staff to initiate the required public meeting.

4.2. ADMIN 11-2021 Community Safety and Well-being Plan Update

52

RECOMMENDATION

THAT ADMIN 11-2021 Community Safety and Well-being Plan Update report be received.

5. DELEGATION

5.1. University of Guelph re: Rural Response to COVID-19

88

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the delegation from the University of Guelph regarding the rural response to COVID-19 survey results be received.

6. NEXT MEETING

April 20, 2021 - 9:00 am, live streamed through Town's YouTube channel

Topics to be discussed:

- Quarry Safety Audit (closed session)
- Widder Street Secondary Access (closed session)
- Widder Street Development Rights (closed session)
- Request to purchase Town lands (closed session)

7. ADJOURNMENT

RECOMMENDATION

THAT this meeting of the Strategic Priorities Committee adjourns at _____ pm.

FORMAL REPORT

To:	Chair Stratthdee and Members of Strategic Priorities Committee
Prepared by:	Mark Stone, Planner
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2021
Subject:	DEV 09-2021 St. Marys Community Improvement Plan Update

PURPOSE

To provide Council with an update regarding the Town's Community Improvement Plan Review and Update Project and seek direction on next steps. A copy of the first draft of the new Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is provided as Attachment 1 of this report. The chart included at the end of this report provides a summary of the draft CIP by incentive program and will be used to help guide the Committee's discussion.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT DEV 09-2021 St. Marys Community Improvement Plan Update report be received; and

THAT the Strategic Priorities Committee recommends to Council:

THAT Council direct staff to circulate the draft Community Improvement Plan to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review; and,

THAT upon receipt of comments from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, that Council direct staff to initiate the required public meeting.

BACKGROUND

Section 106 of the *Municipal Act* prohibits a municipality from directly or indirectly assisting "any manufacturing business or other industrial or commercial enterprise through the granting of bonuses for that purpose" including "giving a total or partial exemption from any levy, charge or fee". However, Section 28(7) of the *Planning Act* provides an exemption to this restriction stating that "for the purpose of carrying out a municipality's community improvement plan that has come into effect, the municipality may make grants or loans, in conformity with the community improvement plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the community improvement plan".

Section 28 of the *Planning Act* allows municipalities, where there are provisions in its Official Plan relating to community improvement, to designate by by-law a Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA), and subsequently provide for the preparation of a Community Improvement Plan (CIP). A CIP is used by municipalities to promote development and/or improvements in the designated CIPA by identifying goals for the area and financial incentives available to landowners.

Additional background regarding the study is provided in Attachment 2 and a summary of applicable Provincial legislation and Town Official Plan policies is provided in Attachment 3.

At the February 18, 2020 Special Priorities Committee, Council received Formal Report DEV 10-2020 and Council directed staff to commence the Community Improvement Plan review and update project based on the project objectives and work plan set out in Report DEV 10-2020.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN

Objectives

The objectives of CIP update project are to:

1. Assess the effectiveness of the Town's existing CIPs
2. Consolidate the CIPs into a single CIP document
3. Modify, expand and/or add economic development related programs and incentives that:
 - encourage and support local start-ups, and attracts new businesses to locate in St. Marys
 - support downtown businesses and encourage the filling of vacant units in the commercial core
 - promote the downtown as key destination in Town and embrace culture as key driver of the Town's tourism strategy
 - support the expansion of existing businesses in Town
4. Develop programs and incentives to encourage and support the development of affordable housing throughout the Town.
5. Explore options to enable the Town to sell serviced land at less than market value to support economic development objectives.
6. Explore program and incentive options to promote and assist with the development of brownfields.
7. Identify and study other community needs that could be addressed through the CIP.

Work Plan

TASK	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
Project Kick-off	• Advise Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) of Town's CIP project	COMPLETE
	• Establish Town CIP project webpage with project description, background documents, opportunities for public input, etc.	COMPLETE
Research/Analysis and Public Consultation	• Planning policy and background document review	COMPLETE
	• Needs and opportunities assessment and option identification and assessment	COMPLETE
Report to Council	• Present draft Community Improvement Plan to Council	COMPLETE
Consultation	• Consult with MMAH	
	• Statutory public meeting (notice to be issued minimum 20 days prior to meeting)	
Report to Council and Approval	• Council considers approval of CIP and passes by-law • Notice of approval issued with 20 day appeal period	

An Open House planned for March 31, 2020 was postponed and the CIP project was put on hold due the pandemic. In the Fall of 2020, the CIP project was reinitiated with the holding of Virtual Open Houses.

REPORT

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Notice of the Virtual Public Open Houses was published in the November 19, 2020 edition of the St. Marys Independent. Two Virtual Open Houses were held on December 3, 2020, from 2 to 2:45 p.m. and 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. Several options for the community to provide comments were provided including by regular mail, phone, facsimile and email. During the open house, the public was able to provide comments or ask questions by appearing in the virtual meeting (via Zoom) or by calling in using a toll-free number.

The purpose of the Open House was to introduce the CIP project to the community by providing information respecting community improvement plans, an overview of the Town's existing CIP programs, project goals and workplan, and potential CIP incentives and programs. The community was also provided with the opportunity to ask questions about the project and were encouraged to provide input to assist the Town, including local goals, needs and issues to be considered as part of the project.



TOWN OF ST. MARYS
Upcoming Virtual Open Houses

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEW	OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW
 Thursday, December 3, 2020  2:00 - 2:45 PM & 6:30 - 7:15 PM	 Thursday, December 10, 2020  2:00 - 2:45 PM & 6:30 - 7:15 PM

What is a Community Improvement Plan?
A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is used by municipalities to promote development and/or improvements in a designated CIP area or areas by identifying goals for the area(s) and financial incentives available to developers.
Currently, the Town has two CIPs: the Façade Improvement CIP and the Economic Prosperity CIP. We have initiated a CIP review and update project to:

- Review the effectiveness/funding levels of the existing CIPs
- Consider existing/new CIP programs to address local priorities and issues (ie. affordable housing, commercial vacancies in the downtown core, economic development and tourism)

We want your input!
Attend our virtual project 'kick-off' open house to learn more about the CIP project and how you can participate throughout the process.
We also need your input and assistance with the assessment of local needs and opportunities and the identification of possible CIP approaches, incentives and programs.
How to participate
Instructions for attending the virtual open house are available at townofstmarys.com/communityimprovementplans.
The open house will start with a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion and a question/answer period.
Additional information about the project is available online or by contacting the Building Department (519-284-2340, ext. 213).

What is an Official Plan?
An Official Plan is a statement of goals, objectives and policies intended to guide future land use, physical development and growth.
Ontario's Planning Act requires municipalities to conduct an Official Plan review every five years to ensure it conforms with or does not conflict with provincial plans, has regard to matters of provincial interest and is consistent with provincial policy statements.
We are undertaking a review and update of the Official Plan in accordance with these Planning Act requirements and to support new strategic goals and community priorities with respect to growth and development in St. Marys.
We want your input!
Attend our virtual open house to receive an update on the Official Plan review project, ask questions, and provide comments on the draft Official Plan.
Please note that this is not the statutory open house required under the Planning Act.
How to participate
Instructions for attending the virtual open house are available at townofstmarys.com/officialplan.
The open house will start with a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion and a question/answer period.
Additional information about the project is available online or by contacting the Building Department (519-284-2340, ext. 213).

Unable to attend? Submit your comments to Grant Bowser, Director of Building & Development, by mail (Town of St. Marys, 408 James St. S, PO Box 998, St. Marys, ON, N4X 1B6); phone (519-284-2340, ext. 215); fax (519-284-0202); or email (planning@townofstmarys.com).

Please note: Comments and opinions submitted on these matters, including the originator's name and address, become part of the public record, may be viewed by the general public and may be published in a Planning Report, for the Planning Advisory Committee and/or Council, and may be included in Planning Committee and/or Council agendas and minutes. Agendas and minutes are published on the Town website (www.townofstmarys.com).



DRAFT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Some of the key components of the draft CIP include:

- An applicant may be eligible to receive multiple grants (provided they are available in any given year), in accordance with the following:
 - i. The total combined value of grants provided to the applicant by the Town per year shall not exceed \$10,000 per project and/or property (or \$20,000 if combined value includes Service Connection Fee Grant), or the total value of eligible costs, whichever is less; and
 - ii. Applicants shall not be eligible to receive the same grant two years in a row for the same property.
- Generally, grants shall not exceed 50 percent of eligible costs (except where specified)
- The CIP Implementation Lead will be the Chief Building Official and will be responsible for reviewing and evaluating applications for financial incentives, and making a recommendation to Council with respect to the approval or refusal of financial incentive applications, if required.
- The Town may put into effect any number of the financial incentives identified in this CIP during the implementation period, subject to the availability of Town funds and other resources.

- Amendments to the CIP are not required to reduce funding levels for the Financial Incentive Programs, or discontinue or cancel any of the programs identified.
- The Façade and Signage Improvement Grant is intended to assist with improvements to buildings in the Downtown where such improvements can be cost prohibitive. At this point, staff is not recommending that this program be extended to outside of the Downtown however, the merits of extending the program to highly visible, highly travelled roadways (e.g. arterial roads – Queen, James and/or Water) has been discussed

A working group of Town staff from various departments has assessed each possible incentive program and this chart provides a summary of how each incentive program would support Town priorities and using a grading scale of:

High Priority

Moderate Priority

Low Priority

CIP SECTION	INCENTIVE / PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING PER PROJECT
6.3	Façade and Signage Improvement Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to an existing building façade or signage. • Supports the Strategic Plan: Pillars 4 and 5 (Culture and Recreation, and Economic Development), protecting unique heritage assets and supporting perception of Downtown as vibrant gathering area. • High Priority as program is intended to maintain the historic character of the Downtown, and attract businesses and tourism. 	\$8,000 to \$10,000
6.4	Building and Site Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural improvements to existing buildings and properties such as landscaping, walkways, ramps, railings, etc. • Supports the Strategic Plan: Pillars 4 and 5 (Culture and Recreation, and Economic Development), investigate the idea of providing allowances for accessibility changes to buildings under the CIP, ensuring a vibrant and sustainable commercial sector, and focusing attention and resources to ensure both business retention and expansion. • High Priority as program will support accessibility, sustainability and economic development objectives of the Town. 	\$8,000
6.5	Commercial Conversion and Expansion Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-scale conversions of existing vacant or underutilized space into new commercial or mixed use space. Also support establishment of business incubator space. • Supports the Strategic Plan: Pillar 5 (Economic Development), offer incentives to new businesses to occupy vacant storefronts, ensuring a vibrant and sustainable commercial sector, focusing attention and resources to ensure both business retention and expansion. Identify vacant spaces to host entrepreneurs and create an inventory. Begin the process of downtown revitalization, and using vacant space in the downtown for entrepreneurs. Research the possibility of introducing business incubator(s) as part of the industrial strategy, including potential partners, budget, utilizing existing facilities, governance model, etc. • High Priority as program is intended to support growing businesses and increase commercial tax assessment. 	\$8,000
6.6	Downtown Rental Housing Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in creation of new residential rental units and improve condition of existing rental residential units in the upper storeys of commercial and office buildings. • High Priority as program is intended to increase the supply of attainable rental housing units and will increase the number of potential patrons of local businesses in the Downtown. 	\$5,000 per unit
6.7	Accessory Dwelling Unit Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in creation of new residential rental units outside of the Downtown in existing single detached, semi-detached and townhouse dwellings 	\$10,000 per unit

CIP SECTION	INCENTIVE / PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING PER PROJECT
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Priority as program is intended to increase the supply of attainable rental housing units in the Town. 	
6.8	POPS and Public Art Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the inclusion of art programming such as mural work, sidewalk art, commemoration, custom site amenities, etc. Supports the Strategic Plan: Pillar 5 (Economic Development), supporting perception of Downtown as vibrant gathering area and investigate opportunities to invest in space in the core to further promote and expand local arts, culture, and theatre. Low Priority as there are other pressing priorities at this time and there are funding reserves available for qualifying public art projects. 	\$5,000
6.9	Sidewalk Café and Outdoor Patio Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intended to support temporary sidewalk cafes in the Downtown and the establishment of restaurant patio space in other areas, where permitted and appropriate. Supports the Strategic Plan: Pillar 5 (Economic Development), supporting perception of Downtown as vibrant gathering area. High Priority as program would support lively and vibrant streetscape in Downtown and expansion of patron space in other areas. 	\$5,000
6.10	Design and Study Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with the completion of studies, plans, or designs that will investigate the site-specific potential of an improvement project. Moderate Priority as program would assist with upfront costs for businesses but completed plans and studies may not lead to an actual business startup in all cases. 	\$5,000
6.11	Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the cost of improvements by offering a grant for any required planning application or building permit fees. High Priority as program is intended to increase the supply of attainable housing units in the Town. 	\$5,000
6.12	Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate investment by deferring part of the increase in property taxation because of adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation, and retrofit works. Low Priority as implementation and monitoring of program will be difficult. 	
6.13	Province of Ontario Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cancellation or deferral of municipal taxes to assist with eligible costs of environmental remediation and rehabilitation. High Priority as program will support economic development objectives of the Town and lead to cleanup of brownfield properties. 	
6.14	Service Connection Fee Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with the cost of connections to water and wastewater services that may otherwise be considered cost prohibitive. To support Moderate Priority as the program can support some commercial, industrial and multi-residential infill development, but there will be a limited number of properties, relative to other programs, where this will be applicable. 	\$15,000

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Consultation fees associated with completing this project are accommodated in the Town budget.

The Council approved 2021 budget allocates \$50,000 to attainable housing incentives and \$30,000 to Façade and Heritage improvement grants. Upon approval of the CIP in 2021, it is recommended that Council dedicate the combined total of \$80,000 to fund approved CIP programs.

SUMMARY

It is recommended that Council direct staff to circulate the draft Community Improvement Plan to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for review and upon receipt of Ministry comments, staff initiate the required public meeting.

STRATEGIC PLAN

- ☒ This initiative is supported by the following priorities, outcomes, and tactics in the Plan.
- Pillar #4 Culture and Recreation, and Pillar #5 Economic Development:
 - Outcome: Protecting unique heritage assets and supporting perception of the downtown as a vibrant gathering area.
 - Tactic(s): Offer incentives to new businesses to occupy vacant storefronts. Investigate the idea of providing allowances for accessibility changes to buildings under the CIP. Investigate opportunities to invest in space in the core to further promote and expand local arts, culture, and theatre.
 - Pillar #5 Economic Development:
 - Outcome: Ensuring a vibrant and sustainable commercial sector, and focusing attention and resources to ensure both business retention and expansion.
 - Tactic(s): Identify vacant spaces to host entrepreneurs and create an inventory. Begin the process of downtown revitalization. Use vacant space in the downtown for entrepreneurs. Explore turnkey operations and serviced commercial/ industrial lands.
 - Pillar #5 Economic Development:
 - Outcome: Seeking new opportunities to attract small, medium and large industry is in the Town's best interests as part of its growth strategy. Increased focused on industry retention as part of the overall strategy.
 - Tactic(s): Build a retention plan, identify elements needed to ensure business stay and grow in the community.
 - Pillar #5 Economic Development:
 - Outcome: Future industrial success will require the ability to create and grow local businesses as well as attracting new enterprises to the community.
 - Tactic(s): Research the possibility of introducing business incubator(s) as part of the industrial strategy, including potential partners, budget, utilizing existing facilities, governance model, etc.

OTHERS CONSULTED

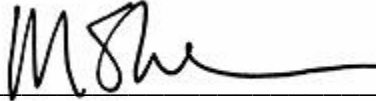
None

ATTACHMENTS

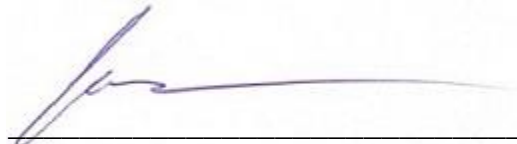
- 1) Town of St. Marys Community Improvement Plan - Draft
- 2) Town of St. Marys Community Improvement Plan Background Summary
- 3) Town of St. Marys Community Improvement Project Legislation/Policy Context

REVIEWED BY

Recommended by the Department

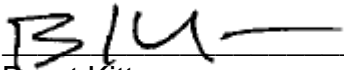


Mark Stone
Planner



Grant Brouwer
Director of Building and Development

Recommended by the CAO



Brent Kittmer
Chief Administrative Officer

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1. INTRODUCTION

St. Marys has long supported small businesses, entrepreneurs, and overall local economic development and revitalization by offering financial incentives (i.e., grants and loans) through the use of Community Improvement Plans (CIPs). However, in recent years, some of those programs have expired. Further, the Town has undertaken new planning initiatives, strategies, and studies to plan for the future, which also align with community improvement efforts.

In 2020, it was determined through Council Report DEV 10-2020 that a CIP review was needed to consolidate the existing CIP programs into a single document, and to modify/expand financial incentive programs in order to better meet the needs of St. Marys now and in the future.

The **St. Marys 2021 CIP** has been prepared to demonstrate that the Town remains committed to local revitalization and a prosperous future by investing in private landowners and businesses.

1.1 What is a CIP?

A CIP is a municipal planning and financial tool, legislated under the Ontario Planning Act, which sets out programs and strategies for improving the built, economic, and social environment in designated areas of a Municipality.

A CIP establishes a framework for public sector investment into private properties. Under Section 106 of the Municipal Act, municipalities are prohibited from directly or indirectly assisting local businesses by giving or lending money. However, having a CIP in place allows municipalities to assist financially with physical improvements to privately owned land and buildings.

Many municipalities across Ontario have prepared CIPs to achieve community goals, such as:

- Facilitating change;
- Stimulating economic growth;
- Assisting property owners with repair, rehabilitation, and redevelopment projects; and
- Raising awareness of local needs and priorities.

1.2 Contents

The **St. Marys 2021 CIP** sets out the following:

- A background summary (Section 2) and basis to the CIP¹ (Section 3);

¹ Sections 1 to 3 are not a legislative component of the St. Marys 2021 CIP.

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- Community Improvement Goal Statement and Objectives (Section 4);
- Community Improvement Project Areas (Section 5);
- Financial Incentive Programs (Section 6);
- Design Guidelines that apply to improvement projects (Section 7); **TBD**
- Details about implementing, marketing, and monitoring (Section 8).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The History of Community Improvement Planning in St. Marys

Prior to the **St. Marys 2021 CIP**, the Town had two CIPs in place:

1. The Facade Improvement CIP, which: was adopted on January 31, 2015; aimed to support the restoration and rehabilitation of building facades; and applied to the Central Commercial District (i.e., downtown area).
2. The Economic Prosperity CIP, which: was adopted on April 28, 2015; aimed to encourage job creation, business retention, and business expansion, in the industrial, commercial and retail sectors; and applied to the entire Town.

The Town's previous CIPs were prepared based on the direction of municipal documents/studies available at the time, including:

1. St. Marys Downtown/Community Economic Revitalization Strategy (2003), which was intended to guide and stimulate the community's economic, cultural, and social development.
2. "Our St Marys, Your Future", a community based strategic plan (2010), which set out strategies to better capitalize on the Town's strengths and assets and effectively position the community within the broader and regional economy.

The following table provides a summary of CIP grants awarded by the Town of St. Marys between 2015 and 2020.

Year	Total Façade Grants (\$)	Total Heritage Grants (\$)	Total of All Grants (\$)
2015	12,240	27,044	39,284
2016	12,765	26,746	39,511
2017	24,366	34,350	58,716

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Year	Total Façade Grants (\$)	Total Heritage Grants (\$)	Total of All Grants (\$)
2018	4,575	31,612	36,187
2019	17,813	10,379	28,192
2020	1,019	5,741	6,760

2.2 The Future of Community Improvement Planning in St. Marys

As mentioned, the Town has recently undertaken new planning initiatives, strategies, and studies to plan for the future. Incentive programs therefore need to reflect and integrate the directions from these documents into updated financial incentive programs, to ensure that goals and objectives are aligned.

In particular, the **St. Marys 2021 CIP** is based on land use planning policies, goals, and other directions established by the following Town led planning documents and initiatives:

- St. Marys Business Retention and Expansion Project;
- County of Perth, Town of St. Marys and City Stratford Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan;
- Strategic Plan Revision and Update;
- St. Marys Municipal Cultural Plan;
- St. Marys Asset Management Plan;
- Heritage Conservation District Plan; and,
- Town Official Plan and ongoing Official Plan review and update.

The **St. Marys 2021 CIP** also takes into consideration recent changes in Ontario's planning policy framework, including the following:

- Provincial Policy Statement, 2020; and
- More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019, S.O. 2019, c. 9 - Bill 108.

3. BASIS

3.1 Legislative Authority

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3.1.1 Planning Act

The Planning Act is the primary piece of legislation that provides the basis for the preparation of CIPs. The Planning Act sets out:

1. Types of projects/activities/works that are considered 'community improvement';
2. A process by which a Municipality can identify a 'community improvement project area' and prepare a 'community improvement plan';
3. Tools that can be implemented once a 'community improvement plan' is prepared; and
4. Eligible costs for which incentives can be provided.

Community Improvement:

Section 28(1) of the Planning Act defines 'community improvement' as "the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a Community Improvement Project Area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefore, as may be appropriate or necessary".

Section 28(2) states that where there is an official plan in effect in a local Municipality or in a prescribed upper-tier Municipality that contains provisions relating to 'community improvement', the Council may, by By-law, designate the whole or any part of an area covered by such an official plan as a 'community improvement project area'.

Community Improvement Project Areas:

Section 28(1) of the Planning Act defines the term 'community improvement project area' as "a Municipality or an area within a Municipality, the Community Improvement of which in the opinion of the Council is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason".

Community Improvement Plans:

Section 28(4) of the Planning Act states that once a 'community improvement project area' has been designated by By-law, "the Council may provide for the preparation of a plan suitable for adoption as a Community Improvement Plan for the Community Improvement Project Area".

Tools:

The Municipality may then prepare and use a 'community improvement plan' to:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land (Section 28(3));

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- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired/held by the Municipality (Section 28(6));
- Sell, lease or dispose of any land and buildings acquired or held by the Municipality (Section 28(6)); and
- Make grants or loans to eligible applicants within the community improvement project area to pay for the whole or any part of 'eligible costs' related to community improvement (Section 28(7)).

Eligible costs:

'Eligible costs' are defined in Section 28 (7.1) of the Planning Act, and include costs related to "environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities".

The word rehabilitation is emphasized above because it is important in understanding the definition of eligible costs. While the term 'rehabilitation' is not defined in the Planning Act, it is generally understood to mean the restoration of something back to its former capacity. By this definition, 'rehabilitation' would not apply to lands that have not previously been developed, or greenfield areas (i.e. lands located outside of the built-up area, as identified by the Province in 2006). Consequently, this section of the Planning Act does not allow for CIP tools to be applied to greenfield areas, unless for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, etc.

Finally, Section 28 (7.3) states that the total of the grants and loans that is provided in respect of the lands and buildings shall not exceed the eligible cost of the community improvement project with respect to those lands and buildings.

Planning and Building Fees:

Outside of Section 28, municipalities also use provisions from Section 69 of the Planning Act (related to establishing tariffs of fees in respect to planning and building) as part of community improvement plans. Under Section 69(2), Municipalities are permitted to reduce the amount of, or waive entirely, the requirement for the payment of a fee in respect of an application where the Council, planning board or committee is satisfied that it would be unreasonable to require payment; however, it is noted that a CIP is not required as a basis for implementing this tool.

Alternatively, a Municipality can collect fees and then provide a partial or total rebate of fees in the form of a grant, but this must be done through a CIP.

3.1.2 Development Charges Act

In addition to the range of community improvement tools established by the Planning Act, Section 5 of the Development Charges Act allows a Municipality (through its development charge by-law)

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to provide for full or partial development charge exemptions for certain types of development. This tool is often incorporated into municipal CIPs; however, again, a CIP is not required to use it.

3.1.3 Municipal Act

Finally, Section 365.1 of the Municipal Act enables Municipalities to implement the Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive Program, which is intended to bring brownfields back into productive use. Under this program, municipalities may pass by-laws providing for the cancellation of all or a portion of the taxes for municipal purposes levied on eligible properties for which a phase two environmental site assessment has been conducted. The Province shares in the cost of the program by funding the education portion of the property tax relief.

Similarly, Section 365.2 enables municipalities to implement the Heritage Property Tax Relief Program. The program encourages the maintenance and conservation of locally designated heritage properties by allowing Municipalities to pass a by-law to provide tax relief (10 to 40 per cent) to owners of eligible heritage properties, subject to agreement to protect the heritage features of their property. The Province also shares in the cost of the program by funding the education portion of the property tax relief. It is noted that a CIP is not required to implement this tax relief program; however, it is only available to heritage properties that are designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

3.2 Enabling Official Plan Policies

The Official Plan for the Town of St. Marys contains goals, objectives and policies for directing and managing change. The plan provides the long-term vision for growth and physical development of the municipality. Currently there are policies in place (as required by the Planning Act) that enable the creation of a CIP for the Town.

Existing policies allow the **St. Marys 2021 CIP** to address a wide range of physical, economic, and social needs and opportunities. Section 6.1 of the Official Plan identifies the following objectives for community improvement:

- 6.1.1 *To enhance the Town's ability to accommodate development, redevelopment and economic growth and to foster a climate favourable to private investment;*
- 6.1.2 *To preserve and protect, without placing undue burden to the Town's financial resources, man-made or natural features of the community that Council believes are important community assets;*
- 6.1.3 *To stimulate the rehabilitation and renewal of private property and enhance the visual quality and overall functionality of the community;*
- 6.1.4 *To preserve the viability of the Downtown area as the primary retail-commercial, civic and cultural focus of the Town; and*

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- 6.1.5 *To develop or rehabilitate hard and soft services in the Town to meet acceptable community standards, without placing undue burden on the Town's financial resources.*

In Section 6.2 of the Official Plan, a set of criteria are established which “*shall be used in the delineation of community improvement project areas for which community improvement plans will be prepared and implemented*”. The designated Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) for the **St. Marys 2021 CIP** is introduced in Section 5.0 and is based on this policy direction from the Official Plan.

4. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 CIP Goal Statement

This is the goal statement for the **St. Marys 2021 CIP**:

To proactively support and invest in the beautification, revitalization, and economic development of St. Marys, to achieve a more attractive, prosperous, and complete community.

4.2 CIP Objectives

To help measure the extent to which this goal is being achieved by the financial incentive programs, the following objectives for the CIP have also been identified:

1. Renew and restore private buildings and properties;
2. Expand local business activity;
3. Attract new investment, partnerships, and funding;
4. Increase the municipal tax base;
5. Promote St. Marys built and cultural heritage, and unique character;
6. Reduce vacant commercial and industrial buildings and properties; and
7. Increase the availability of affordable housing units.

5. COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA (CIPA)

5.1 Analysis

As noted earlier, the Town's Official Plan establishes criteria in Section 6.2, which is to be used to identify and designate CIPAs. The following table shows how the criteria are met **to some extent** in key areas of the Town. At least one criterion must be met in order to designate an area a CIPA.

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Table A: Applying the Official Plan CIPA Criteria to St. Marys

CIPA Criteria (Official Plan Section 6.2)	Downtown St. Marys	Industrial Areas	Residential Areas
Building stock or property in need of rehabilitation;	✓	✓	
Building and structures of heritage or architectural significance in an area warranting conservation and/or enhancement	✓		✓
Conflicting or incompatible land uses or activities			
Deteriorated or insufficient physical infrastructure such as, but not limited to, sanitary and storm sewers and water mains, hydro, public transit and utilities			
Deteriorated or insufficient community services such as, but not limited to public recreational or community facilities, public open space/parks and public social facilities, in terms of size, space, location, access, landscaping, grading or equipment			
Inadequate mix of housing types and densities, including insufficient affordable housing			
Known or perceived environmental contamination			
Deterioration or insufficient parking facilities;	✓		
Poor overall visual amenity of the area, including, but not limited to streetscapes and urban design	✓	✓	
Existing Business Improvement Areas or potential for inclusion in a Business Improvement Area designation	✓		
Deficient streetscapes in terms of poor roads, curbs, traffic circulation, sidewalks, boulevards, tree planting, street furniture and street lighting	✓		
Inadequate flood protection			
Need for greater energy or water efficiency on land or in buildings		✓	
Need for waste reduction or achieve other environmental sustainability objectives		✓	
Opportunities for intensification and redevelopment of under-utilized sites	✓		✓
There are a number of screening, buffering or landscaping deficiencies in the area		✓	
Shortage of land to accommodate building expansion and/or parking and loading facilities			
Other barriers to the improvement or redevelopment of underutilized land or buildings			
Any other environmental, social or community economic development reasons for designation	✓	✓	✓

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Based on the above analysis, it has been determined that the **St. Marys 2021 CIPA** should be as comprehensive as possible to address local improvement needs and to ensure that a wide range of incentives are available to key areas.

5.2 Designated CIPA

The **St. Marys 2021 CIPA** includes all lands within the municipal boundary, as shown in Schedule A of the Town of St. Marys Official Plan, as amended, and provided in Appendix A of this CIP. The **St. Marys 2021 CIPA** has been adopted by Council by By-law No. 2021-__.

Financial Incentive Programs may be available to registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants (with written consent of the owner) of lands and buildings located within the CIPA, subject to a number of eligibility criteria, as described in Section 6.2 of this CIP.

Further, to ensure that the provision of financial incentives will achieve the Town's most significant environmental, social, and community economic development needs and opportunities, eligible uses have also been identified, below.

5.3 Eligible Uses

Only certain types of existing or proposed uses in the CIPA will be eligible for financial incentives (in accordance with the uses permitted by the Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-law). Unless otherwise stated in the Program Specific Eligibility Criteria (Section 6.3 to 6.14), these uses include:

- Commercial, office, or mixed-use buildings located in the Downtown;
- Rental housing units that are located above the ground floor of a commercial building in the Downtown;
- Industrial uses in existing industrial areas; and
- Secondary/additional residential units in the residential area.

6. FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

6.1 Overview

Through the **St. Marys 2021 CIP**, the Town may provide financial incentives to eligible applicants within the CIPA identified in Section 5. The incentive programs are intended to stimulate private investment and physical improvements to private property, where such improvements will result in or contribute to the objectives set out in Section 4.2.

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The following Financial Incentive Programs may be available to eligible owners/tenants of land and buildings in the CIPA, subject to the Town's approved budget and availability of resources:

1. Façade and Signage Improvement Grant
2. Building and Site Improvement Grant
3. Commercial Conversion and Expansion Grant
4. Downtown Rental Housing Grant
5. Accessory Dwelling Unit Grant
6. POPS and Public Art Grant
7. Sidewalk Café and Outdoor Patio Grant
8. Design and Study Grant
9. Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate Grant
10. Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse Grant (TIEG)
11. Province of Ontario Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Grant
12. Service Connection Fee Grant

Detailed information about General Eligibility Criteria (Section 6.2) and Program Specific Eligibility Criteria (Section 6.3 to 6.14) are outlined in the following pages.

6.2 General Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for any of the Financial Incentive Programs that may be offered by the Town in any given year, the following General Eligibility Criteria must be met:

- a) The lands and buildings subject to an application must be located within the **St. Marys 2021 CIPA**. Town staff should be contacted to confirm that the property and proposed use is eligible.
- b) All projects must contribute to the CIP goals statement and to achieving one or more community improvement objectives (as identified in Section 4.1 and 4.2).
- c) All projects must comply with the any applicable Design Guidelines and be designed to complement the surrounding architectural styles and natural settings, and not overshadow the existing character of the broader area.
- d) All proposed projects must result in some level of improvement or rehabilitation over the existing conditions and will not simply represent a life cycle replacement.
- e) Unless otherwise specified, registered owners, assessed owners, and tenants (with written consent of the property owner) of private land or buildings may be eligible for financial incentives.

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- f) The total value of all grants provided to an owner/tenant shall in no case exceed the total value of eligible costs associated with the community improvement project.
- g) Unless otherwise specified in the Program Specific Eligibility Criteria (Section 6.3 to 6.14), an applicant may be eligible to receive multiple grants (provided they are available in any given year), in accordance with the following:
 - i. The total combined value of grants provided to the applicant by the Town per year shall not exceed \$10,000 per project and/or property (or \$20,000 if combined value includes Service Connection Fee Grant), or the total value of eligible costs, whichever is less; and
 - ii. Applicants shall not be eligible to receive the same grant two years in a row for the same property.
- h) Financial incentives will not be applied retroactively to works started prior to approval of applications and any application for costs incurred prior to the adoption of this CIP will not be considered eligible.
- i) The property owner must have no outstanding property tax or utility arrears or any other outstanding Town obligation on the subject property at the time of application or during the term of the grant.
- j) Applicants will be required to disclose all other funding sources, including governmental, private, or not-for-profit funding to support the project. These shall be taken into consideration in the review of applications and the value of incentives provided by the Town may be reduced, at the sole discretion of Council.
- k) The proposed works will conform with all applicable policies, standards, and procedures, including (but not limited to) the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, in addition to being subject to a review and the issuance of necessary planning and development approvals and building permits pursuant to the Ontario Building Code, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and Ontario Regulation 167/06 (i.e., Conservation Authority Regulated Areas).

In addition to these General Eligibility Criteria, a set of Program Specific Eligibility Criteria (Section 6.3 to 6.14) must also be met, which are outlined in the description of financial incentives.

6.3 Façade and Signage Improvement Grant

6.3.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Façade and Signage Improvement Grant may be available to eligible applicants to assist with the financing of improvements to an existing building's façade or signage in the Downtown.

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- b) This grant is intended to promote aesthetic and functional improvements to buildings and properties, which otherwise may not occur due to cost premiums associated with these improvements.

6.3.2 *Value of Grant*

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Façade and Signage Improvement Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible costs of façade and/or signage improvements.
- b) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$8,000 per project and/or property.
- c) The Town may increase the maximum value of the grant to \$10,000 per project and/or property when one or more of the following criteria are met:
 - i. A building has multiple storefronts or street addresses or is on a corner lot, where façade improvements are proposed on both frontages; or
 - ii. The restoration of heritage attributes is proposed.

6.3.3 *Eligibility Criteria*

- a) Properties will be eligible for the Façade and Signage Improvement Grant if the existing or proposed use is in accordance with the eligible uses listed in Section 5.3.
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- c) Applicants receiving the Façade and Signage Improvement Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

6.3.4 *Eligible Costs*

- a) For a Façade Improvement Project, improvements to the main and rear façade of buildings are eligible.
- b) Façade improvements to a side wall may also be eligible where the subject building or property is located in a prominent Downtown location and is adjacent to or is visible from a view corridor or has a significant public view in the opinion of Town staff.
- c) Eligible costs include the following:
 - i. Restoration or replacement of exterior building treatments, such as brickwork/cladding/siding and painting;
 - ii. Restoration or replacement of cornices, eaves, and parapets;
 - iii. Restoration or replacement of windows, doors, and awnings;
 - iv. Restoration or replacement of exterior lighting;
 - v. Chemical or other façade cleaning;
 - vi. Redesign of storefront/entrance, and provisions for accessibility; and
 - vii. Such other similar improvements and repairs that may be necessary to improve the appearance of a building façade exterior.

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- d) For a Signage Improvement Project, improvements to or replacement of the storefront signs of buildings are eligible. Where a side and/or rear wall sign is visible from a public street or public space, or fronts onto a laneway or parking lot, improvements to these signs may also be eligible.
- e) For Façade and Signage Improvements, the services of a professional engineer or architect to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs, subject to the following:
 - i. A grant for such services has not already been provided to the applicant through the Design and Study Grant (Section 6.10 of this CIP); and
 - ii. The maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15% of the total value of the grant.

6.3.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum as a grant based on eligible costs incurred.

6.4 Building and Site Improvement Grant

6.4.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Building and Site Improvement Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist with functional improvements to existing buildings and properties, and to extend the useful life, improve safety, add electric charging stations or other similar improvements to meet sustainability goals, and/or increase the value of a building or property. If required, improvements could extend onto Town owned lands (e.g. road allowances) if approved by the Town.
- b) This grant is intended to support improvements to private property to meet the current Building Code, and other building and site requirements (such as accessibility), in order to provide for safe and usable eligible uses.

6.4.2 Value of Grant

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Building or Property Improvement Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible costs.
- b) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$8,000 per project and/or property.

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6.4.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Properties will be eligible for the Building and Site Improvement Grant if the proposed or potential use being investigated is in accordance with the eligible uses listed in Section 5.3.
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- c) Applicants receiving the Building and Site Improvement Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

6.4.4 Eligible Costs

- a) For a Building or Site Improvement Project, improvements to the front, rear, and side of building(s) are eligible. Eligible costs include the following:
 - i. Structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors, and foundations;
 - ii. Installation of ramps, elevators, lifts, and/or automatic door openers, and other improvements to improve accessibility;
 - iii. Interior restoration and re-design;
 - iv. Repair/replacement/installation of building infrastructure, such as roofing, windows, and doors;
 - v. Repair/replacement/installation of plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and fire protection systems;
 - vi. Weatherproofing; and
 - vii. Any other improvements that may bring a building up to code, address health and safety concerns, or improve accessibility and removal of barriers as approved by the Town.
- b) The services of a professional engineer or architect to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs, subject to the following:
 - i. A grant for such services has not already been provided to the applicant through the Design and Study Grant (Section 6.9); and
 - ii. The maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15% of the total value of the grant.

6.4.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

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6.5 Commercial Conversion and Expansion Grant

6.5.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Commercial Conversion and Expansion Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist with the small-scale conversion and expansion of existing vacant or underused space into new commercial, mixed-use and other eligible uses.
- b) This grant is intended to support growing businesses thereby increasing commercial assessments.

6.5.2 Value of Grant

- a) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$8,000 per project and/or property.

6.5.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Properties will be eligible for the Commercial Conversion and Expansion Grant if the proposed or potential use being investigated is in accordance with the eligible uses listed in Section 5.3.
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.1 of this CIP must be met.
- c) Applicants receiving the Commercial Conversion and Expansion Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

6.5.4 Eligible Costs

- a) The Commercial Conversion and Expansion Grant may be provided for the construction and renovation costs related to the following types of projects:
 - i. Conversion of non-commercial or vacant building space into new commercial, mixed-use, secondary uses, and other eligible uses;
 - ii. Conversion of existing ground floor commercial space to better suit a new commercial use (e.g., retail to restaurant);
 - iii. Creation of business incubator space; and,
 - iv. Expansion of existing eligible uses to increase the gross floor area.
- b) The Grant will also apply to the adaptive re-use of existing structures.
- c) The services of a professional engineer, architect, landscape architect, or planner to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs, subject to the following:
 - i. A grant for such services has not already been provided to the applicant through the Design and Study Grant (Section 6.10); and

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- ii. The maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15% of the total value of the grant.

6.5.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

6.6 Downtown Rental Housing Grant

6.6.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Downtown Rental Housing Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with consent of the owner) to assist in the creation of new rental residential units in St. Marys and to improve the condition of existing rental residential units.
- b) The purpose of this program is to support the availability of a wider range of more attainable housing options in St. Marys.

6.6.2 Value of Grant

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Rental Housing Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible costs for each unit.
- b) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$5,000 per unit.

6.6.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Properties will be eligible for the Downtown Rental Housing Grant if the proposed or potential use being investigated is in accordance with the eligible uses in Section 5.3.
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- c) Applicants receiving the Downtown Rental Housing Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

6.6.4 Eligible Costs

- a) The Downtown Rental Housing Grant may be provided for the construction and renovation costs related to the following types of projects:
 - i. Creation of new residential units in the upper storey(s) of a commercial or office building; or
 - ii. Significant improvement in the quality of one or more existing residential units in the upper storey(s) of a mixed-use building, which achieve one or more of the following:

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- A. improve the quality of life for the occupants;
 - B. increase the value of the unit(s);
 - C. make previously inhabitable unit(s) habitable (and may include floodproofing measures); and,
 - D. make the unit attractive to a wider range of income groups.
- b) The services of a professional engineer, architect, landscape architect, or planner to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs, subject to the following:
 - i. A grant for such services has not already been provided to the applicant through the Design and Study Grant (Section 6.10); and
 - ii. The maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15% of the total value of the grant.

6.6.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

6.7 Accessory Dwelling Unit Grant

6.7.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) This grant is intended to support a greater mix and size of housing types in the Town, and the increased availability of attainable rental housing accommodation.
- b) The Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program provides a one-time grant to help offset project costs for the construction of an:
 - i. interior accessory apartment dwelling unit within an existing principal dwelling unit or as an addition thereto; or,
 - ii. exterior accessory apartment dwelling unit within an existing or new detached accessory structure.

6.7.2 Value of Grant

- a) After successful completion of the project, the applicant may receive a one-time grant from the Town, as follows:
 - i. the value of the grant is up to 50 percent of eligible project costs incurred, to a maximum of \$10,000, for the construction of an interior or exterior accessory dwelling unit.

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6.7.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Only on properties in compliance with the location and regulatory use permissions established in the Official Plan and Zoning By-law for accessory dwelling units;
- b) For the construction of:
 - i. an accessory apartment unit within, or as an addition to, an existing principal dwelling unit that is 5 years in age or older at time of complete application;
 - ii. an accessory apartment unit within an existing or new detached accessory structure.
- c) The property owner shall not be in arrears of any property taxes, local improvement charges or any other arrears or charges from the Town or the Province.
- d) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- e) Applicants receiving the ADU Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

6.7.4 Eligible Costs

- a) Eligible Project Costs that may be claimed for an ADU Grant are set out below.
 - i. Only eligible project costs that are consistent with, and incurred after the Building Permit for the accessory apartment unit has been issued by the Chief Building Official, may be claimed for the ADU Grant;
 - ii. Eligible Project Costs include building materials, labour costs, and new or upgraded HVAC systems and plumbing where required under the Building Permit to facilitate construction of the accessory dwelling unit;
 - iii. Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to, household appliances, decorative amenities, and financing, consulting fees, and fees to prepare building permit plans.

6.7.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

6.8 POPS and Public Art Grant

6.8.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The POPS and Public Art Grant may be available to eligible applicants to assist with the permanent installation of Publicly Accessible Private Spaces (POPS) and outdoor artworks on private property.
- b) The grant is intended to promote a lively and vibrant streetscape in Downtown St. Marys and encourage the creation of spaces that contribute to urban character, enhance the pedestrian experience, and complement the public network of parks, including: small

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parks, plazas, squares, atriums, extended sidewalks, mid-block connections/laneways, trails, community gardens, rooftop terraces, simple grass covered open spaces, and public art.

6.8.2 *Value of Grant*

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a POPS and Public Art Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible costs.
- b) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$5,000 per project and/or property.

6.8.3 *Eligibility Criteria*

- a) Properties will be eligible for the POPS and Public Art Grant if the proposed or potential use being investigated is in accordance with the eligible uses listed in Section 5.3.
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- c) Proposed public art projects must, in the opinion of the Town, be consistent with any applicable design guidelines.
- d) Proposed public art projects must also be suitable for a public audience and may not contain commercial or advertising content. Applicants shall work in cooperation with and obtain guidance from the Town with respect to proposed public art projects.
- e) Applicants receiving the POPS and Public Art Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

6.8.4 *Eligible Costs*

- a) Eligible costs associated with POPS or public art projects include:
 - i. Decorative signage;
 - ii. Paving and the addition of walkways;
 - iii. Addition of permanent landscaping features;
 - iv. Seating;
 - v. Lighting (decorative); and
 - vi. Material costs for design/production/fabrication/installation of new/original art works/structures, or the restoration of existing works/structures.
- b) The services of a professional artist or landscape architect to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs, subject to the following:
 - i. A grant for such services has not already been provided to the applicant through the Design and Study Grant (Section 6.10); and
 - ii. The maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15% of the total value of the grant.

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6.8.5 *Payment*

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

6.9 Sidewalk Café and Outdoor Patio Grant

6.9.1 *Purpose and Anticipated Benefits*

- a) The Sidewalk Café and Outdoor Patio Grant may be available to eligible applicants to assist with the beautification and physical improvement of seasonal outdoor sidewalk café spaces and permanent outdoor patios.
- b) The grant is intended to promote a lively and vibrant streetscape in the Downtown and support the establishment of restaurant patio space in other areas, where permitted and appropriate.

6.9.2 *Value of Grant*

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Sidewalk Café and Outdoor Patio Grant may be provided for 50% of the eligible costs of sidewalk café or outdoor patio provision.
- b) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$5,000 per project and/or property.

6.9.3 *Eligibility Criteria*

- a) Only Commercial or mixed use properties will be eligible for the Sidewalk Café and Outdoor Patio Grant .
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- c) Applicants receiving the Sidewalk Café Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).
- d) Applicants will not be eligible for the Sidewalk Café and Outdoor Patio Grant more than once during the lifetime of this CIP.

6.9.4 *Eligible Costs*

- a) Eligible costs associated with sidewalk café projects include:
 - i. Patio furniture;
 - ii. Decorative fencing; and
 - iii. Landscaping.

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- b) The services of a professional engineer, architect, landscape architect, or planner to design and implement the project will also be considered eligible costs, subject to the following:
 - i. A grant for such services has not already been provided to the applicant through the Design and Study Grant (Section 6.10); and
 - ii. The maximum amount of a grant for such services shall not exceed 15% of the total value of the grant.

6.9.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

6.10 Design and Study Grant

6.10.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Design and Study Grant may be available to eligible applicants for the completion of studies, plans, or designs that will investigate the site-specific potential of an improvement project.
- b) This grant is intended to aid with initial background planning and design in support of improvement projects on eligible properties.

6.10.2 Value of Grant

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Design and Study Grant may be provided to successful applicants for 50% of the total cost to complete eligible studies, plans, or designs.
- b) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$5,000 per project and/or property.

6.10.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Properties will be eligible for the Design and Study Grant if the proposed or potential use being investigated is in accordance with the eligible uses listed in Section 5.3.
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- c) The studies, plans, or designs must provide new site-specific information in support of a potential improvement project.
- d) Applicants receiving the Design and Study Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

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6.10.4 Eligible Costs

- a) The cost to complete any of the following types of studies, plans, or designs may be eligible for the Design and Study Grant:
 - i. Survey, concept plans and site plans;
 - ii. Traffic Impact Assessments;
 - iii. Environmental studies;
 - iv. Attainable housing report;
 - v. Studies and/or plans to enhance urban design;
 - vi. Other site-specific studies or plans which may be required by the Town at the time of pre-consultation or site plan approval and as approved by the CIP Implementation Lead; and
 - vii. Any combination of the above.
- b) Eligible studies, plans, or designs must be completed by licensed and/or qualified professionals as deemed by the Town.
- c) The applicant must provide at least three quotes for the completion of the subject studies, plans, or designs at the time of a financial incentive application, or the applicant must provide an explanation as to why three quotes is not possible.

6.10.5 Payment

- a) All completed studies, plans, or designs must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon completion of the approved study, plan, or design, to the satisfaction of Town staff. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred, and provided at the time of required Planning Act approval or building permit issuance.
- c) One electronic and one hard copy of the completed studies, plans, or designs shall be submitted to the Town for its review and retention.
- d) All completed studies will become the shared property of the Town and the successful applicant.

6.11 Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate Grant

6.11.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with written consent from the owner) to offset the planning and building fees required by the Town related to attainable housing projects.

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6.11.2 Value of Rebate

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate Grant may be provided to cover 50% of the eligible fees required by the Town in relation to a proposed project and/or property.
- b) The total value of the grant shall not exceed \$5,000 per project and/or property.

6.11.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Properties will be eligible for the Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate Grant if the proposed or existing use is in accordance with the eligible uses listed in Section 5.3.
- b) All General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP must be met.
- c) Applicants receiving the Planning Application and Building Permit Fee Rebate Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP in accordance with Section 6.2 g).

6.11.4 Eligible Costs

- a) Costs associated with the following may be eligible:
 - i. Planning application fees required by the, including minor variances, site plan approval, severances, and zoning by-law and official plan amendments; and
 - ii. Building or demolition permit fees required by the Town.
- b) Costs (i.e., hourly fees) associated with the processing of planning applications by Town staff will not be eligible.

6.11.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

6.12 Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse Grant (TIEG)

6.12.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse Grant (TIEG) will provide a grant to eligible property owners, which is equivalent to a percentage of the Municipal portion of a property tax increment that is incurred because of an improvement project.
- b) The purpose of the TIEG is to stimulate investment by deferring part of the increase in property taxation because of adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation, and retrofit works.

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6.12.2 Value of Grant

- a) Where a proposed project satisfies the eligibility requirements, a TIEG may be provided on approved applications as follows:
 - i. Grants will be provided for a period of 5 years.
 - ii. In year one, a grant that is equivalent to 100% of the Town portion of the tax increment may be provided to a property owner.
 - iii. In year two, a grant that is equivalent to 80% of the Town portion of the tax increment may be provided to a property owner.
 - iv. In year three, a grant that is equivalent to 60% of the Town portion of the tax increment may be provided to a property owner.
 - v. In year four, a grant that is equivalent to 40% of the Town portion of the tax increment may be provided to a property owner.
 - vi. In year five, a grant that is equivalent to 20% of the Town portion of the tax increment may be provided to a property owner. .
- b) To determine the suitability of the TIEG, the Town will attempt to estimate the total potential value of the grant prior to submitting an application for the program. The estimate will consider current assessment value, total anticipated investment, and the potential reassessment based on completing the works.
- c) Applicants should refer to the definition for Tax Increment provided in the Glossary of this CIP to further understand how grant values will be calculated.

6.12.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Eligible applicants will only include the registered owner/assessed owner of the subject property. Tenants will not be eligible for the TIEG.
- b) Only projects that are anticipated to generate an increase in assessment are eligible.
- c) Applicants receiving the TIEG will not be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this CIP.
- d) Properties will be eligible for the TIEG if the proposed use is in accordance with the eligible uses listed in Section 5.3.
- e) The General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.2 of this CIP also apply.

6.12.4 Eligible Costs

- a) For a TIEG, the following types of costs will be eligible:
 - i. Demolishing buildings;
 - ii. Adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation, and retrofit works;
 - iii. Upgrading on-site infrastructure including water services, sanitary sewers, and storm water management facilities;

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- iv. Constructing/upgrading of any off-site improvement that is required to fulfill any condition of a development/planning approval (including Site Plan Control) for the development, redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of the building and/or property; and
- v. Such other similar costs that may be necessary for the redevelopment, adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of the building and/or property, such as the completion of studies and the cost of planning application and building permit fees.

6.12.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) Grants may be provided in accordance with a TIEG Agreement made between the Town and the owner(s) upon successful completion of the approved project, to the satisfaction of the Town, and payment of the full reassessed value of Municipal taxes.
- c) If a property is sold, in whole or in part, before the grant period lapses, the original owner is not entitled to receive the remaining grant Payments. However, if a Grant Agreement is registered on the title of the subject property [per Section 28(11) of the Planning Act], the new owner may be entitled to receive the remaining grant payments.

6.13 Province of Ontario Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Grant

6.13.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Program provides tax assistance to eligible applicants whose properties require environmental remediation and/or risk assessment/management prior to redevelopment, in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001.
- b) Town property tax assistance for the municipal portion is provided by the Town of St. Marys through this grant. This grant also provides the opportunity for education tax assistance through the Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive – a program administered by the Province, which requires a separate application and is subject to approval by the Minister of Finance on a case-by-case basis.
- c) The purpose of the program is to:
 - i. Encourage the remediation and rehabilitation of brownfield sites (where actual contamination has been demonstrated) by providing tax assistance at the beginning of the clean-up process and also during the redevelopment stage. The program will also promote improvement of the physical and environmental condition of private property;
 - ii. Increase the supply of serviced residential and commercial land by redeveloping existing brownfield sites for the purpose of these uses; and

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- iii. Promote development on previously undevelopable lands.

6.13.2 Value of Grant

- a) The Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Program will provide a cancellation of all or part of the Municipal and Municipal portion of education taxes on a brownfield site during the rehabilitation period and development period, as defined in the Municipal Act, 2001.
- b) The value of the Town portion of the tax cancellation will be determined by the Town upon approval of a financial incentive application.
- c) Through the Provincial Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Program, the Minister of Finance may match property tax assistance for a maximum of three years. An extension prior to the termination of tax assistance may be possible.

6.13.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) Properties will only be eligible for the Brownfield Financial Tax Incentive Program if:
 - i. The eligible site must be qualified as a brownfield; and
 - ii. A Phase II ESA has been conducted, and additional work and/or remediation are required under the Environmental Protection Act to permit a Record of Site Condition (RSC) for the proposed use to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry.
- b) Eligible applicants will only include the registered owner/assessed owner of the subject property. Tenants will not be eligible for the Brownfield Financial Tax Assistance Program.
- c) An application must be accompanied by, at a minimum, a Phase II ESA prepared by a qualified person (as defined by the Environmental Protection Act) that contains:
 - i. An estimate of the cost of actions that will be required to reduce the concentration of contaminants on, in, or under the property to permit a RSC to be filed in the Environmental Site Registry under Section 168.4 of the Environmental Protection Act; and
 - ii. A work plan and budget for environmental remediation/risk management actions.
- d) All other General Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 6.1 of this CIP must be met.
- e) Applicants receiving the Brownfield Financial Tax Assistance Grant will be eligible for the TIEG but will not be eligible for any other incentive programs offered through this CIP.

6.13.4 Eligible Costs

- a) Eligible costs include the following:
 - i. Environmental Site Assessments (Phase I and II ESAs and Risk Assessment);
 - ii. Environmental remediation activities;

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- iii. Costs of preparing a RSC, including subsequent subsurface characterization work required to support RSC filing;
 - iv. iv. Placing clean fill and grading;
 - v. v. Installing environmental and/or engineering controls/works as specified in a Risk Assessment completed for the property; vi. Monitoring, maintaining and operating environmental and engineering controls/works; and vii. Environmental insurance premiums.
- b) For all eligible projects, the property shall be improved such that the amount of work undertaken is sufficient to, at minimum, result in an increase in the assessed value of the property.

6.13.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

6.14 Service Connection Fee Grant

6.14.1 Purpose and Anticipated Benefits

- a) The Service Connection Fee Grant may be available to eligible property owners and tenants (with written consent of the owner) to assist with the cost for connections to water and wastewater services that may otherwise be considered cost prohibitive.
- b) The program is intended to increase the number of serviced properties in areas where there is infill potential for commercial, industrial or multi-residential development.

6.14.2 Value of Grant

- a) Where all eligibility requirements are fulfilled, a Service Connection Fee Grant may be provided for up to 50% of the eligible costs for connections to water and waste services.
- b) A minimum total investment of \$2,500 shall be required by an applicant in order to be eligible. In other words, the minimum value of a grant shall be \$5,000, representing a \$2,500 contribution from the applicant and a \$2,500 contribution from the Town.
- c) The Town will provide a maximum of \$15,000 per property as part of a Service Connection Fee Grant

6.14.3 Eligibility Criteria

- a) To be eligible, the general eligibility criteria set out in Section 5.3 of this CIP apply.
- b) A property is eligible for the Service Connection Fee Grant once during the term of this CIP.

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- c) Applicants receiving the Service Connection Fee Grant may be eligible for additional incentive programs offered through this Plan in accordance with Section 6.2.

6.14.4 Eligible Costs

- a) For a Service Connection Fee Grant, the following costs will be eligible:
 - i. New water and wastewater connection application fees; and
 - ii. Construction and engineering related costs associated with the connection of water and wastewater services to previously unserved properties.
- b) The applicant must provide at least three quotes for the required works, plans, or designs at the time of a financial incentive application, or the applicant must provide an explanation as to why three quotes is not possible.

6.14.5 Payment

- a) All completed projects must comply with the description as provided in the grant application form.
- b) The grant will be provided upon successful completion of the approved project. The grant will be paid in a lump sum based on eligible costs incurred.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Implementation Period

It is anticipated that the CIP will be implemented over a 10-year period ending _____ 2031. Council may reduce the implementation period as deemed appropriate or necessary, without an amendment to the CIP. An extension to the lifetime of the CIP will require an amendment.

7.2 Administration

7.2.1 Council Roles and Responsibilities

- a) Town Council will provide direction to staff annually on the implementation of the CIP (subject to the Town's priorities and the availability of resources/funding) as follows:
 - i. Identifying key priority sites for that budget cycle;
 - ii. Determining which of the CIP Financial Incentive Programs will be put into effect in any given year during the implementation period, if any; and,
 - iii. Identifying (as part of the annual budgeting process) a community improvement budget for financial incentives that have been put into effect for that year, if any, in accordance with Section 7.3 of this CIP.

7.2.2 CIP Implementation Lead (Chief Building Official)

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- a) The CIP Implementation Lead will be responsible for:
 - i. Reviewing and evaluating applications for financial incentives; and
 - ii. Making a recommendation to Council with respect to the approval or refusal of financial incentive applications, if required.

7.2.3 Administration of Financial Incentives

- a) The Town may put into effect any number of the financial incentives identified in this CIP during the implementation period, subject to the availability of Town funds and other resources.
- b) Annually, the CIP Implementation Lead may make recommendations to Council with respect to the administration of financial incentives.
- c) Applications for financial incentives may be received on a first come, first served basis to the limit of the available funding for that year. Alternatively, Council may establish an annual/bi-annual deadline for the submission of applications and all applications will be received and evaluated in accordance with this deadline.
- d) Applications will be evaluated in a timely manner, in accordance with:
 - i. General Eligibility Requirements, as outlined in Section 6.2;
 - ii. Program Specific Eligibility Requirements, as outlined in each of the grant program details (Section 6.3 to 6.14);
 - iii. Application requirements, as outlined in Section 7.4; and
 - iv. A Council approved budget.
- e) In cases where the CIP Implementation Lead refuses an application for financial incentives, all applicants will have the right to appeal the decision to Council. If a decision is appealed, a staff report will be prepared for Council detailing the Lead's decision. The applicant can appear at Council to detail their appeal.

7.3 Financial Management

- a) As part of the annual Town budgeting exercise, Council will consider a community improvement budget for financial incentives that have been put into effect for that year, if any.
- b) The provision of any grant incentive shall be to the limit of the available funding for that year.
- c) During the implementation period of this CIP, Council will determine if funding and incentive levels are necessary or warranted to ensure that the CIP functions properly in respect of the goals and objectives (as set out in Section 4.0), and the Town's financial circumstances.

7.4 Applying for Incentives

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7.4.1 Application Process

The following is a summary of the process for the submission, evaluation, and approval of Financial Incentive Program applications. .

- a) Applicants must meet with the CIP Lead for a pre-consultation meeting, prior to submitting an application, to confirm requirements for a complete application.
- b) Applications must be submitted in accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 7.4.2.
- c) The CIP Implementation Lead will evaluate all applications and supporting materials and may conduct a site visit. Applicants will be notified if their submission is incomplete.
- d) Based on the evaluation of complete applications, a recommendation will be made to Council, if necessary, with respect to the approval or refusal of an application.
- e) For applications that are approved, a Financial Assistance Agreement will be prepared and executed.
- f) Any program commitments may be cancelled if work does not commence within six months of approval of an application, or if a project is not undertaken or completed in accordance with the Financial Assistance Agreement.
- g) When projects are completed, a statement with supporting invoices and proof of payment shall be submitted to the Town. Following this, the work will be inspected by the Town and, if approved, notice of completion will be issued and the financial assistance will be initiated.
- h) Upon completion of a community improvement project, the Town reserves the right to inspect any properties/buildings, or to audit final costs at the owner's expense.
- i) Funding approval will lapse if a notice of completion is not issued within 12 months of the date of execution of the Financial Assistance Agreement unless agreed upon by the applicant and the Town.
- j) The CIP Implementation Lead may grant an extension for community improvement works following receipt of a written request by the owner setting out the reasons for the extension and providing a new date of completion.
- k) Should the applicant fall into default of any of the requirements of the incentive program or other requirements established by the Town, incentives may be delayed, reduced, or cancelled. Applicants may be required to repay benefits to the Town.

7.4.2 Application Requirements

Applications for financial incentives offered through the CIP must include:

- a) One copy of a completed and signed application form.

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- b) One copy of all supporting documentation, as determined by the CIP Implementation Lead at a pre-consultation meeting, which may include (but is not limited to):
 - i. Good quality photographs of the existing condition of the buildings and property;
 - ii. Past/historical photographs and/or drawings (where available);
 - iii. Specifications of the proposed project, including design drawings prepared by a design professional (if available) or sketches, renderings, and/or elevation drawings illustrating the proposed improvements;
 - iv. Three detailed independent contractor estimates for each component of the proposed eligible work, or two estimates covering all the components of the eligible work. Any labour hours provided by the applicant in preparation of the estimates or application will not be considered an eligible expense;
 - v. A statement with respect to how the proposed project meets the overall goals and objectives of the CIP; and
 - vi. Any additional requirements as determined by the CIP Implementation Committee.
- c) The Town is not responsible for any of the costs associated with the preparation of a CIP financial incentive application.

8. MARKETING AND MONITORING

8.1 Marketing

The following are communications materials that the Town may develop to promote the **St. Marys 2021 CIP** and the related opportunities:

- d) A section on the Town's website devoted to the CIP, including information on financial incentives the application process;
- e) Promotion of the CIP incentives via social media tools;
- f) An information package that would be sent to both property-owners and tenant businesses in the CIPA;
- g) A bi-annual E-newsletter highlighting new developments, businesses and public realm improvements, as well as CIP success stories;
- h) Presentations could be tailor made to business associations and other groups to communicate the opportunities available through the CIP;
- i) Information nights could be held in the CIPA to share information about the CIP programs and incentives;
- j) Information displays could be provided at local community events, conferences, and at municipal buildings, to broadly promote the CIP; and

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- k) Annual progress reports could be prepared to outline the success of the CIP over the period of one year and to serve as case studies for future applicants.

The Town may also identify target businesses and properties where improvements would be most desirable, and arrange short visits with owners/managers, to ensure awareness and encourage take-up.

These activities may be undertaken as part of the initial launch of the new CIP program, and repeated annually or every few years as “reminders” of the CIP opportunities.

8.2 Monitoring

8.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the following monitoring strategy is to:

- a) Track funds provided by the **St. Marys 2021 CIP** to owners and tenants of land located in the CIPA;
- b) Evaluate whether the programs are achieving the goals and objectives set out by the CIP;
- c) Determine whether program adjustments are required; and
- d) Provide the basis for reporting the results of the CIP, and specifically the uptake and success of Financial Incentive Programs, to Town Council.

8.2.2 Data Collection

Collection of data related to financial incentive applications and proposed/completed projects should be on-going during the implementation of the **St. Marys 2021 CIP**. The Town should monitor the following on an on-going basis for applications not approved:

- a) Number of unsuccessful applications; and
- b) Reason(s) for the application’s refusal.

For each approved financial incentive application, the Town should also monitor the following on an on-going basis:

- a) Project details as proposed in application;
- b) Approved value of grants, in total and by program;
- c) Total private sector investment/total value of construction;
- d) Number of building permits issued (if applicable);
- e) Timing of completion of the project and payment of the grant;
- f) Property tax assessment before and after the completion of the project, if relevant;
- g) Total value of tax incentives, planning application/building permit and/or development charges waived if applicable; and

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- h) Project details of the completed project (“after” photos).

8.3 Reporting

An annual report should be prepared to highlight the successes and achievements of the **St. Marys 2021 CIP**. The report will be presented to Council for consideration. The report may recommend adjustments/amendments to the CIP, as discussed below.

8.4 Plan Amendments

As a result of the monitoring and evaluation of the **St. Marys 2021 CIP**, amendments may be required. At minimum, the Town will complete a 5-year review of this CIP to determine whether or not amendments are required.

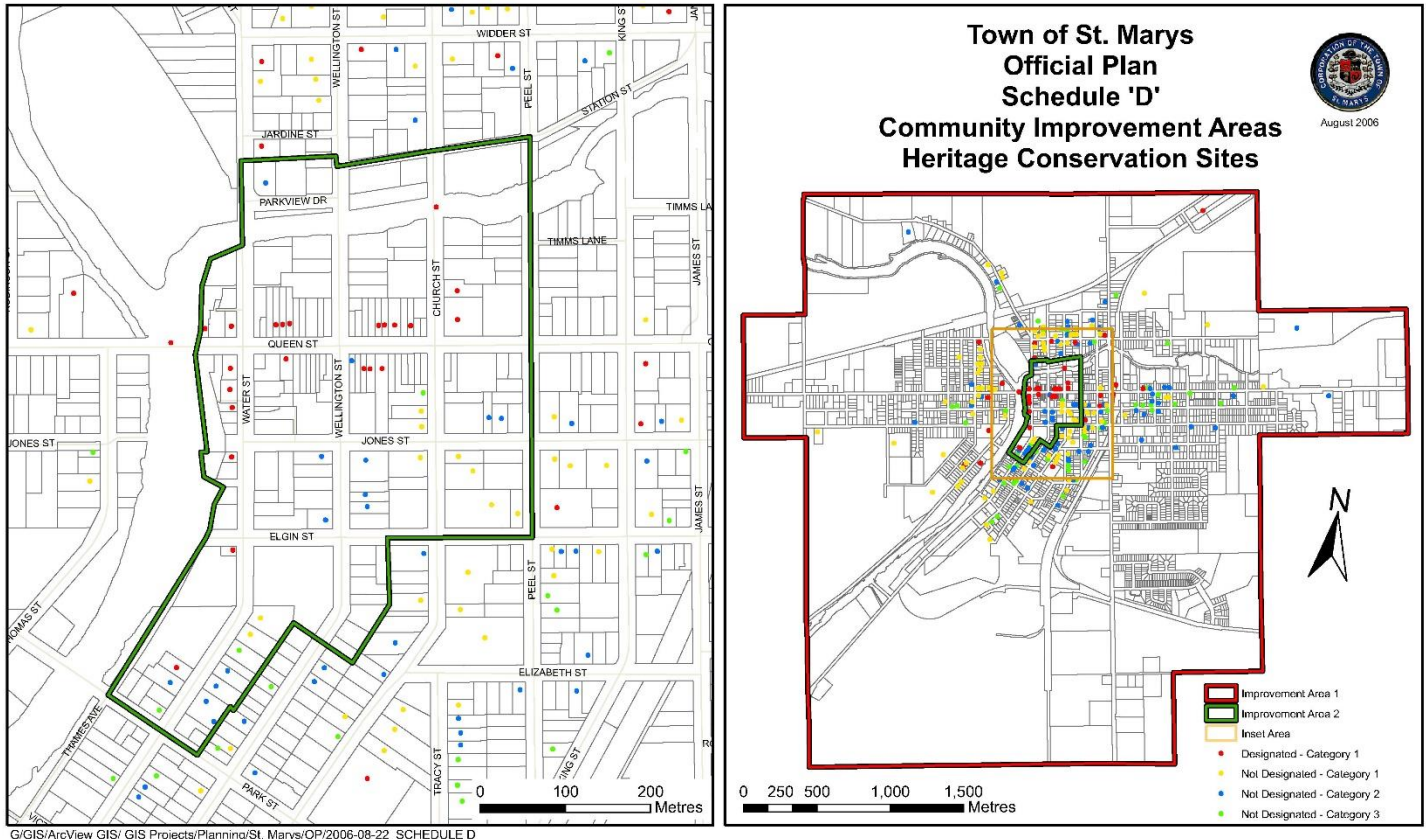
The following summarizes when CIP amendments are and are not required:

- a) An amendment to the **St. Marys 2021 CIP** will not be required to:
 - i. Reduce funding levels for the Financial Incentive Programs; or
 - ii. Discontinue or cancel any of the programs identified.
- b) An amendment will be required to the **St. Marys 2021 CIP** or implementing by-laws to:
 - i. Extend the implementation period of the CIP;
 - ii. Add any new Financial Incentive Programs;
 - iii. Modify the eligibility criteria related to Financial Incentive Programs offered; and
 - iv. Modify the geographic area (i.e., the CIPA) to which Financial Incentive Programs apply.

Amendments to this CIP will be passed by Council under the Planning Act. The Town of St. Marys will also be required to pre-consult with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on any amendments to the **St. Marys 2021 CIP**.

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APPENDIX A



Town of St. Marys Community Improvement Background

The Town of St. Marys Façade Improvement CIP was established to encourage property owners to improve and maintain existing buildings, and preserve heritage features in the central commercial district.

The Town of St. Marys Economic Prosperity CIP was established to encourage job creation, and business retention and expansion in the industrial, commercial and retail sectors throughout the Town. The Economic Prosperity CIP consists of the Business Investment Grant Program which is intended to assist in attracting new businesses to St Marys whereby eligible businesses will be able to receive a grant for a percentage of the tax increment generated as a result of development, redevelopment, rehabilitation, or construction, of a building or property. The Business Revitalization/Expansion Grant Program is intended to support small businesses and entrepreneurs, and to provide incentives for large manufacturing businesses to grow and expand in St. Marys. This program expired on December 31, 2019.

Façade Description	% of Eligible Costs	Annual Maximum Grant
Façade portions greater than 0 linear metres to 15 linear metres	30%	\$3,000 for the façade subject to the application
Façade portions greater than 15 linear metres to 30 linear metres	20%	\$400 per every 3 linear metres subject to the application to a maximum of \$2,000
Façade portions greater than 30 linear metres to 45 linear metres	10%	\$200 per every 3 linear metres subject to the application to a maximum of \$1,000

Eligible costs under both CIPs are listed below:

- entrance modifications to provide barrier-free accessibility
- installation/upgrading of fire protection systems
- repair/replacement of roof;
- structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors and foundations
- water/flood/weatherproofing
- repair/replacement of windows and doors
- extension/upgrading of plumbing and electrical services for the creation of habitable space
- installation/alteration of required window openings to residential spaces
- professional design fees
- professional architectural fees
- landfill/tipping fees
- building demolition costs
- development or redevelopment of a building or property
- expansion of an existing building or facility
- adaptive reuse, building rehabilitation and retrofit works
- up to 100% of development application fees and building permit fees (includes application for Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment, Minor Variance or Permission, Consent, Site Plan

- required improvements to heating and ventilation systems
- other similar repairs/improvements related to health and safety issues, as may be approved

Approval/Amendment/Modification/Termination, Plan of Subdivision/ Condominium, Condominium Conversion, Part Lot Control Exemption, Demolition Permit up to 50% of Building Permit fees)

Grants provided cannot exceed \$15,000 or the value of the eligible work that resulted in the reassessment, whichever is the lesser.

Year of Grant	Grant Percentage
1	100%
2	100%
3	80%
4	60%
5	40%

And under both CIPs, the payment schedule for the Business Development Grant and Business Revitalization/Expansion Grant Program is as follows:

Both CIPs state that Council:

- may conduct periodic reviews of the program(s) being offered under the CIPs to determine program effectiveness and whether funding levels should be increased or decreased, or whether modifications to the program should be made; and,
- is required to amend a CIP to add programs or significantly increase financial commitments.

Town of St. Marys Community Improvement Project

Legislation / Policy Context

Planning Act

Section 28 of the Planning Act defines “community improvement” as:

“the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary”.

Community improvement also includes the provision of affordable housing [28(1.1)].

Other key components of Section 28 of the Planning Act include:

- eligible costs of a CIP may include costs related to environmental site assessment, environmental remediation, development, redevelopment, construction and reconstruction of lands and buildings for rehabilitation purposes or for the provision of energy efficient uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities. (7.1)
- An agreement concerning a grant or loan may be registered against the land to which it applies and enforced by the municipality. (11)

Provincial Policy Statement

There are a number of provincial policies that support the Town’s community improvement initiatives including:

- Sustaining communities by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential including affordable housing, and employment (1.1.1)
- Settlement areas shall be the focus of growth and development, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted (1.1.3.1)
- Promoting economic development and competitiveness by providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment uses (1.3.1)
- Supporting long-term economic prosperity by:
 - promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness
 - promoting well-designed built form and cultural planning
 - maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and mainstreets
 - promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites
 - providing opportunities for sustainable tourism development (1.7.1)

Official Plan

The establishment of CIP programs and incentives support the housing and economic development goals and general principles in Section 2 of the Town's Official Plan, including:

- 2.1.1 Residential areas in St. Marys shall provide a range of housing accommodation suitable for all age groups and household incomes.
- 2.1.3 The central business area of the Town will continue as the primary retail, commercial, civic and cultural focus of the Town.
- 2.1.4 Owners will be encouraged to maintain and improve the physical condition and economic health of existing buildings in order to allow the Town to capitalize upon its natural and heritage resources and to provide for the integration of new, compatible uses.
- 2.1.5 The central business area will be encouraged to develop and redevelop with an efficient and harmonious overall design and to provide the widest possible range of goods and services to all residents in the market trading area.

Community Improvement is addressed in the Official Plan under Section 6 – Community Improvement which states, “Council recognizes the need to maintain and rehabilitate the physical environment within the Town of St. Marys and Council is therefore committed to ongoing improvement efforts where deficiencies exist. Specific objectives for community improvement have been selected and areas in need of community improvement have been delineated within the Town based on specific criteria relating to improvement needs”.

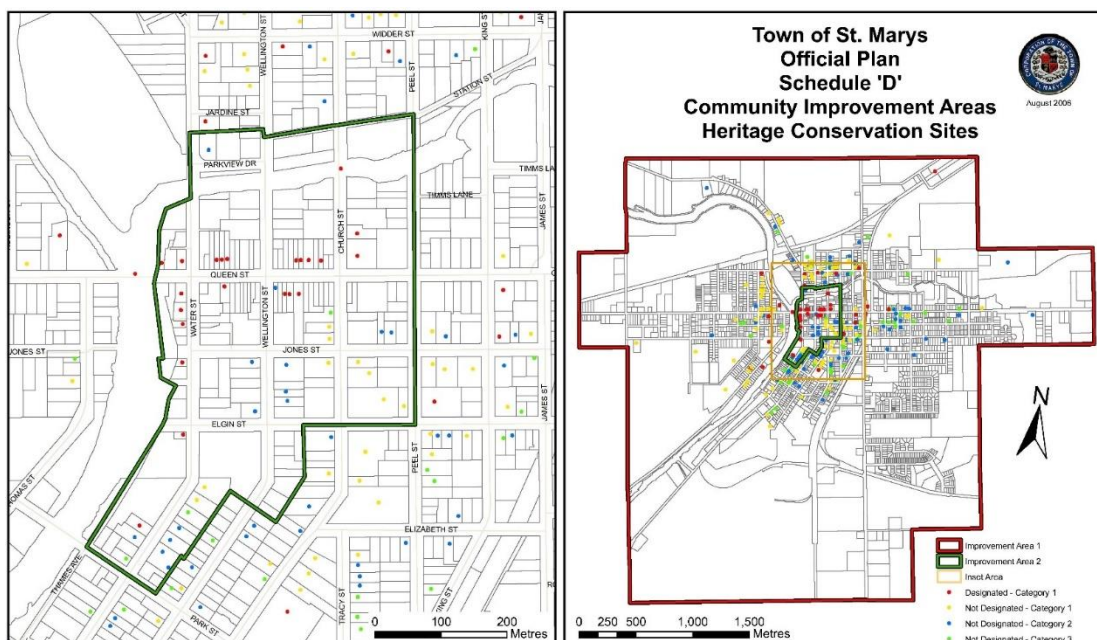
Section 6.1 of the Official Plan sets out community improvement objectives, providing the basis for undertaking CIPs and community development projects to help ensure the ongoing maintenance, improvement and rehabilitation of the Town's residential, commercial and industrial districts. Objectives identified in this section are as follows:

- 6.1.1 To develop or rehabilitate hard and soft services in the Town to meet acceptable community standards, without placing undue burden on the Town's financial resources.
- 6.1.2 To enhance the Town's ability to accommodate development, redevelopment and economic growth and to foster a climate favourable to private investment.
- 6.1.3 To preserve and protect, without placing undue burden to the Town's financial resources, man-made or natural features of the community that Council believes are important community assets.
- 6.1.4 To preserve the viability of the Central Commercial area as the primary retail-commercial, civic and cultural focus of the Town.

Section 6.2 of the Official Plan sets out the following criteria which provides the basis for delineation of areas in need of community improvement and the selection of specific project areas for which CIPs will be prepared and implemented:

- 6.2.1 Roads in need of resurfacing;
- 6.2.2 Sidewalk or curb replacements required;
- 6.2.3 Outdated sanitary sewer, storm sewer, or water distribution systems;
- 6.2.4 Insufficient or inadequate social or recreational facilities;
- 6.2.5 Inadequate or outdated street-lighting, traffic signals or signage;
- 6.2.6 Lack of off-street parking;
- 6.2.7 Older buildings or properties suffering from poor maintenance or decay and in need of rehabilitation;
- 6.2.8 Lack of appropriate land to accommodate community growth in existing developed areas;
- 6.2.9 Properties requiring improved storm water drainage or flood protection;
- 6.2.10 Insufficient quantity and/or variety of housing to meet community needs in existing developed areas; and
- 6.2.11 Properties which are underutilized with good potential for development or redevelopment.

Section 6.3 states in part that “the criteria for selection were applied to all parts of the Town and two community improvement areas were identified. Both areas exhibit many of the deficiencies noted in the criteria for area selection. One of the two community improvement areas identified by the Official Plan encompasses the commercial core area of the Town of St. Marys. The predominant land use type in this area is commercial and most of the deficiencies listed under criteria for area selection exist here. Section 6.4 of the Town of St. Marys Official Plan which addresses Phasing of Community Improvements states, “Emphasis shall be placed on improving the business community in the Central Commercial area to protect its viability as a location for business.”



Section 6.5 of the Town of St. Marys Official Plan sets out methods of implementing community improvements. Some of the methods which Council may choose to achieve community improvement objectives include:

- Establish a special committee of Council that will prepare and oversee the implementation of community improvements by utilizing the community improvement provisions outlined in Section 28 of the Planning Act, RSO 1990.
- Take advantage of senior government programs that are available to assist municipal community improvement projects.
- Support the provisions of the Town's Maintenance and Occupancy Standards By-law.
- Acquire land utilizing any assistance available through senior government programs.
- Encourage the redevelopment or rehabilitation of privately-owned properties in need of improvement and take advantage of senior government programs that are available to assist property owners in their efforts.
- Dispose of municipally-owned land to private sector investors who will develop projects that Council believes will be important assets to the community.
- Support and assist the Business Improvement Area and Merchants' Association in their efforts to improve the viability of the Town as a location for business.
- Co-operate and liaise with community service clubs in an effort to improve community services.
- Encourage and support the development of infill projects on underutilized properties.
- Support the preservation of properties that Council believes to be historically significant.

FORMAL REPORT

To:	Chair Strathtdee and Members of Strategic Priorities Committee
Prepared by:	Jenna McCartney, Clerk
Date of Meeting:	16 March 2021
Subject:	ADMIN 11-2021 Community Safety and Well-being Plan Update

PURPOSE

To update the Committee on the progress of the Community Safety and Well-being Plan in conjunction with other relevant projects that have aligned with the desired outcome of the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT ADMIN 11-2021 Community Safety and Well-being Plan Update report be received.

BACKGROUND

In January 2019, new requirements for Community Safety and Well-being planning came into force. The *Police Services Act*, 1990 (PSA) was amended and municipalities across Ontario were required to develop and adopt a community safety and well-being (CSWB) plan (the Plan) in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders and groups.

In February 2020, the Town of St. Marys partnered with the City of Stratford, Municipality of West Perth, North Perth, Perth East and Perth South to hire DPRA Canada Inc. as the consultant that would steer the partners through the plan development.

Although the original deadline to complete the report was January 1, 2021, the Ministry of the Solicitor General has extended the deadline until July 1, 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

REPORT

There are a few contributing factors that will be considered in conjunction with this report. They are:

- Community and Safety Well-being Plan
- Town of St. Marys Community and Social Wellbeing Plan
- University of Guelph Rural Response to COVID-19 Survey Results

Community and Safety Well-being Plan

The CSWB Advisory Committee has reviewed a final version of the Plan. It was noted that the original procurement of this project did not include a graphic design component. The Advisory Committee was hesitant with recommending the final version to municipal councils for approval as it lacked the professional touches that graphic design offers.

Realizing that the Town's Communications department has the high-quality skills and tools to accomplish the graphic design in-house, St. Marys has offered to bring this Plan to completion.

It is the Advisory Committee's objective to have the graphic design completed by mid-May in unison with the implementation plan. The detail of the implementation plan is anticipated to be the driver that explains the important question, "what next". The Advisory Committee will then forward a recommendation to the applicable municipal councils seeking approval of the final version in keeping with the legislative deadline of July 1, 2021.

Presented to the Committee today specifically related to the CSWB Plan, are three documents which have been appended to this report. They are:

- Letter from the CSWB Advisory Committee;
- Executive Summary from DPRA of the CSWB Plan; and
- Frequently Asked Questions about the CSWB Plan.

The letter from the Co-Chairs, Kim McElroy from the City of Stratford Social Services Department and Chief Greg Skinner of Stratford Police Service, provides an overview of the project and the next steps forward. Furthermore, the letter identifies that the Plan consists of two components; the Plan itself and the Implementation Plan.

The letter from DPRA provides an executive summary of the Plan and identifies how the Plan was developed including the research taken to fuel the outcomes.

Finally, the frequently asked questions list is provided that explains different aspects of the Plan and the legislated requirements associated.

As Council is aware, finding solutions to local social issues has become a key priority for Council and Staff. The CSWB Plan has provided useful information for Council and staff to consider as tactics are developed to solve both regional and local issues. Regionally, it is expected that some of the tactics in the larger scale CSWB implementation plan will require St. Marys' participation at the regional table to find ways to partner on regional tactics.

At the local level, the CSWB Plan will provide useful context to further inform the work that has been ongoing over the last fifteen months to address the social issues that exist in our community. It is staff's vision that implementation of local tactics to address the findings of the CSWB Plan will be done in conjunction with the work that is already ongoing in the Town's Community and Social Wellbeing Plan.

Community and Social Wellbeing Plan

The local approach was presented to Council as an initial draft at the regular meeting on December 8, 2020. Staff are referring to the local approach as the Community and Social Wellbeing Plan. The purpose of this document is to track all of the community wellness tactics directly delivered by the Town that have been implemented within the last fifteen months whether in response to the social issues that exist in or have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The vision for the document is that it is a relaunch of the Town's original Community Wellness Plan, and its goal is to consolidate all of the Town's tactics that are scheduled for the future to support the social wellbeing. The plan is for the document to be fluid, and its tactics will be updated or newly launched as the CSWB Plan is further digested, and as the University of Guelph Survey Results (below) are better understood.

An internal committee including Brent Kittmer, Stephanie Ische, André Morin, Jenny Mikita, Beverly Brenneman and Jenna McCartney has been struck to support the Community and Social Wellbeing Plan. The internal committee has reviewed the implementation plan and updated it since it was last presented to Council in December. Moving forward, staff will be assigned leaders of the various tactics, and regular reports on the advancement of the plan will be provided to Council.

Through the partnership between Family Services Perth Huron, City of Stratford, United Way Perth Huron and Town of St. Marys, a Community Development Worker has been hired to support the community of St. Marys.

The Community Development Worker will play an integral role in the implementation of the Community and Social Wellbeing Plan. After the internal committee has been introduced to the Community Development Worker, staff will offer formal introductions to other stakeholders from within St. Marys or those that support St. Marys.

University of Guelph Rural Response to COVID-19 Survey Results

While DPRA was conducting surveys and focus groups to develop an understanding of the participating communities' safety and wellbeing concerns, the University of Guelph executed a survey related to the rural response to the pandemic.

At the March 16 SPC meeting, representatives from the University of Guelph will present Council with the findings of the survey.

CSWB Advisory Committee members in addition to Town staff have acknowledged that surveys such as this will play a role in the implementation plan developed through the CSWB Plan. It is staff's plan to use the survey results to develop further tactics and strategies to be integrated into the Town's Community and Social Wellbeing Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Town's financial commitment to the development of the CSWB Plan was approved in 2020. The initial payment has been disbursed to the consultant. The second payment will be disbursed upon completion of the CSWB implementation plan and final approve by the various Council's of the Plan.

The provincial government has not identified what the next steps are for municipalities with respect to this project. However, there is speculation that each municipality will be required to present regular reporting to the ministry that identifies progress through the implementation plan. It is unknown at this time whether the provincial government will be contributing financially to the outcomes.

SUMMARY

Staff are presenting a number of reference documents to the Committee that contribute to the overall social, safety and wellbeing perspective of the community.

The next steps include presenting the final Community and Safety Well-being Plan and implementation plan to Council prior to the July 1, 2021 legislated deadline.

STRATEGIC PLAN

- ☒ This initiative is supported by the following priorities, outcomes, and tactics in the Plan.
 - Pillar #3 Balanced Growth
 - Tactic(s): Review and identify what infrastructure needs should be in place to attract / retain this demographic (e.g. housing that's affordable, public services, etc.)

OTHERS CONSULTED

Kim McElroy, Director of Community Services, City of Stratford

Greg Skinner, Chief, Stratford Police Service

Tracy Farmer, DRPA Canada Inc.

Community Safety and Well-being Advisory Committee

Community and Social Wellbeing Committee

ATTACHMENTS

Advisory Committee Co-Chair Letter

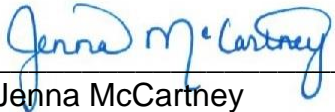
Executive Summary – DPRA Canada Inc.

Frequently Asked Questions

St. Marys Community and Social Wellbeing Plan

REVIEWED BY

Recommended by the Department



Jenna McCartney
Clerk

Recommended by the CAO



Brent Kittmer
Chief Administrative Officer

March 8, 2021

Update on the Community Safety and Well-being Plan

As you are aware, the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys, Municipality of North Perth, Municipality of West Perth, Township of Perth East, and Township of Perth South have consolidated our resources to develop a joint Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) Plan as required by the *Police Services Act, 1990*. The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for our municipalities, in partnership with key stakeholders, to communicate, collaborate, and coordinate interventions and initiatives aimed at reducing risks and improving safety and well-being for all our residents.

Guided by an Advisory Committee, the work of developing the CSWB plan began in early 2020 when the services of consulting firm DPRA Canada were secured. Although we expected the plan to be completed by January 1, 2021, this deadline was extended because of the pandemic. As committee co-chairs, we would like to take this opportunity to provide an update on the progress of the plan development and our next steps moving forward.

The CSWB Plan consists of two components:

1. Community Safety and Well-being Plan for Stratford, St. Marys, North Perth, West Perth, Perth South, and Perth East (2021-2024)

This is a strategic document that provides a roadmap for safety and well-being planning locally. Based on the results of public consultation, it includes 4 priority areas: 1) Systems Planning and Integration; 2) Affordable, Attainable, and Suitable Housing; 3) Affordable and Accessible Health, Social, and Recreation Services; and 4) Social Inclusion. It also outlines the governance structure for implementing safety and well-being activities and initiatives through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Partnership Council.

2. CSWB Implementation Plan

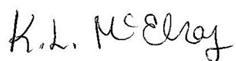
This is a companion document to the Plan that outlines in more detail how the implementation will be managed, including the roles and expectations of municipalities and other members of the Partnership Council. It also outlines the communications approach and tools that will be used to inform people about the new Plan (e.g. consistent, timely key messages).

The first component – the Plan itself – is going through final edits. The second component – the Implementation Plan – is currently being developed by DPRA with input from the Advisory Committee. These components are equally important to our communities’ safety and well-being planning and for this reason, we will share both documents at the same time once they have been finalized. They will be ready for presentation at municipal councils in advance of the Province’s deadline of July 1, 2021.

In the meantime, we have included an executive summary and set of FAQs in this package to provide an overview of the larger Plan and explain the governance structure and implementation approach. We hope this will help to answer some questions you may have.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Kim McElroy
Director of Social Services
City of Stratford



Greg Skinner
Chief of Police
Stratford Police Services

Community Safety and Well-being Plan - Executive Summary

Introduction

In January 2019, new requirements for Community Safety and Well-being planning came into force. The *Police Services Act, 1990* (PSA) was amended and municipalities across Ontario were required to develop and adopt a community safety and well-being (CSWB) plan (the Plan) in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders and groups. This multi-sectoral approach to community safety and well-being recognizes that complex social problems cannot be addressed by the police alone, that local service providers working in areas such as health/mental health, education, community/social services and children/youth services play an integral role.

This CSWB Plan represents a partnership between the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys, Municipality of North Perth, Municipality of West Perth, Township of Perth East, and Township of Perth South. Given their close proximity and their shared services and supports, the six partner municipalities have opted to create a joint Plan, that will help them respond to the unique needs of the area.

The Plan provides a roadmap for the six partner municipalities to work together to support a more inclusive, connected and coordinated approach to safety and well-being. The Plan builds on existing successful initiatives by leveraging and maximizing existing community assets while at the same time working to address gaps in the system in order to strengthen the responsiveness and supportiveness of services network.

Impact of COVID-19

When we began to prepare for the development of this Plan, COVID-19 was not on the radar. But as planning for the engagements began, the pandemic became a central feature of every day life. The contents of this Plan reflect the impacts of COVID-19 on residents, both personally and professionally.

As a result of COVID-19, many extra supports were put in place (e.g., additional temporary housing, enhanced mental health supports) to address the need for physical distancing and to respond to the negative outcomes (e.g., increases in domestic violence, decrease in mental wellness) associated with the pandemic. These supports often addressed a need identified by those who took part in the engagement process. The Plan builds on those additional programs and services.

Identifying Our Priority Areas

The Plan was developed based on a combination of desktop research, input from community members and service providers, and guidance from an Advisory Committee comprised of 24 members. The specific methods used to gathering information included:

- Document, data and media reviews;
- Participation in Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) calls addressing the planning and preparation of the municipal CSWB plans; and,
- Conducting a range of virtual engagement activities:

- An online CSWB survey - a total of 1078 respondents took part.
- Focus groups and one-on-one interviews with service providers - a total of 27 sessions and nine (9) interviews took place with a total of 91 participants.
- Engagement with community members with lived experience (through focus groups or a brief survey) - a total of 28 individuals took part.

What We Heard – Priority Areas

Survey

Survey participants identified the five most important safety and well-being priorities in their communities. They are presented in ranked order. There is a very high level of consistency in the priorities identified by residents from each of the six partner municipalities.

Stratford	St. Marys	North Perth	West Perth	Perth East	Perth South
1. Access to health care services	1. Access to health care services	1. Access to health care services	1. Access to health care services	1. Access to health care services	1. Access to health care services
2. Adequate and affordable housing	2. Adequate and affordable housing	2. Overall community security and safety	2. Overall community security and safety	2. Recreational activity opportunities	2. Overall community security and safety
3. Food security and access	3. Overall community security and safety	3. Adequate and affordable housing	3. Recreational activity opportunities	3. Overall community security and safety	3. Adequate and affordable housing
4. Overall community security and safety	4. Food security and access	4. Food security and access	4. Adequate and affordable housing	4. Food security and access	4. Food security and access
5. Protection from discrimination	5. Recreational activity opportunities	5. Recreational activity opportunities	5. Food security and access	5. Adequate and affordable housing	5. Employment and Employment Skills

Service Agencies / Lived Experience Engagement

The key priorities identified by service providers and those with lived experience, listed by level of importance beginning with the most important, included:

1. Adequate, affordable and attainable housing
2. Mental health and addictions supports
3. Poverty
4. Systems planning and integration
5. Access to health, social/community and recreational services

6. Affordable and accessible transportation
7. Social isolation
8. Community belonging
9. Community safety

What We Heard – Priority Populations

The following groups were identified as priority populations due to their enhanced vulnerability as a result of social, economic and/or health related risk factors:

- Low income individuals and families
- Individuals who are experiencing homelessness/precariously housed
- Individuals experiencing mental health and/or addictions challenges
- Transitional-aged youth (16-24 years)
- Seniors
- Women and children in abusive situations
- Newcomers (immigrants and refugees)
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC)
- Anabaptist communities
- Children and adults with disabilities
- LGBTQ2+ community
- Those without strong social networks

Model for Planning, Collaboration and Action

To ensure an integrated approach to community safety and well-being promotion, proactive risk prevention, risk intervention and incident response occurrences, the implementation of the CSWB Plan will be led by a Partnership Council. The Council represents an alliance among people and organizations from multiple sectors for a common purpose. The goals of the Partnership Council are to:

- Implement the Community Safety and Well-being Plan,
- Build supportive systems that identify effective linkages to relevant programs and services, and
- Enhance coordination across municipalities and service providers.

Membership for the Council will include a representative from each:

- Police
 - Stratford Police Services

- Huron Perth Ontario Provincial Police
- Partner municipalities
 - City of Stratford
 - Town of St. Marys
 - Municipality of North Perth
 - Municipality of West Perth
 - Township of Perth East
 - Township of Perth South
- Shared Services
 - City of Stratford Social Services
 - Perth County Paramedics
- Key stakeholders from the following sectors (membership to be reviewed periodically as per a Terms of Reference):
 - School boards
 - Children & youth services
 - Healthcare
 - Mental health & addictions services
 - Community funders
 - Justice & legal services
 - Violence Against Women (VAW) services
 - Newcomer services
 - Indigenous services

As needed the Partnership Council will call on Action Groups for direction, support and/or communication to help implement the Plan activities. These Action Groups may already exist or may need to be created to address priority area gaps and better meet the needs of vulnerable populations.

Community Safety and Well-being Plan Priorities

Based on what we heard, the following four (4) priority areas and their associated goals and objectives have been identified for the CSWB Plan. The implementation of the actions will take place with guidance from the Partnership Council and support from municipal staff as well as existing and new Action Group members.

Priority Area #1 - Systems Planning and Integration

Goal 1.1: Improved access to programs, services, supports, and resources by simplifying pathways and coordinating efforts

- Objective 1.1.1: To increase resident knowledge and awareness of existing programs, services and supports through improved communications.
- Objective 1.1.2: To establish collaborative pathways between programs, services, and supports, so that service providers can work together more effectively and are better equipped to guide individuals and families to the social, health, economic, and education supports they need.

Goal 1.2: Enhanced prevention and protection for safer communities

- Objective 1.2.1: To increase police presence through proactive community-oriented interventions.
- Objective 1.2.2: To work with municipal partners to support pandemic planning and preparedness for the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys, and Perth County.

Priority Area #2 - Affordable, Attainable, and Suitable Housing

Goal 2.1: Increased availability and accessibility of affordable, safe, and suitable housing

- Objective 2.1.1: To work with the Coordinated Access System Leadership Group (CASLG) as well as other government and private sector partners to support the strategic objectives identified in the updated *Housing and Homelessness Plan for Stratford, Perth County, and St. Marys (2020-2024)*:
 - Ending Homelessness
 - Creating Attainable Housing Options
 - Sustaining Community Housing
 - Addressing a Diversity of Needs

Priority Area #3 - Affordable and Accessible Health, Social and Recreation Services

Goal 3.1: Improved availability and accessibility to healthcare services and supports

- Objective 3.1.1: To work with partners such as the Huron Perth Addiction and Mental Health Alliance and the Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team to support planning and implementation of mental health and addictions services and supports for residents in Stratford, St. Marys, and Perth County.
- Objective 3.1.2: To provide more opportunities for residents, especially those in rural communities with limited physical and mental health services, to access care in- person and through virtual healthcare technology.

Goal 3.2: Improved knowledge and awareness of crisis response triage options

- Objective 3.2.1: To work with municipal and service agency partners to increase residents' knowledge and awareness of crisis response options (e.g., Huron Perth Helpline, 911 and 211) and when it is most appropriate to use each option.

Goal 3.3: Increased availability of affordable transportation options

- Objective 3.3.1: To implement new cost-effective transportation initiatives for low-income and rural residents to support improved access to healthcare, social services and recreational activities.
- Objective 3.3.2: To determine the effectiveness of the Perth County Connect public transit pilot in providing residents with affordable and accessible transportation options within Perth County, and surrounding areas, including Stratford, St. Marys, Kitchener/Waterloo, and London. Focus on ridership of rural community members and low-income residents.

Priority Area #4 – Social Inclusion

Goal 4.1: Increased application of equity, diversity, and inclusion practices across all partner agencies

- Objective 4.1.1: To continue to build partner agencies' understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion principles and practices through education and training.

Goal 4.2: Promote understanding of diverse groups

- Objective 4.2.1: To develop, promote, and organize innovative community engagement and public strategies/campaigns aimed at promoting understanding of mental health, addiction, racism, and discrimination.
- Objective 4.2.2: To support efforts of the Stratford Police Services' Community Equity Action Team (CEAT) and the OPP's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Units and to provide the community with a forum to discuss their interactions with police, critically examine local policing policies and procedures, and make recommendations for changes that will address potential issues related to systemic racism within police services and the broader community.

Goal 4.3: Enhanced sense of community belonging

- Objective 4.3.1: To create and maintain safe, welcoming, and inclusive public spaces that promote opportunities for use by individuals of all identities, backgrounds, and experiences.
- Objective 4.3.2: To increase inclusion and access to activities and community events for populations that face constraints to participation (e.g., youth, people with disabilities, newcomers, BIPOC, LGBTQ2+ persons and low-income families and individuals).

Moving Forward

The CSWB Plan lays the groundwork for the six partner municipalities to work together in a coordinated and collaborative way to promote the safety and well-being of all residents in our communities. The Plan builds on existing municipal and community strengths and assets, while also addressing gaps and challenges that particularly affect the more vulnerable members of our population. While the Plan identifies specific goals and objectives we hope to achieve or make progress on over the next three years, it is also adaptable, allowing us to respond to emerging needs in our communities in a more proactive manner.

The next steps are to:

1. Develop an Implementation Plan that identifies the parties responsible for supporting the execution and communication of the CSWB Plan goals and objectives.
2. Prepare an Evaluation Plan that helps assess the success of the Plan goals and objectives and identifies priority areas requiring additional attention.

Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) Plan - FAQs

What is the Community Safety and Well Being (CSWB) Plan?

This CSWB Plan represents a partnership between the City of Stratford, Town of St. Marys, Municipality of North Perth, Municipality of West Perth, Township of Perth East, and Township of Perth South. The Plan provides a roadmap for the six partner municipalities to work together to support a more inclusive, connected and coordinated approach to safety and well-being. The Plan builds on existing successful initiatives by leveraging and maximizing existing community assets while at the same time working to address gaps in the system in order to strengthen the responsiveness and supportiveness of services network.

Why is the Government of Ontario mandating CSWB planning to the municipality?

CSWB planning is being mandated to municipalities to ensure a proactive and integrated approach to address local crime and complex social issues on a sustainable basis. Municipalities will have a leadership role in identifying their local priority risks in the community and addressing these risks through evidence-based programs and strategies, focusing on social development, prevention, and risk intervention. It is important to remember that while the municipality is designated the lead of CSWB planning, developing and implementing a CSWB plan requires engagement from all sectors.

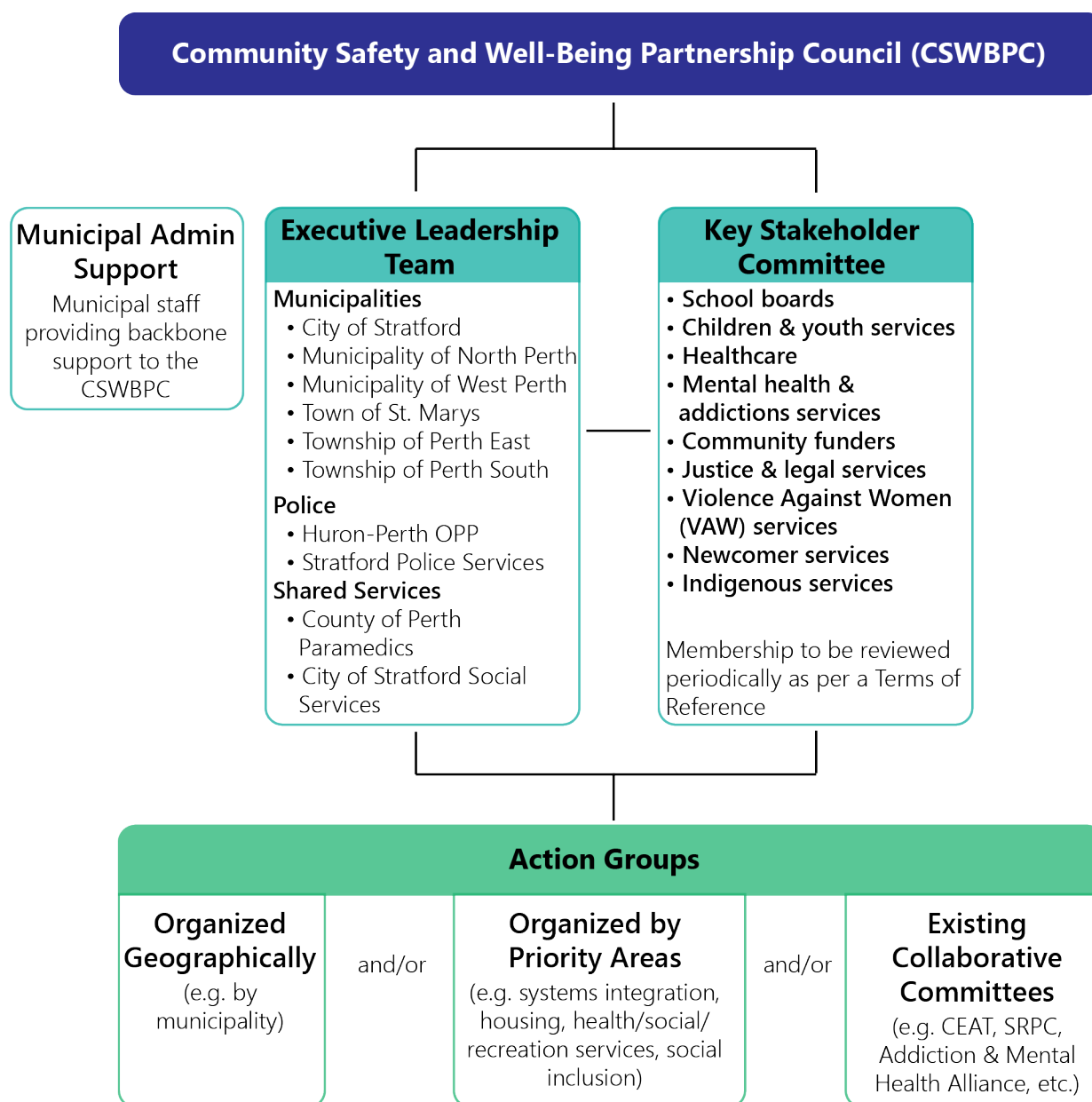
Who is responsible for implementing the CSWB Plan?

To ensure an integrated and coordinated approach to community safety and well-being promotion, proactive risk prevention, risk intervention and incident response occurrences across municipalities and service providers, the implementation of the CSWB Plan will be led by a multi-stakeholder Partnership Council (see Figure 1 on the following page).

Guided by a Terms of Reference, the Partnership Council will include representation from municipalities, police services, providers of health services, mental health & addictions services, education, community/social services and children/youth services. In addition, the Partnership Council will call on Action Groups for direction, support and/or communication to help implement the Plan activities. These Action Groups may already exist or may need to be created to address priority area gaps and better meet the needs of vulnerable populations.

As part of the implementation, the Partnership Council will be responsible for evaluating and measuring the impact of the Plan and its activities.

Figure 1: CSWB Partnership Council Governance Structure



When will the new legislative requirements related to CSWB planning come into effect?

The new legislative requirements related to CSWB planning came into force on January 1, 2019, as an amendment to the *Police Services Act, 1990*, and municipalities had two years from this date to develop and adopt a plan (i.e., by January 1, 2021). However, given the current climate with respect to COVID-19, this deadline has been extended to July 1, 2021.

Are municipalities required to formally adopt the CSWB Plan (i.e., resolution by council)?

Yes. As prescribed in legislation, every municipal council shall prepare, and by resolution, adopt a CSWB Plan. The same process must be followed for a joint CSWB plan, as is the case locally. This means that all six municipalities involved must pass a resolution to adopt the joint plan.

Was more than one advisory committee established for creating the joint Plan?

No. Regardless of whether the CSWB Plan is being developed by one or more municipal councils, the legislative requirements were for one corresponding advisory committee.

At a minimum, the advisory committee needed to include representation as prescribed in the legislation. In terms of creating our joint CSWB Plan, the participating municipal councils determined additional members on the advisory committee, including more than one representative from the prescribed sectors.

Are there requirements for municipalities to publish their CSWB Plan?

The *Police Services Act* includes regulatory requirements for municipalities related to the publication of their CSWB plans. These include:

- Publishing a CSWB Plan on the internet within 30 days of its adoption;
- Making a printed copy of the CSWB Plan available for review by anyone who requests it; and
- Publishing the Plan in any other manner or form the municipality desires.

Was public input considered prior to the development of the CSWB Plan?

Yes. The Plan was developed based on a combination of desktop research, input from community members and service providers, and guidance from the 24-member Advisory Committee. The specific methods used to gather information included:

- Document, data and media reviews
- Participation in Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) calls addressing the planning and preparation of the municipal CSWB plans
- Conducting a range of virtual engagement activities:
 - An online CSWB survey
 - Focus groups and one-on-one interviews with service providers

- Engaging community members with lived experience through focus groups or a brief survey

What priority areas are being addressed in the CSWB Plan?

The key priorities identified by consultation participants, listed by level of importance beginning with the most important, included:

1. Adequate, affordable, and attainable housing
2. Mental health and addictions supports
3. Poverty
4. Systems planning and integration
5. Access to health, social/community, and recreational services
6. Affordable and accessible transportation
7. Social isolation
8. Community belonging
9. Community safety

These priorities have been collated and refined into the following four main areas:

Priority Area #1 - Systems Planning and Integration

Priority Area #2 - Affordable, Attainable, and Suitable Housing

Priority Area #3 - Affordable and Accessible Health, Social and Recreation Services

Priority Area #4 – Social Inclusion

How will municipalities know if their CSWB plan is effective and when does it need to be reviewed?

As part of the CSWB planning process, municipalities must identify measurable outcomes that can be tracked throughout the duration of the plan. A key responsibility of the Partnership Council will be to identify and collect data on short, intermediate, and longer-term performance measures in order to measure how effective the plan has been in addressing the priority risks and creating positive changes in the community.

Municipalities are required to regularly monitor and update their plan, as needed, in order to ensure it continues to be reflective of local needs and is meeting the intended outcomes. Municipalities are encouraged to align their review of the plan with relevant local planning cycles and any other local plans (e.g., municipal and police services strategic plans, housing and homelessness plans, etc.). Requirements related to the reviewing and updating of CSWB plans may be outlined in regulation in the future.

How will the ministry monitor the progress of a local CSWB Plan?

New legislation requires municipalities to provide the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services (upon request) with any prescribed information related to:

- The municipality's CSWB Plan, including its preparation, adoption or implementation;
- Any outcomes from the municipality's CSWB Plan; and
- Any other prescribed matter related to the CSWB Plan.

Additional requirements related to monitoring CSWB Plans may be outlined in regulation in the future.



Community and Social Wellbeing Plan

December 2020
(Revised March 2021)

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Introduction:

On March 14, 2020 the Town of St. Marys declared a state of emergency in response to community threats resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Immediately following the declaration of emergency, the Town launched its Community Wellness Plan.

The initial plan was designed and implemented to support the needs of residents during the COVID- 19 pandemic, primarily geared to Friendship Centre clientele. The plan included strategies to identify at risk citizens and to identify resources that they may need access to during the pandemic. The first iteration of the plan was designed to support a vulnerable population that was defined as those individuals who may become isolated due to the pandemic because they do not have the necessary supports in their lives to ensure access to the essentials of life. In response, tactics were developed to ensure the provision of essential services such as food delivery, medication, social isolation supports, and safety check-ins with the members of the community who were identified at risk.

Looking Forward:

The initial Community Wellness Plan was launched with great success. The plan has been delivered since March 2020, and the clientele accessing the services provided has primarily been ages 50+.

However, the impacts of the pandemic have been felt by all members of the community in some way. Leveraging our initial success, the Community Wellness Plan is being re-launched as a “Community and Social Wellbeing Plan”. The goal is to expand the plan to be a community wide approach to ensure that appropriate supports are in place for the Town’s vulnerable population, and for any resident who has a need.

To do this, an internal staff sub-committee of the Town’s Emergency Control Group was formed. The committee consists of staff from Administration, Community Services, and Corporate Services. In developing the new Community and Social Well-being Plan the following steps were taken:

1. Review of emerging issues and trends
2. Reviewing and clarifying the goals of the relaunched plan
3. Clarifying the Town’s role
4. Identifying the stakeholders in the plan
5. Identifying measures of success
6. Developing tactics
 - a. By completing a review of successes and opportunities through staff’s experience delivering the initial Community Wellness Plan; and
 - b. By developing new tactics to address the emerging issues and trends.

This relaunched plan has been developed with an understanding that the Town is currently finalizing its legislated Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan (CSWBP). The creation of this relaunched plan has been done without having access to the final recommendations of the CSWBP. Once the CSWBP is received, the Community and Social Wellbeing Plan will be revised so that both strategic documents are aligned and so that the recommendations of the CSWBP can be actioned and operationalized.

Community and Social Wellbeing Plan Relaunch:

1. Review of Emerging Issues and Trends:

At the time of writing, a formal data collection effort has not taken place to define and quantify local needs. However, since the launch of the initial plan, trends have been observed that are worth considering because they may well dictate new or modified community and social wellness initiatives. At this point in time the approach is to action the information that exists today and implement preliminary community and social supports. A parallel data collection effort will follow to better define and tailor the programs to local needs.

Some of the observed issues and trends include:

Prevalence of Mental, Social, and Addiction Issues

Mental and social wellness and addiction issues in the broader community have become more apparent, with little intervention by the Town. As the prevalence of these issues becomes more obvious, the community's reaction has also become more visible, both positive and negative. Through some initial work by both Council and staff, it has become clear that the Town needs to take an active role in developing supports for those individuals suffering from mental, social and addiction issues. The Town also needs to take a lead role in educating the community on their role in supporting this specific vulnerable population.

Seasonal Changes, Variants of Concerns, and Additional Waves

During the initial relaunch of this plan in December 2020, the seasonal change to winter and the increasing second wave of the pandemic was concerning due to the risk of social isolation of vulnerable individuals. With the second wave now ended, there is still a concern that the true impacts of the Winter 2021 lockdown have not been fully realized.

Today, as the community heads into the Spring of 2021, medical experts are warning of the real potential of a third wave. The Provincial response model is to initiate a lockdown as cases rise. This will once again present risks in our community. During lockdowns, we are concerned that the supports our vulnerable population have relied on may no longer be accessible to them.

Next, with the emergence of spring, our community will naturally be poised to get outside with a desire to return to some semblance of normal activities. Additional lockdowns will restrict our community's ability to do this, which could further present a risk to the mental wellness of the Town's residents.

The Town will need to evaluate its existing tactics aimed at reducing social isolation and providing essential services to ensure that they are designed to support the risks and needs identified.

Financial Security

At the same time as launching the Community Wellness Plan, the Town also announced a number of financial relief programs for residents and businesses. This included deferring payments, waiving interest, and providing \$300,000 in relief funds to support residents and businesses respectively. Uptake on financial relief for residents was low, with a working assumption that

financial supports provided by the Federal and Provincial governments were enough to support the need.

With the end of CERB, there is a concern that regular cashflow for some of our residents may be at risk. The Town will need to be prepared for a potential uptick in the need for financial support and relief from residents and will need to evaluate if the current financial relief programs are appropriate to address the need.

Food Security

According to Feed Ontario's annual report, food bank usage across Ontario was already increasing in the year leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of the pandemic, the number of first-time food bank visitors spiked by 26.5 per cent. Feed Ontario lists a lack of affordable housing, insufficient social assistance programs, and a growth in precarious employment (like part-time and casual work) as the top three drivers of food bank usage.

In St. Marys, there is uncertainty around the future of the local food bank. The Salvation Army Church has decided to close. Although it appears as though some form of a food bank will remain in the community for the immediate term, the long-term future of the local food bank is uncertain. In addition, operations of the food bank have been complicated by the pandemic due to a lack of volunteers to help manage the hamper program.

These changes present two potential issues. First, a closure of the food bank would cause a food security issue for the segment of the population who is currently accessing the service. Secondly, implementing alternative programs needs to consider barriers to food for those individuals who don't have access to transportation. The Town will need to evaluate its existing tactics related to food security and transportation and determine if modifications are necessary to address these potential concerns. Determining how to integrate the United Way's Nourish Market into any strategy that is developed will be important.

Homelessness/Under Housed

Risk for homelessness or under housed residents appears low at present but may become more prevalent as financial supports from upper levels of government are ended. This will be monitored with support from the City of Stratford, and measures will be put in place to support those most at risk.

Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

Amendments to the *Police Services Act* require the Town to develop a Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Throughout the duration of the pandemic, the Town and its partner municipalities have completed the public engagement and data evaluation portion of the project, and a final report is projected to be available by the end of 2020.

For St. Marys, the preliminary reporting has identified the following as the top local priorities to consider:

- i. Access to Health Care Services
- ii. Adequate and Affordable Housing
- iii. Overall Community Security and Safety
- iv. Food Security and Access

v. Recreational Activity Opportunities

These community priorities will need to be considered while the Town continues to develop its strategies and tactics to support community and social wellbeing.

2. Goals of the Relaunch Plan:

The overarching goals answer the questions of “What is the purpose of the plan? What are we trying to achieve through the plan?” This Community and Social Wellbeing Plan sets out strategies and tactics to achieve the following overarching goals:

- ➔ We want people to feel safe.
- ➔ We want to connect those in need to the services and programs that will support them.
- ➔ We want to communicate to residents that we are aware of issues in the community, communicate that we have a plan, and share specifics on the tactics (i.e. change the narrative from “we have a problem” to “we have a solution”)
- ➔ We want to deploy an interconnected approach, both internally, and with external agencies as well.

3. Town’s Role:

This Plan has been developed to create strategies and tactics to address social issues in the community. Traditionally, the Town has not been in the business of directly delivering social services programs, preferring to contract social services from the City of Stratford. The exception are those services provided by the Community Services department under contract with the Province.

However, municipalities are established to provide services and programs at a service level that is commensurate to the local need. In this instance, the COVID-19 pandemic has had such a broad impact to all communities that, without direct intervention by the local municipality, those individuals in need may not receive the support they require.

With the understanding that the Town needs to take an active role in addressing the community’s need, the Town’s role includes:

- Directly delivering services using own resources.
- Indirectly delivering services by funding a third-party to provide them.
- Taking a lead role in communications to:
 - Facilitate access to services and connect residents to the appropriate providers.
 - Connect service providers to residents in need.
 - Connect service providers to other service providers.
 - Provide data and information about St. Marys specific needs.
 - Educate the community about resources that are available.

4. Who are the Stakeholders:

- All residents, in particular those who have a specific need (the vulnerable population)
- Council
- External agencies (police and social services agencies)

5. Tactics and Action Plan

Through a critical review of the delivery of the initial Community Wellness Plan, and a review of the emerging issues and trends, the following list of priorities was developed to clearly frame the areas in need of action by the Town:

- Communications
- Financial support, relief, and subsidies
- Direct delivery of services to support:
 - Resident Wellbeing
 - Access to Food and Nutrition
 - Access to Essential Medication
 - Social Connectivity

In the following sections, the staff sub-committee have identified various initiatives to be implemented for each priority area to move the plan forward in an effort to meet the identified goals and outcomes.

6. How Will Success be Measured:

Throughout implementation of the Community and Social Wellbeing Plan, tactics will continue to be critically analyzed to identify opportunities for improvement and to identify modifications required to respond to new trends. To help guide this analysis, the staff sub-committee has identified measures of success for Plan evaluation purposes.

As the Community and Social Wellbeing Plan moves forward, Council and staff will know the goals and outcomes of the plan are reaching success if:

- The vulnerable population:
 - Feel supported and connected to the resources they need
 - Feel less stigma for their issues, and the impact
 - Feel the services they are connected to are tailored to their needs
- Residents:
 - Feel safe
 - Feel informed
- Council:
 - Sees a reduction in community concerns
 - Feels informed
- External Agencies
 - See a coordinated service delivery approach
 - Increased understanding of what agencies provide what supports

Tactics and Action Plan

Priority Area: **Communications**

Current Context:

Throughout 2020, the Town has completed public engagement to discuss community and social issues with residents and external agencies. This includes Council's ad-hoc committee for social housing, a comprehensive engagement program for the Town's community safety and wellbeing plan. Key messages heard include:

- There is a lack of awareness about the social services that exist in St. Marys, and how to access them.
- There is a lack of awareness about which agencies provide which services.
- A hub, or easily navigable "one stop shop" is needed that provides an inventory of services and providers.
- There are perceived silos, or a lack of interconnectedness and a lack of data sharing, between service providers.
- When residents don't know who to call, the default agency that is contacted is the Stratford Police Services.
- The Town is currently lacking a youth perspective on issues and trends.
- Access to and visibility of police/mental health/addiction services/emergency services/community services (library, cultural, and recreation) will help to promote a feeling of a "safe" community".

KEY MESSAGES

- Mental health issues are a growing concern across the country, especially with the added pressures of COVID-19
- St. Marys is not exempt – but we have resources to help
- We are reminding residents of local resources that are currently available as we prepare for a difficult winter
- We are working with local partners – Stratford Police Service, OPP, City of Stratford Social Service, HPPH(?) to enhance these offerings
 - Police – more proactive policing in community, more visibility
- Taking additional, proactive steps – rolling out Community Safety and Well-being Plan, hiring social worker - to address these issues in a way that that is specific to St. Marys
- "In St. Marys, we are strong as stone. But even the most resilient among us needs a little help to keep our foundations intact. As we all prepare for a long winter, made more challenging by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we're reminding you of the services available in our community. We're also working with our local police, public health and social services partners to develop new strategies to assist our most vulnerable residents."

STRATEGY	TACTIC	TASK(S)	TIMING/ STATUS
Facilitate access to services and connect residents to the appropriate providers.	Community and Social Wellbeing Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an internal sub-committee of the Town Community Control Group. Mandate of the group will be to oversee the progress and implementation of this plan, and to achieve better internal and external coordination of services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented December 2021.
	MEDIA RELEASE	Introducing program	April
	NEWSPAPER PROFILES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft profiles for local newspaper highlighting organizations offering resources in the community Important to connect faces to names/services*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General (United Way 211) Food & Nutrition (St Marys Salvation Foodbank) Well Being (Canadian Mental Health Association Huron & Perth, Huron Perth Helpline & Crisis Response Team, Huron Perth Centre for Children & Youth, Choices for Change, Family Services Perth – Huron, Rural Response for Healthy Children, *One Care Home & Community Support Services) Misc (Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth) Housing (Stratford Social Services, Optimism Place) Financial (Government grant programs) Mental Health (*Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance, (Stratford General Hospital Inpatient & Out), Huron-Perth Intensive Case Management, Prevention and Early Interventions for Psychoses, Southern Network of Specialized Care) Recreation (PRC/Friendship Centre programming) <p>*list TBD based on Community Development Officer research</p>	<p>April</p> <p>Subsequent profile written/released on a monthly basis throughout 2021</p>
	WEBSITE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new webpage under Living Here “St. Marys Safety & Wellbeing Resources” (TBD) Homepage Website banner 	Launch start of April, continuously update when new resources become available
	SOCIAL MEDIA #StrongAsStone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program intro/overview Weekly “Wellness Wednesday” post: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> highlighting various resources and what they offer 	April

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FAQs (the unknown creates fear, educate to feel safer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educate about common mental illness in the area ▪ How to recognize if someone needs help ○ Local social/mental illness stats in the area • Contest to complete wellness survey (test your knowledge) for a prize (something wellness related from local store) 	
	POSTERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create posters listing mental health resources available in community • Post in strategic locations (social housing, Town facilities, churches, Tim Hortons, etc.) 	April
	INSERT/MAILER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create postcard/insert and use Independent to distribute • Same content as poster • Print limited copies for Town facilities (especially Library, Adult Learning, Friendship Centre) and other strategic locations 	April
	PRINT ADVERTISING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly ½ page Strong As Stone ad with resources from specific categories • Add wellness section to Stonetown Crier column 	April & ongoing April (monthly if space permits)
	SIGNAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use municipal signs to promote webpage with wellness resources (could also leverage non-municipal/private signs) 	Ongoing through 2021
	PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inbox, helpline, etc. for residents to submit concerns, ask for help, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inbox/direct line to community developmen worker 	April launch & ongoing through 2021
Data Collection		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys (through social media) to complete wellness surveys, win a wellness prize from local retailer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify issues in St. Marys (identify problems) ○ Test your knowledge (to educate) • Form Builder or Survey Monkey, printed option? 	May & July

Priority Area:
Financial Support, Relief, and Subsidies

Current Context:

At the outset of the pandemic the Town of St. Marys quickly identified the need for the Town to offer financial assistance to residents and businesses in response to anticipated financial impacts caused by the pandemic. Throughout 2020 it became clear that the financial assistance programs offered by upper levels of government were filling the need, and the Town’s programs for residents shifted to an “as-requested” basis. In late 2021, the Town launched a successful business support grant.

As Federal and Provincial support programs taper off, the concern remains that regular cashflow for some of our residents may be at risk. Additionally, Huron Perth is only just emerging from a second lockdown and the financial impact to businesses and residents is unknown. The Town will need to be prepared for a potential uptick in the need for financial support and relief from businesses and residents and will need to evaluate if the current financial relief programs are appropriate to address the need.

STRATEGY	TACTIC	TASK(S)	TIMING/STATUS
Financial Relief	Property Tax Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defer the May 28, 2020 interim tax due date to June 30, 2020 	Complete
		Tax Deferral Program – Property Owners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create program based on merit; merit can include maximum family income, in receipt of federal aid during COVID-19, varying levels Deferral can be interest free or at prime; deferral length can be up to 5 years, or in some cases lifetime/sale of home Would work like a reverse mortgage 	TBD
		Tax Deferral Program – Landlord/Tenant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operates similar to the Property Owner Program Implement a 3-party agreement to ensure that tenant receives the benefit. 	TBD
	Fee Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate the April 1, 2020 fee increases for childcare fees, ice rentals, and animal tags 	Complete
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waive P/I on all town accounts, until July 31, 2020 (exception property taxes) 	Complete

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council direct the Director of Finance/Treasurer to create a policy to assist taxpayers impacted by COVID-19 with relief from penalties and interest on a case-by-case basis; and 	TBD
	Subsidy for Recreation/ Mental Wellness Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must understand needs in order to develop proper parameters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issue an application/EOI asking those in need to apply for relief, and indicate their need. ○ Use data to develop policy and set budget. • If no specific trend emerges, an option is to set aside \$\$\$; keep an open application, divide funding to all eligible applicants up to an individual cap. 	TBD
Financial Support, Subsidies and Grants	Business Support Grant	Phase 1	October 2020
		Phase 2	March 2021
	Subsidy for Recreation/ Wellness Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inventory of existing subsidy programs that are offered by third party service providers. • Complete data collection to determine the need that exists in the community. • Complete analysis of the need against existing programs to determine where gaps exist. • Develop a policy and program for Council consideration to address the gaps. 	TBD

Priority Area: Direct Delivery of Services to Support Residents

Current Context:

At the outset of the pandemic the Town of St. Marys quickly identified the need for the Town to take a lead role in supporting residents in self-isolation and those who are under-housed. The Town quickly launched a flexible and nimble Community Wellness plan that leveraged existing community volunteer efforts and resources through the Town’s Friendship Centre.

Throughout 2020, the Community Services department provided a variety of directly delivered wellness programs in response to existing and emerging needs caused by the pandemic. Certainly, the mental health impact of the pandemic is a concerning topic of discussion. The plan forward is to remain nimble and flexible, to balance infection control with the need to have safe things to do, and to adapt to the needs of residents as they emerge in response to that changing socio-economic and public health conditions of the pandemic.

STRATEGY	TACTIC	TASK(S)	TIMING/ STATUS
Resident Wellbeing	Community Development Worker Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide professional, confidential counselling/mediation services to individuals, couples, families, and groups• Coordinate with other human services organizations and make referrals as appropriate.• Liaise with the Town’s Community Services department to identify community trends, areas of need and to help advise how the Town best deploys its Community Wellness Program.• Educate the community at large on relevant issues seeking to reduce isolation and negative attitudes while increasing awareness and empathy.• Engage community members, neighbours and other stakeholders in relationship building activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launching March 2021
	Vaccine Clinics	<p>Flu Vaccine Clinics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the Happy Valley Family Health Team to host 6 community flu shot vaccines administering 1,855 vaccines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed Fall 2020.• If Community Health is a strategy that is supported long term, a future action to consider is to offer space for all vaccine clinics at no charge to remove barriers for service providers and allow broader access to the community.

		<p>COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town will provide space for local vaccination clinics. Town will provide staff to support HPPH delivery. Town will offer "Vaccine Concierge" services to assist those in need with booking appointments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vaccine support phone line and email where local residents can request assistance. Staff will assist walking them through the online booking process or in some cases registering them if required. Staff will assist with arranging transportation to clinics if needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched week of March 1, 2021. Ongoing until vaccination process is completed. Town to support by sharing in costs, funded through the Town COVID-19 relief budget.
	"Essentials" Care Packages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed package containing hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray, home based activities, exercise bands, and a gift card for groceries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributed 30 care packages to isolated seniors in the community Partnered with the Stratford Police Service to distribute 10 packages to vulnerable population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed in December 2020
	Footcare Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space provided and service maintained throughout the pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change for 2021
	Blood Donor Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space provided and service maintained throughout the pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change for 2021
	Blood Pressure Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to one on one clinics to encourage people to know their numbers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change for 2021
	Information & Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support all residents to access information through various information channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an ongoing service
	Emergency Childcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As appropriate, plan, organize and deliver emergency childcare services for essential workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered summer of 2020, and January/February 2021. Service will be considered if future lockdowns occur.
Access to Food and Nutrition	Grocery Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shopping services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective March 2020 with Public Health's recommendation to keep vulnerable populations home the fee for service has been removed from shopping service, grocery pick up to support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the service for the duration of the pandemic. Prior to COVID 19 Shopping Services were available by a fee for service model. It is expected that fees will return for shopping services when recommendation to stay at home are removed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching residents how to online shop 	
	Community Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with Public Works to reinstate the Community Garden program due to demand, all 20 gardens were booked in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff have received interest for this program to continue in 2021 and are working to a find funding to continue this program for the community.
	Community Dining Take Away Meal Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnered with the Rotary Club to provide a weekly meal. Meal is prepared for residents on either Tuesday or Thursday. Subsidized and co-pay options exist for residents. Accessed by 103 residents in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for the Community Dining Take Away program will end March 31 2021. Staff are currently working with the Rotary Club and St. Marys United Church to restart the St. Marys United Church bi-monthly Community Meals by re-engaging community sponsors to offer drive-thru/delivery option until the St. Marys United Church can re-welcome people back into the Church safely.
	Holiday Meal Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborated with the St. Marys United Church and the St. Marys Rotary Club to those registered with the Community Dining program as Christmas Dinner. Hosted a drive-thru Christmas Dinner for the community serving 175 residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This model will be utilized for the Holiday meal program until gathering limited exceed 100 indoors. The next event is a Drive through Easter Lunch to be provided. A pay it forward option has been included as an option for residents to gift a meal to a community members who identify financial barriers.
	Hot Meals On Wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 Residents served, with 1,991 units of service provided in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
	Frozen Meals on Wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75 Residents served, with 2,805 units of service provided in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
	Food Bank Hamper Deliveries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need for this service was identified due to the Food Banks inability to allow access to the Food Bank location. 12 Residents currently access this service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This service will continue with no fee while the Food Bank locations continue to be limited access. Fees will not be implemented for this service due to the barriers they pose.
	Low Income – income Tax Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in Partnership with a local service provider to enable low income residents with a free options to complete income tax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yearly during the tax season
Social Connectivity	Social Connection Calls (Telephone Reassurance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 43 Residents served, with 2,704 units of service provided in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an ongoing LHIN funded program

	Social Phone Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85 Residents served, with 954 units of service provided in 2020. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for the Social Phone program will end in March 2021, however staff are searching for alternative funding sources and alternative operating method to ensure it remains sustainable.
	Museum Virtual Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and delivered weekly telephone and video programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
	Youth Based Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Bell Let's Talk Day for our community. • Homework help/virtual study session for youth ages 9-13 • Cook along through zoom. • St. Marys virtual video game platform for youth. • Connection sessions for youth ages 8-11 this is to provide this group the opportunity to connect with other youth. • Family Day Boxes filled with family type activities including crafts, games, and family workouts. • Sessions for high school students with various St. Marys youth from different colleges and universities explaining their programs, schools and things you need to know as you go off to post-secondary school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing.
	EarlyON Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifted EarlyON services to a virtual platform to provide continuity of services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook Lives, Play & Learn, Outdoor Adventures, Activity Sheet, Baby Time, Baby Connections, Bedtime Stories, Holiday Card Events, Parenting Support Group, Mindful Kids Stratford, Scavenger Hunt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
	Virtual Fitness Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Zoom Fitness Classes • Virtual 100 Day Challenge • Virtual Fitness Assessments • Virtual For Profit Fitness Classes • Virtual Falls Prevention Group Fitness Classes are offered on multiple times on a weekly basis. Averaging 45 attendees per class the virtual options will remain as long as they are needed and technology allows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing •
	Virtual Social Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Scrapbooking • Virtual Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing – Social based programming in-person and virtual offer opportunities to reduce social isolation.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Virtual Coffee	
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RURAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Presentation to



Leith Deacon, PhD

Assistant Professor, School of Environmental Design & Rural
Development, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON

Wayne Caldwell, PhD

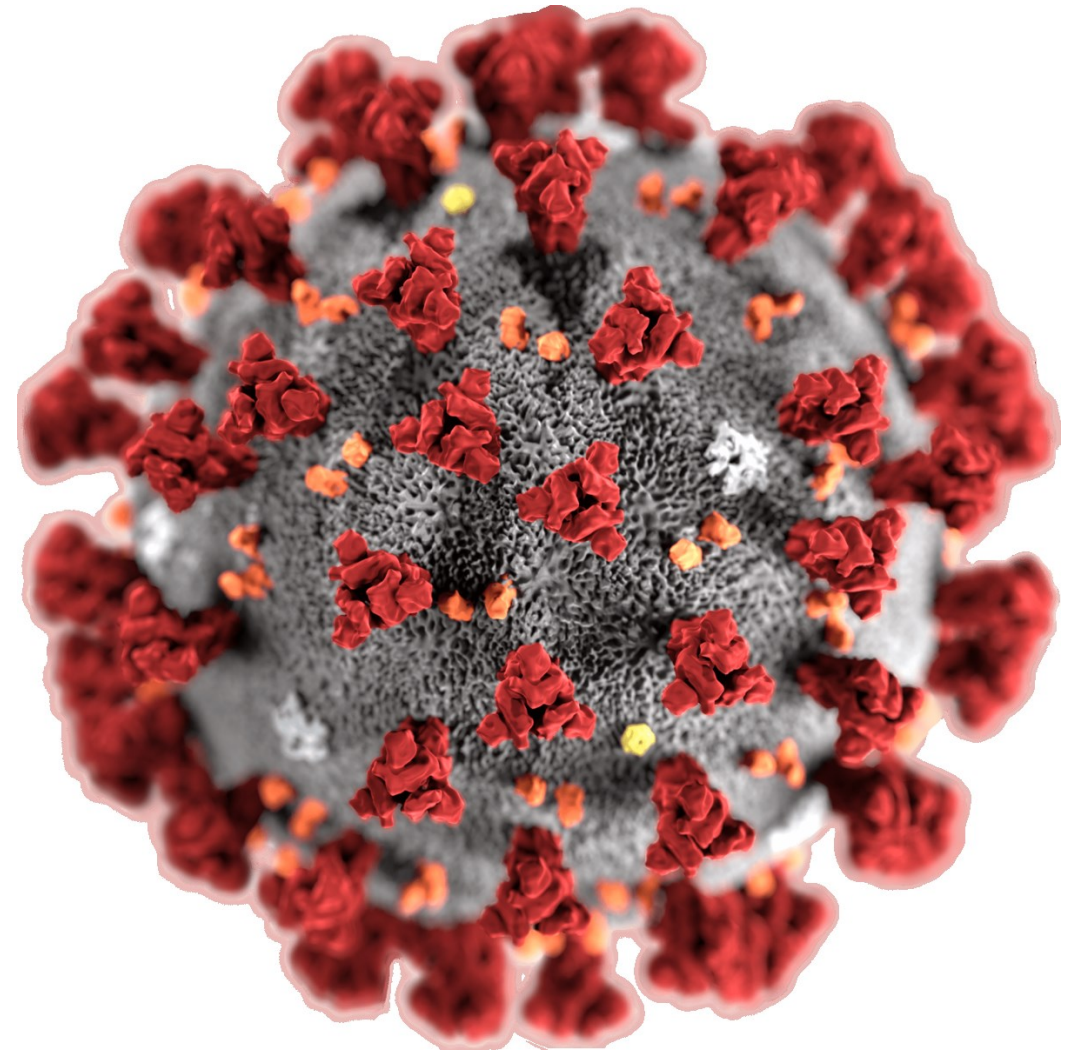
Professor, School of Environmental Design & Rural
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Silvia Sarapura, PhD

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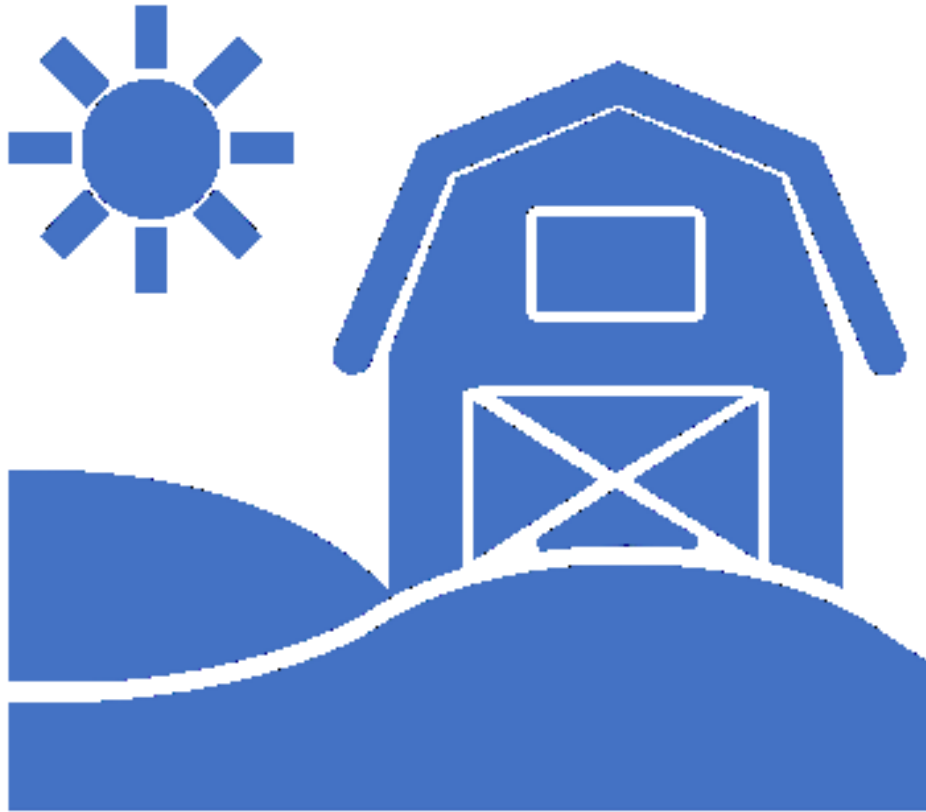
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Project **goal** is to explore the experiences of residents from across Perth and Huron Counties related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



Why rural?

Rural places are often neglected as a symptom population distribution.

Why now?

Rural places are different; often greater percentage of older residents, physically/digitally isolated, less access to services.

TRANSFORMATIVE RESILIENCE

The ability to adjust to new requirements imposed by internal and/or external shocks or change processes by learning, adapting, reorganizing, and transforming to take advantage of new opportunities.



Objectives

1. Identify vulnerable populations in Perth Counties affected by COVID-19.
2. Determine priority programs to support populations during and post-COVID-19.
3. Explore opportunities for the non-sector during and post-COVID-19.
4. Identify emergent mental health and concerns generated by COVID-19.
5. Provide locally-relevant, reliable, and valid can be used to advocate for funding and development.

Quantitative data

The Survey

1. Demographics
2. Individual well-being
3. Social behaviour
4. Day-to-day living
5. Planning and preparation

We have nearly 3,600 completed surveys.

INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING:

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (March 1st, 2020), how would you rate your:

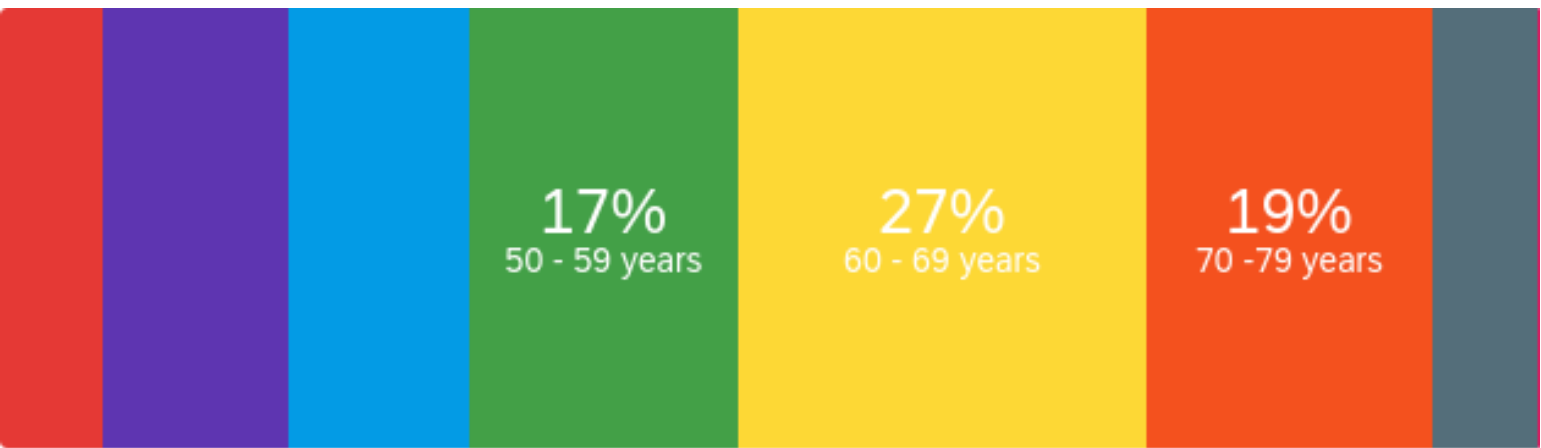
12.	Excellent	Good	Average	Satisfactory	Poor	Not applicable
Physical health						
Mental health						
Personal finances						
Employment satisfaction						
Retirement						
Living arrangements						
Personal safety						

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (March 1st, 2020), how often did you:

13.	More than 3 times/week	1-3 times/week	1-2 times/month	Never or not at all
Spend time with family and/or friends				
Use public transport				
Support businesses/stores in my community				
Grocery shop (including markets)				
Online shop				
Visit restaurants/ bars/coffee shops				
Order take-out food				
Attend church/faith-based services/activities				
Participate in an in-person activity (e.g. recreation or leisure activities, service clubs, social clubs, other)				
Participate in a virtual activity (e.g. Facebook chat, online games, app such as <i>HouseParty</i>)				
Volunteer				

Results: Age Brackets

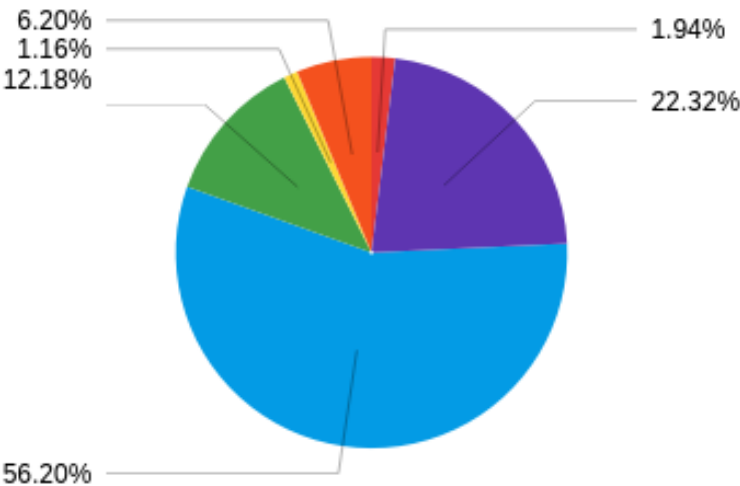


18 - 29 years 30 - 39 years 40 - 49 years 50 - 59 years 60 - 69 years
70 - 79 years 80 + years Prefer not to answer



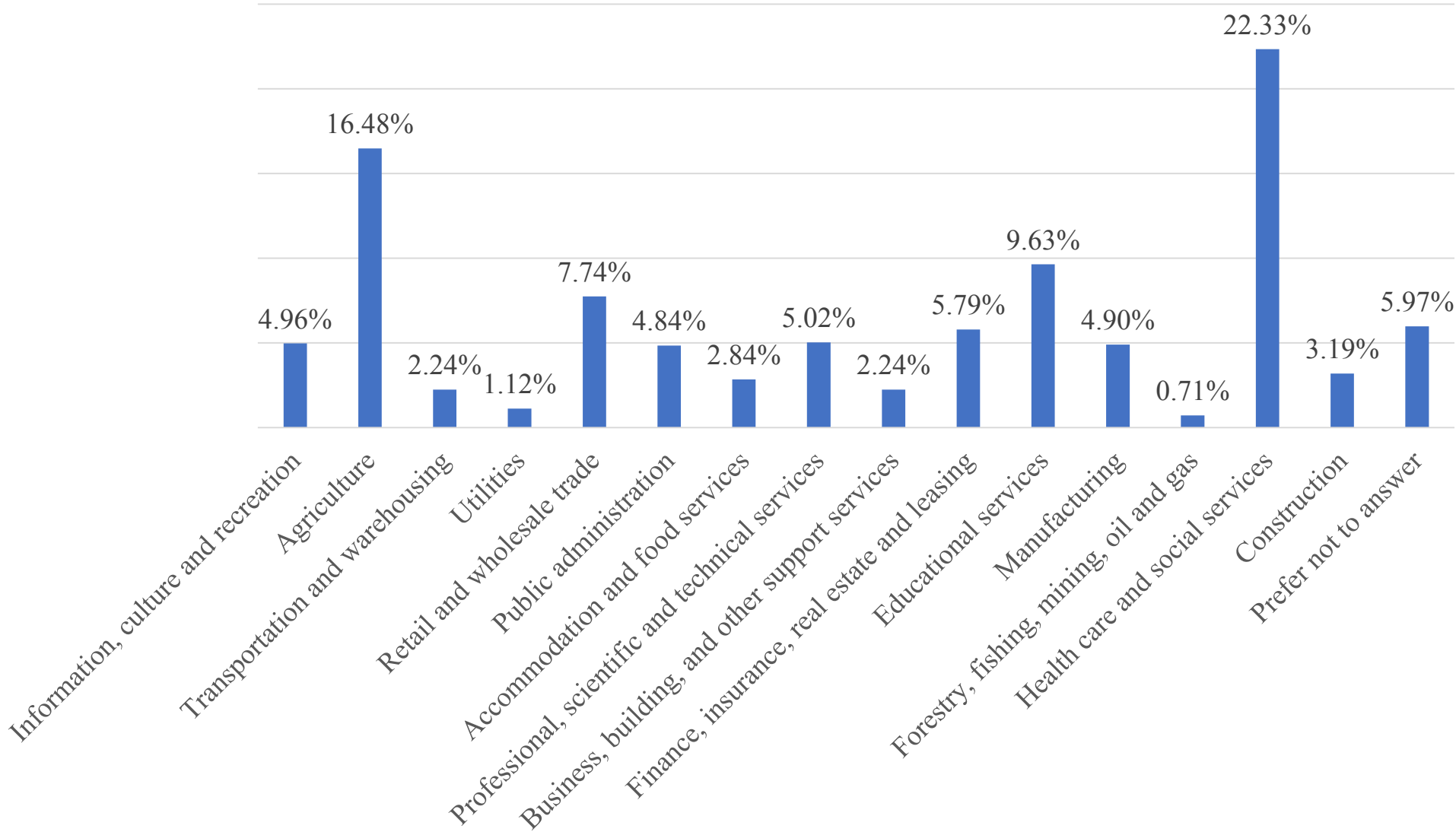
[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

Results: Educational Attainment

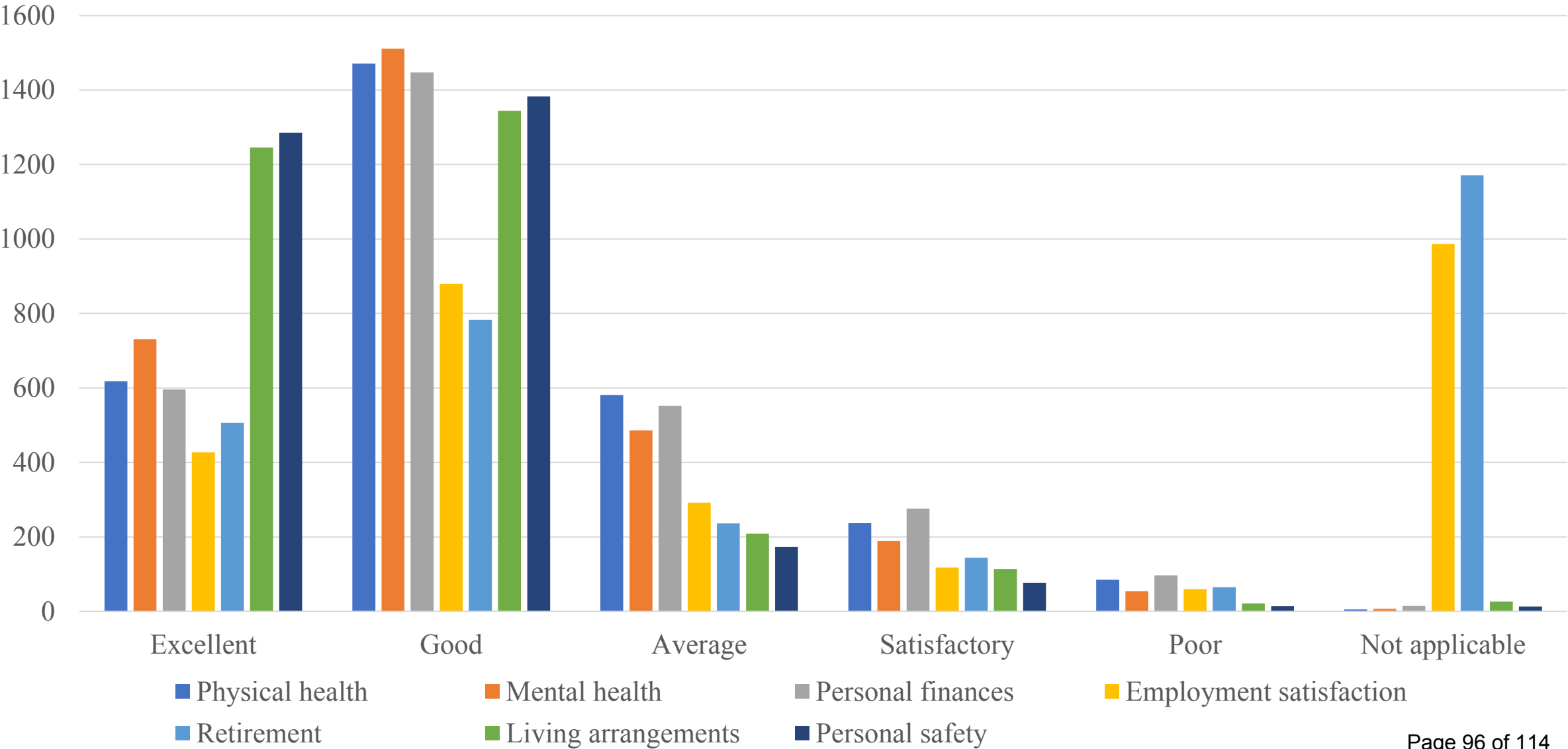


Grades 1-8 High school College/Undergraduate
Post-graduate degree (e.g. Master's, PhD, MD) Prefer not to answer Trades certificate

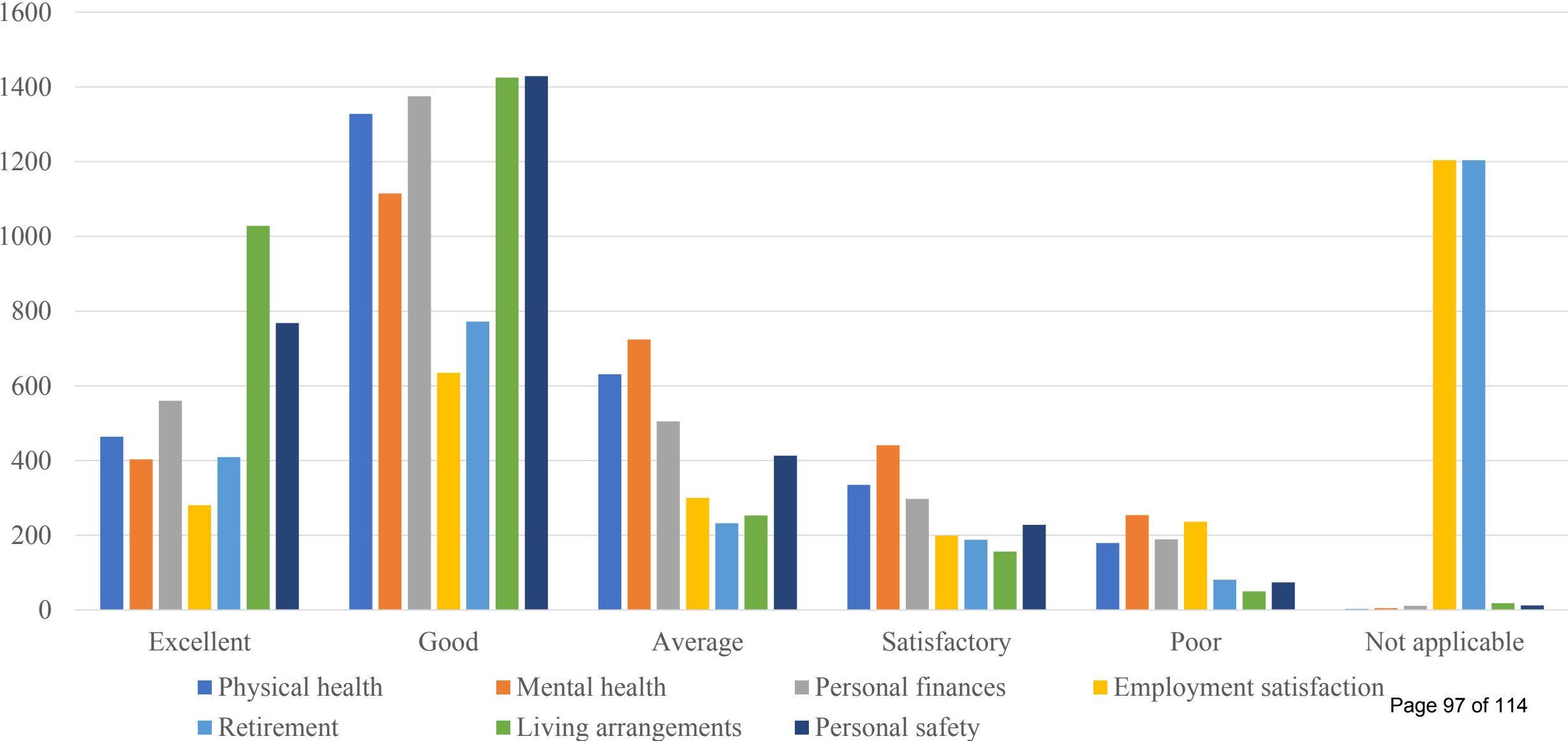
Results: Employment Sector



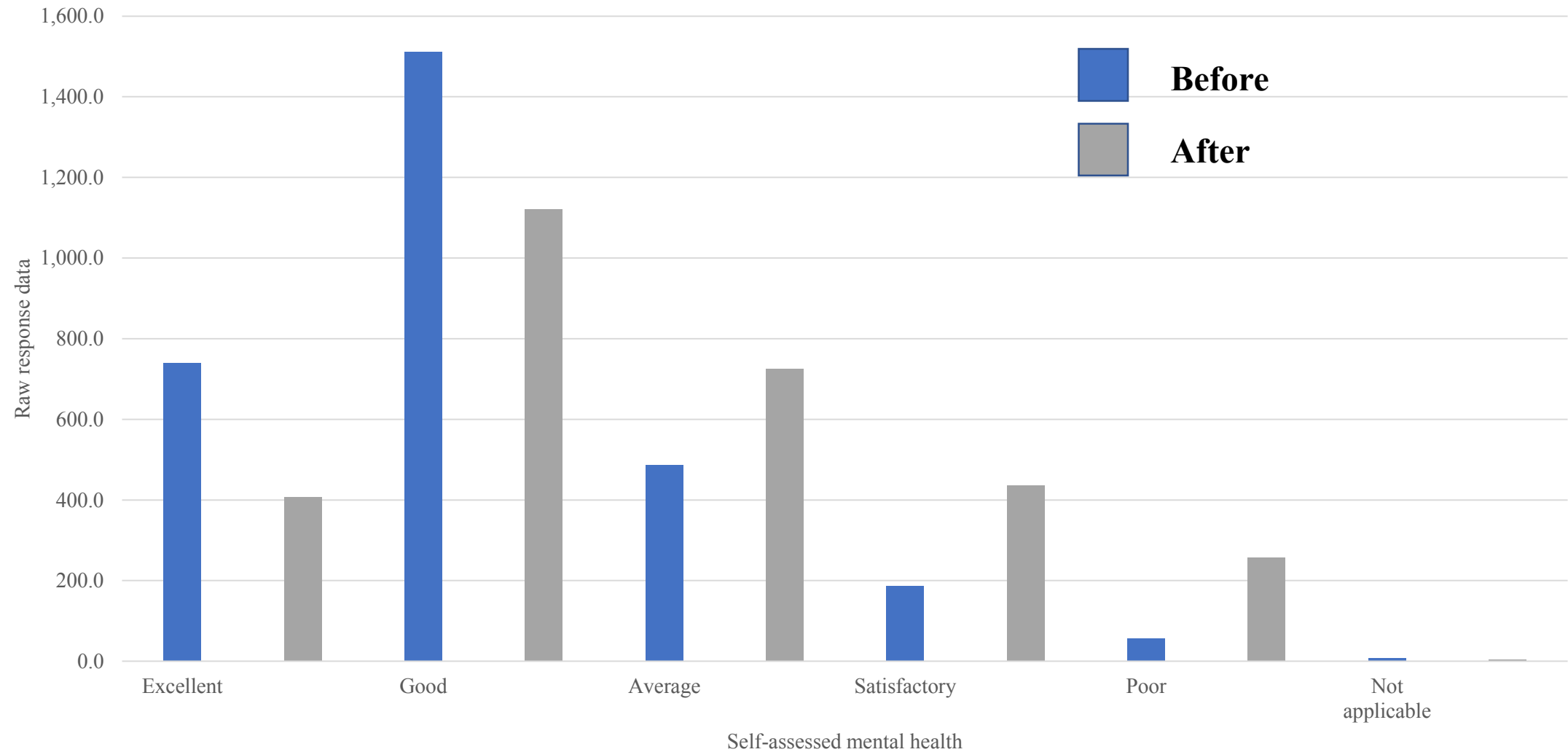
Results: Individual Well-Being (Before)



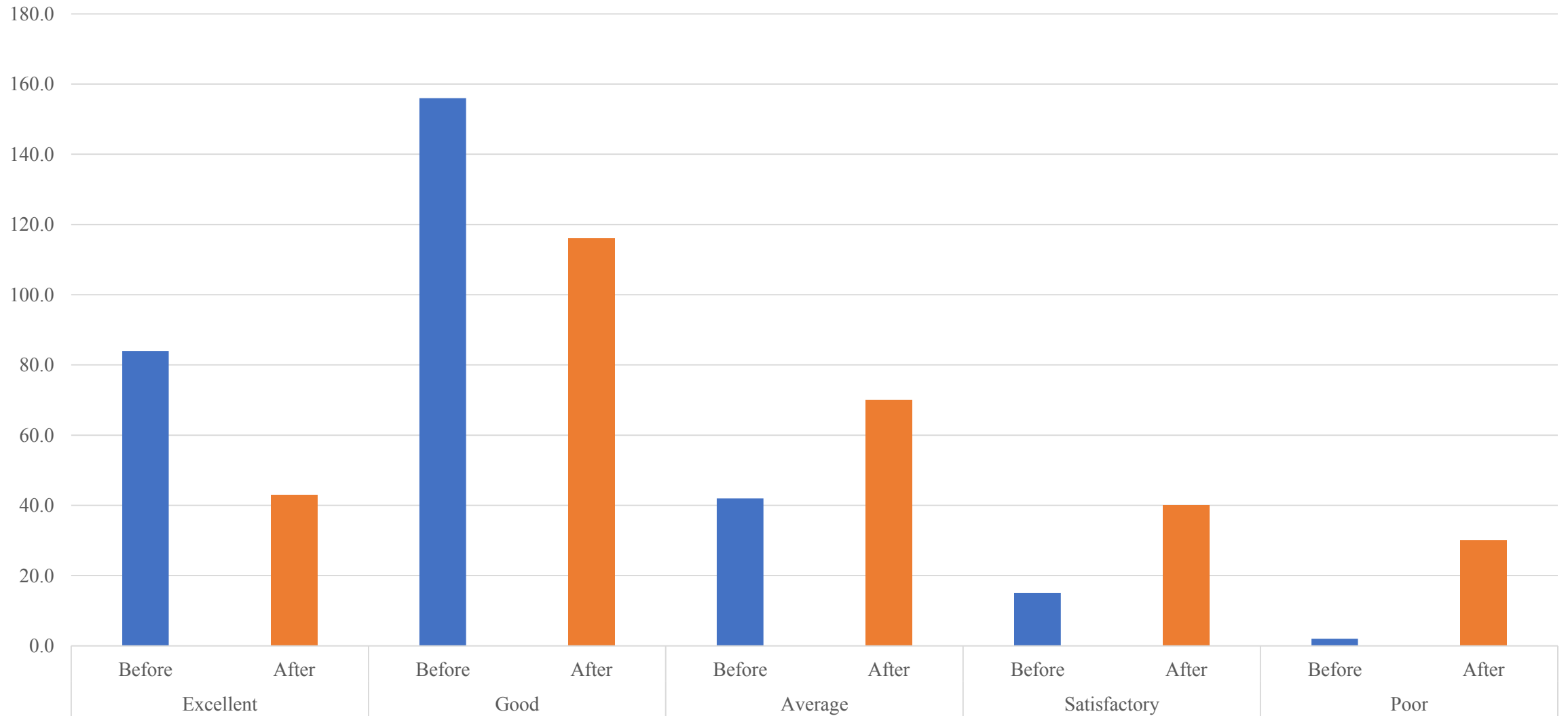
Results: Individual Well-Being (After)



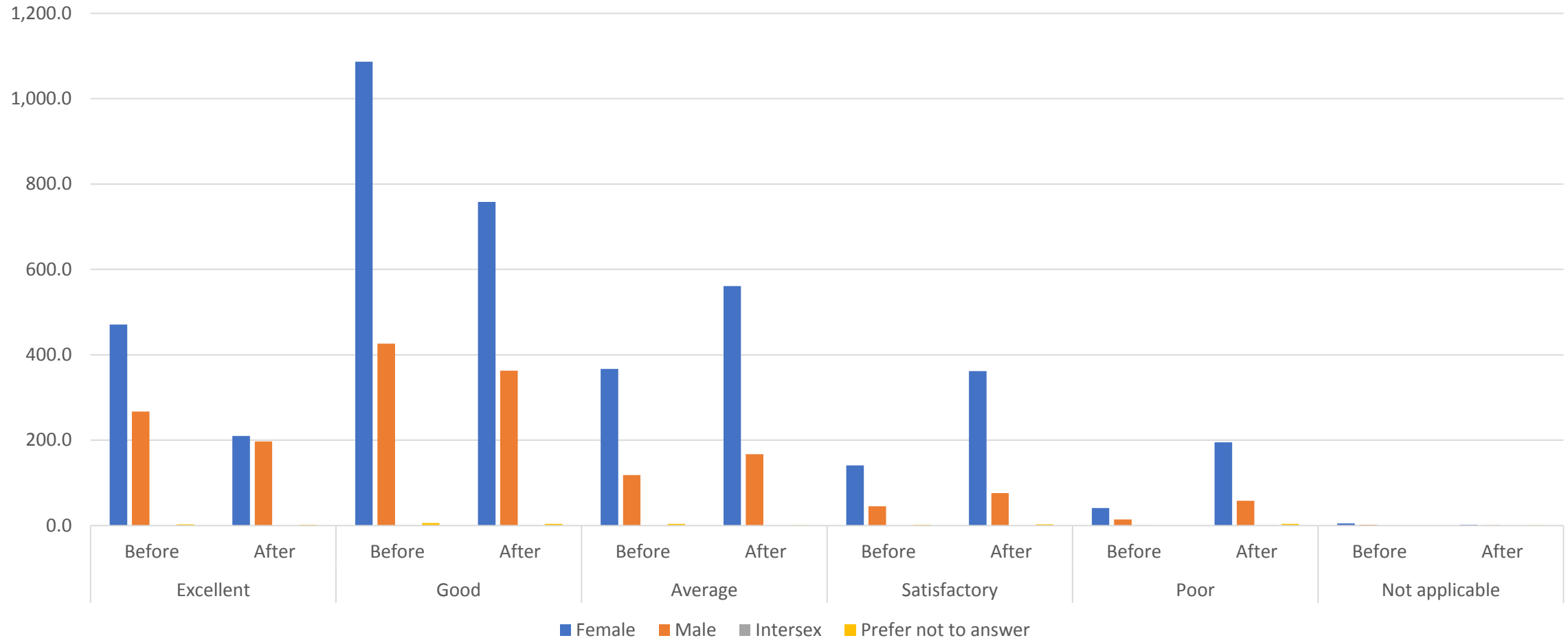
Results: Mental Health Before/After



Results: Mental Health, Before/After – St. Marys

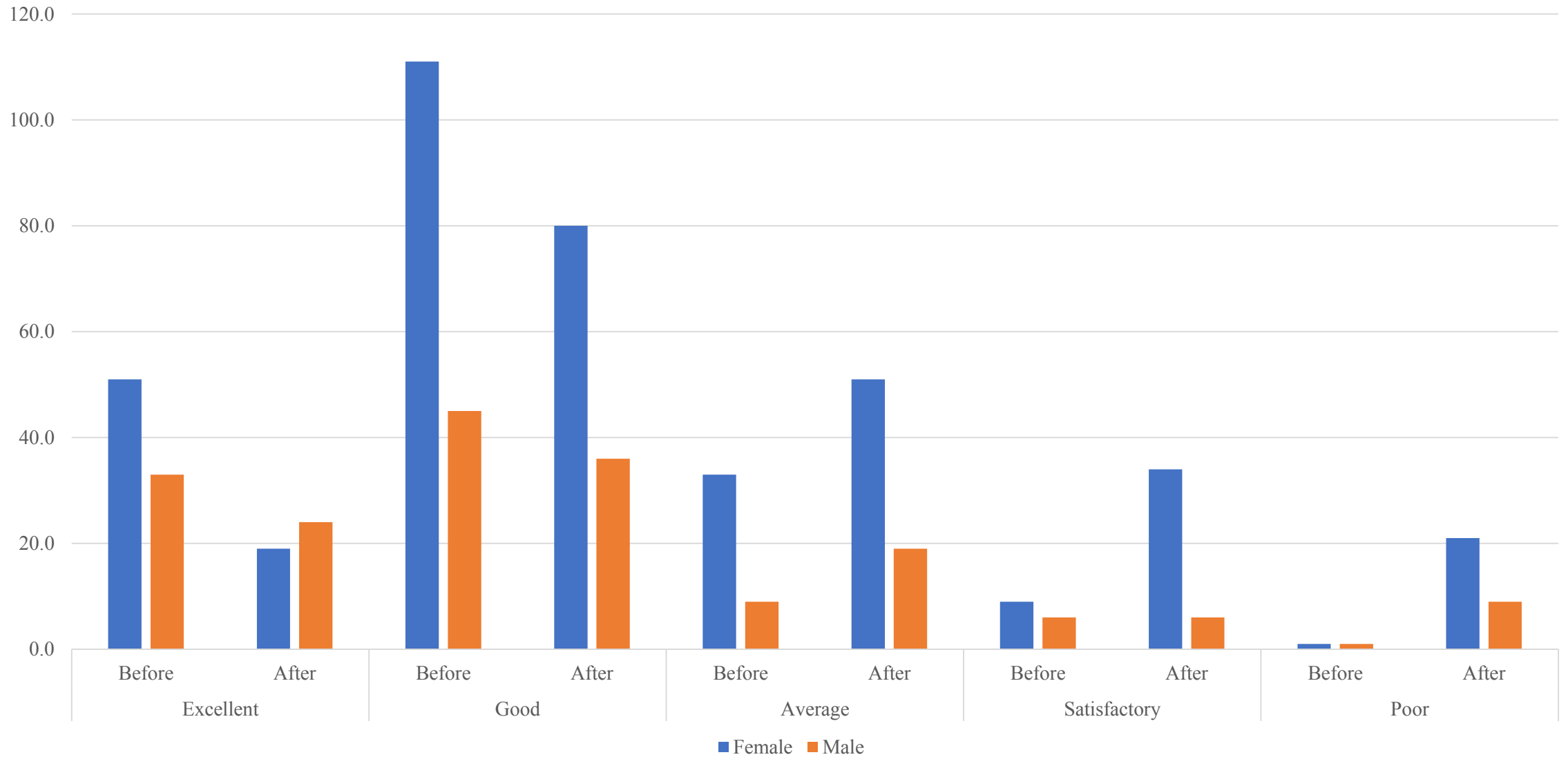


Results: Mental Health by Sex Before/After

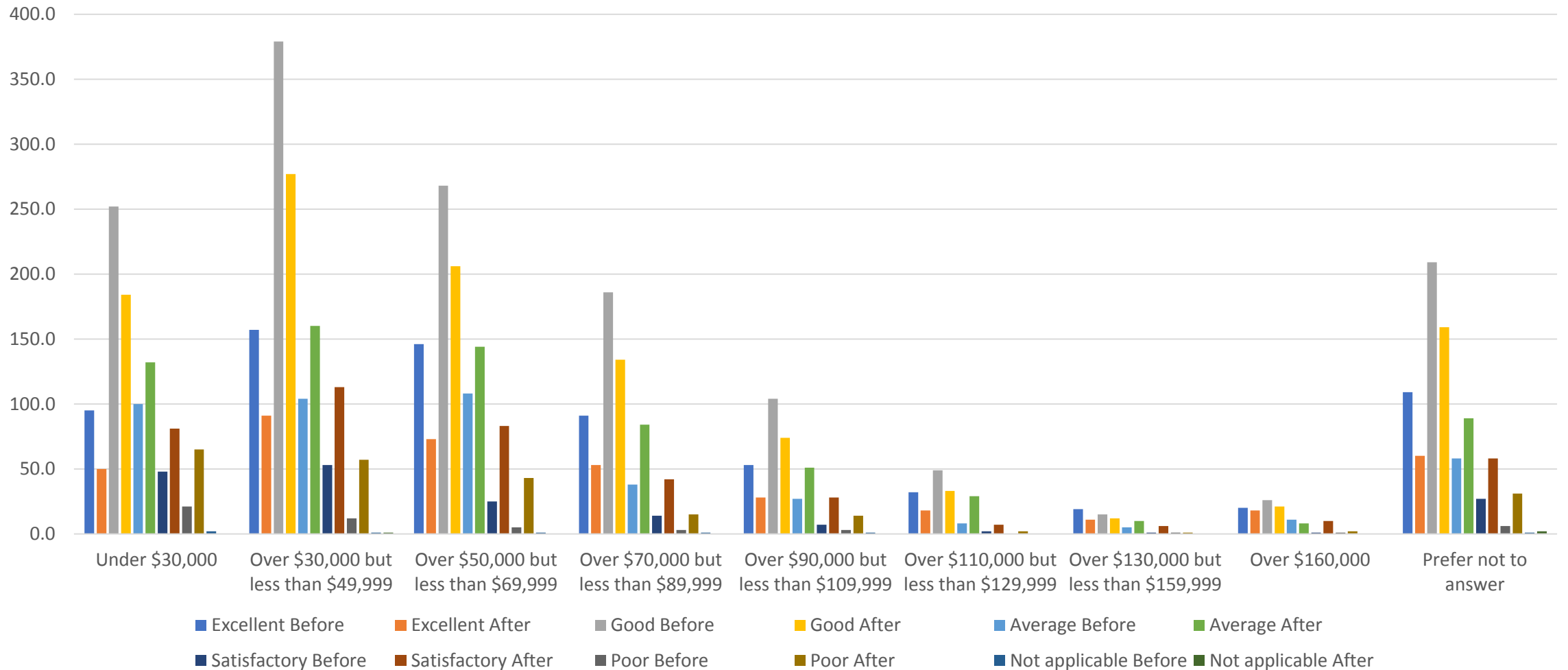


It was indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between sex and mental health prior and during COVID-19 ($p < 0.05$).

Results: Mental Health by Sex Before/After, St. Marys

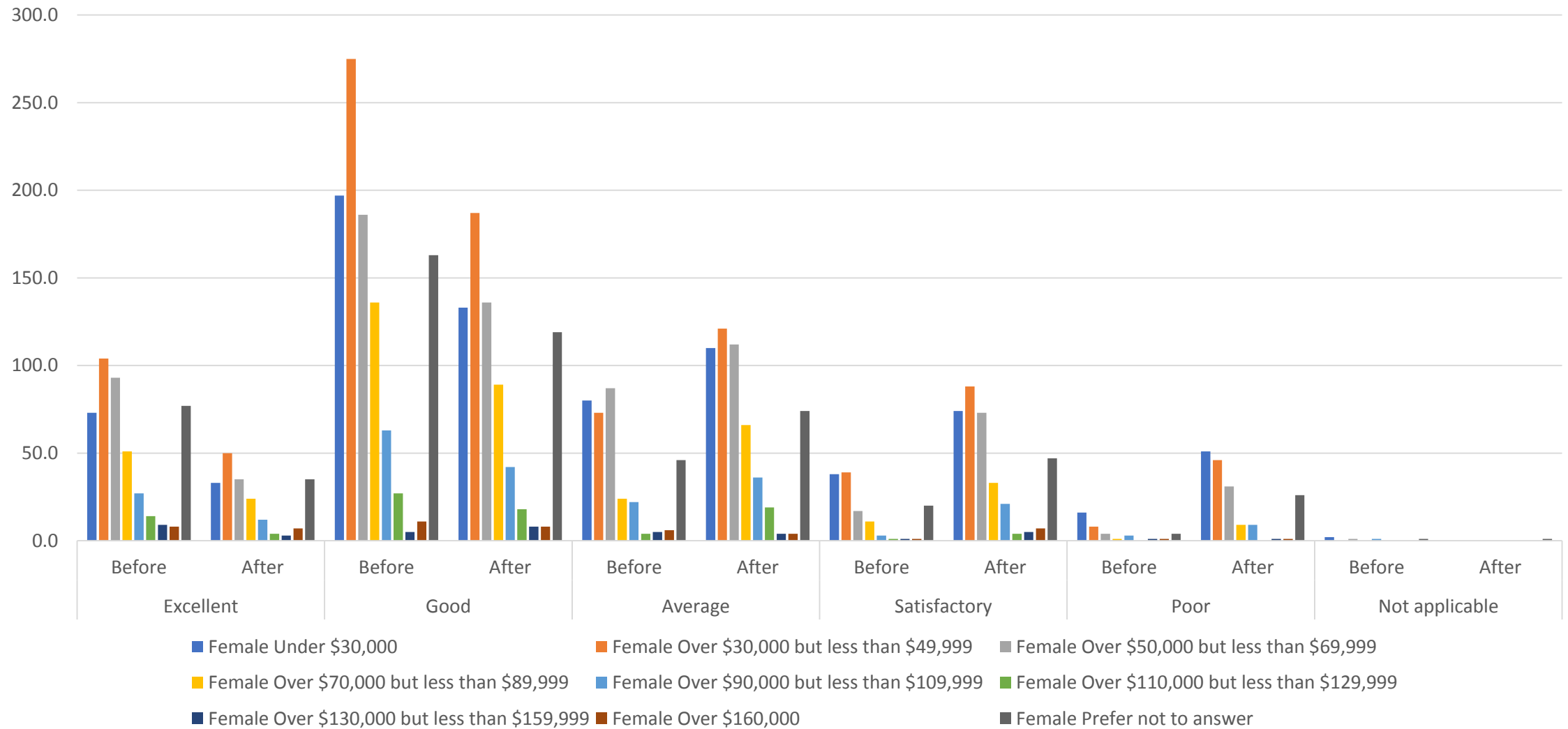


Results: Mental Health, Before/After by Income



Results: Mental Health by Sex Before/After by Income

FEMALES

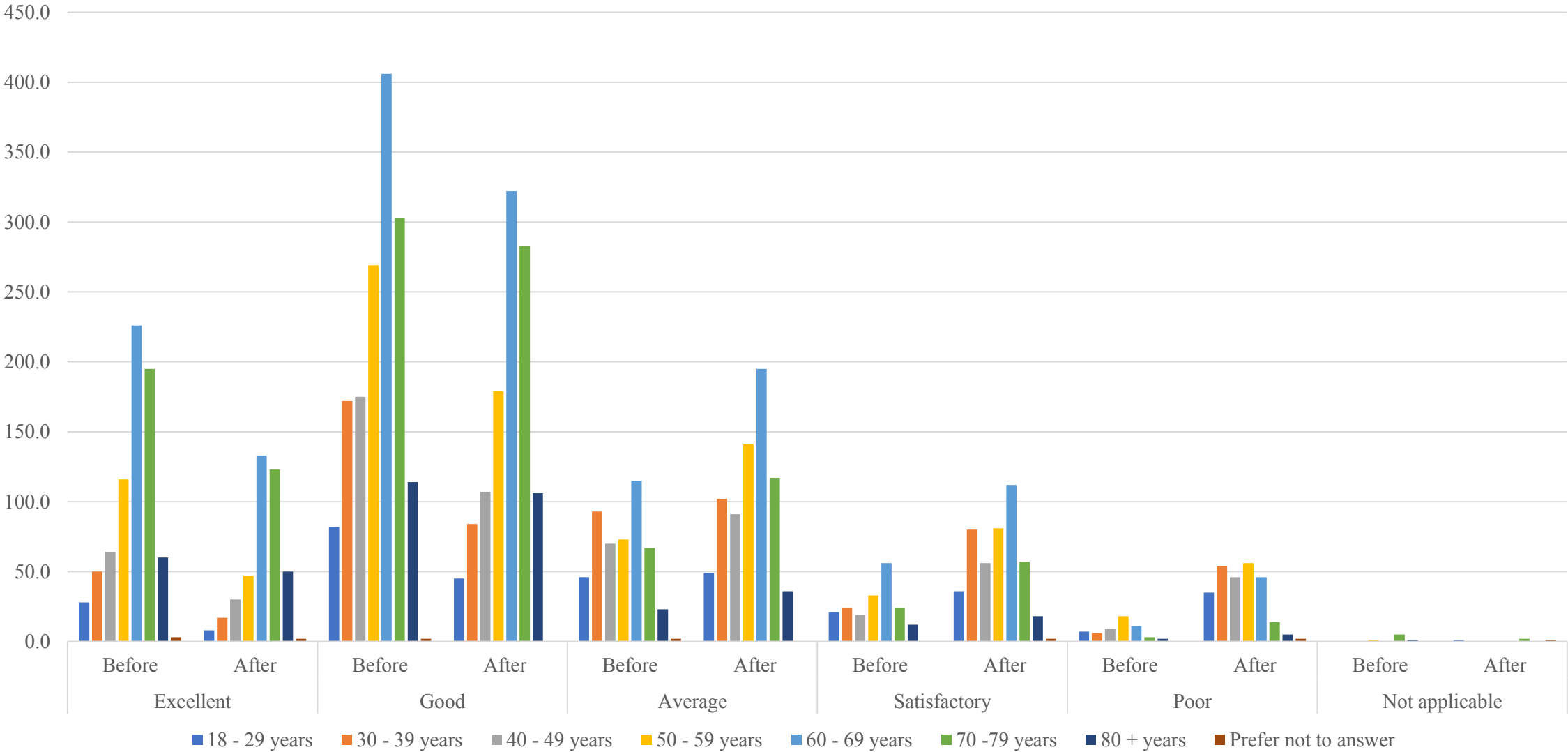


Results: Mental Health by Sex Before/After by Income

MALES



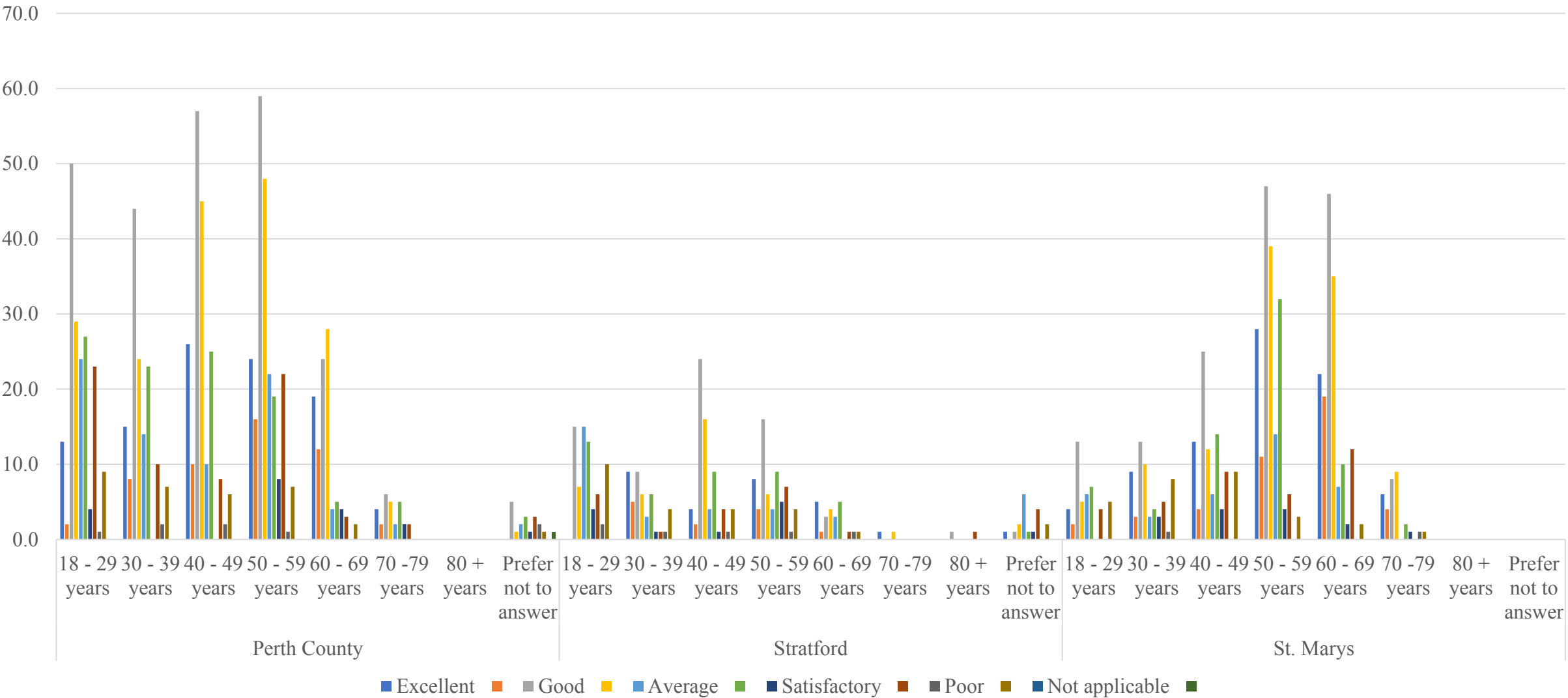
Results: Mental Health by Age, Before/After



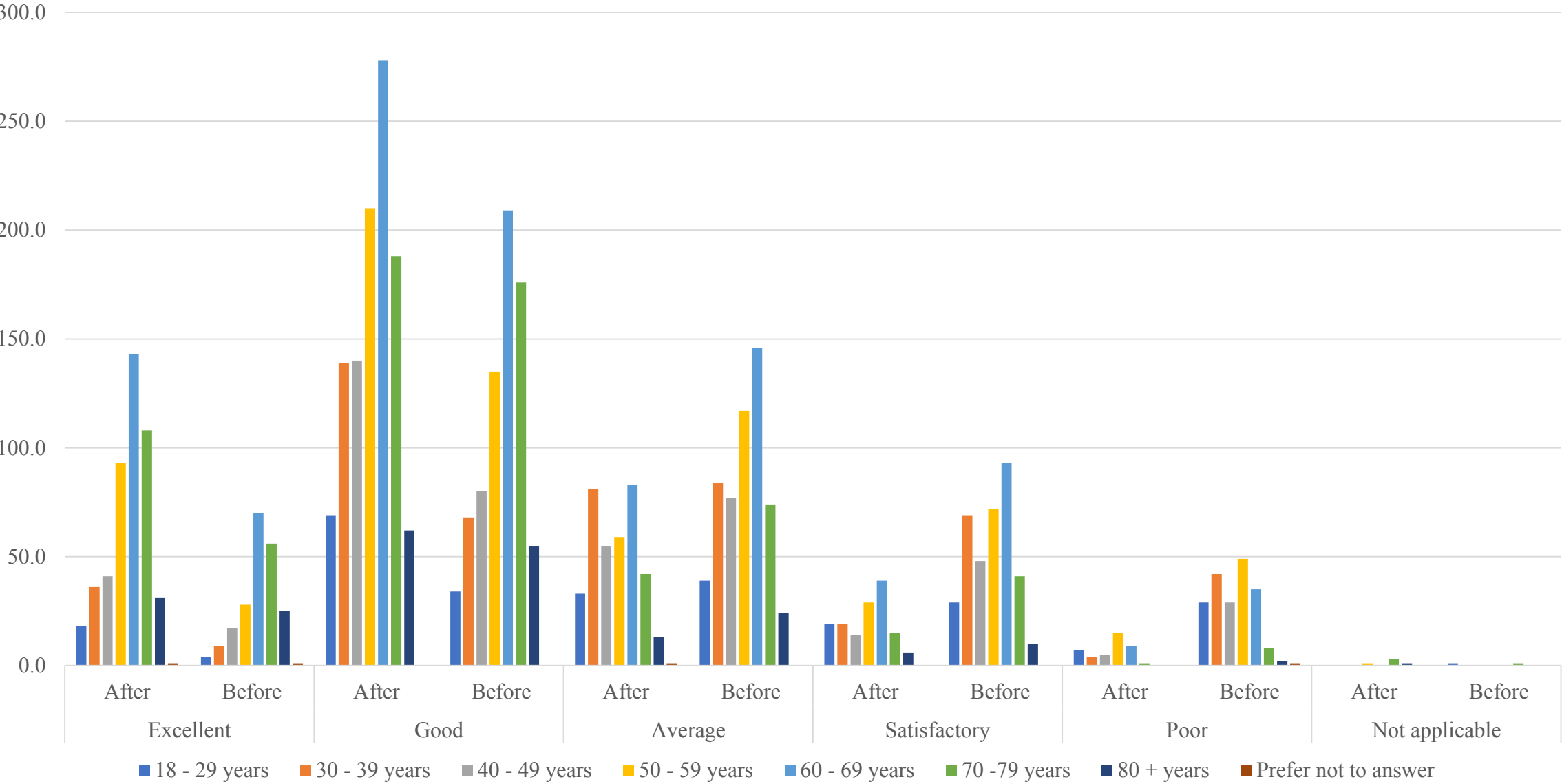
It was indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between females and males (independently) in the age groups of 18-29, 30-39, 60-69, and 70-79 for mental health prior and during COVID-19 ($p < 0.05$).

Results: Mental Health by Age, Before/After

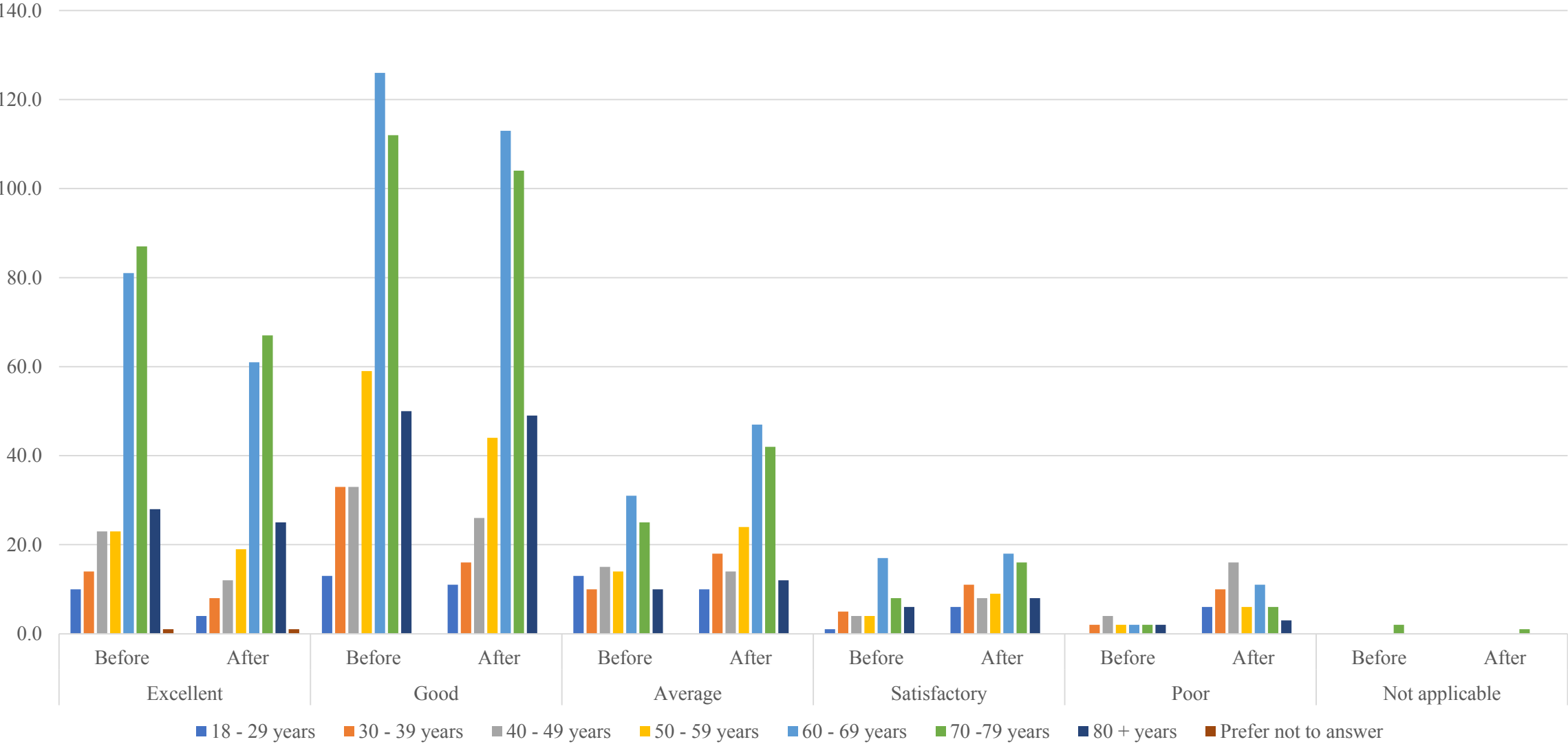
Perth County, Stratford, St. Marys



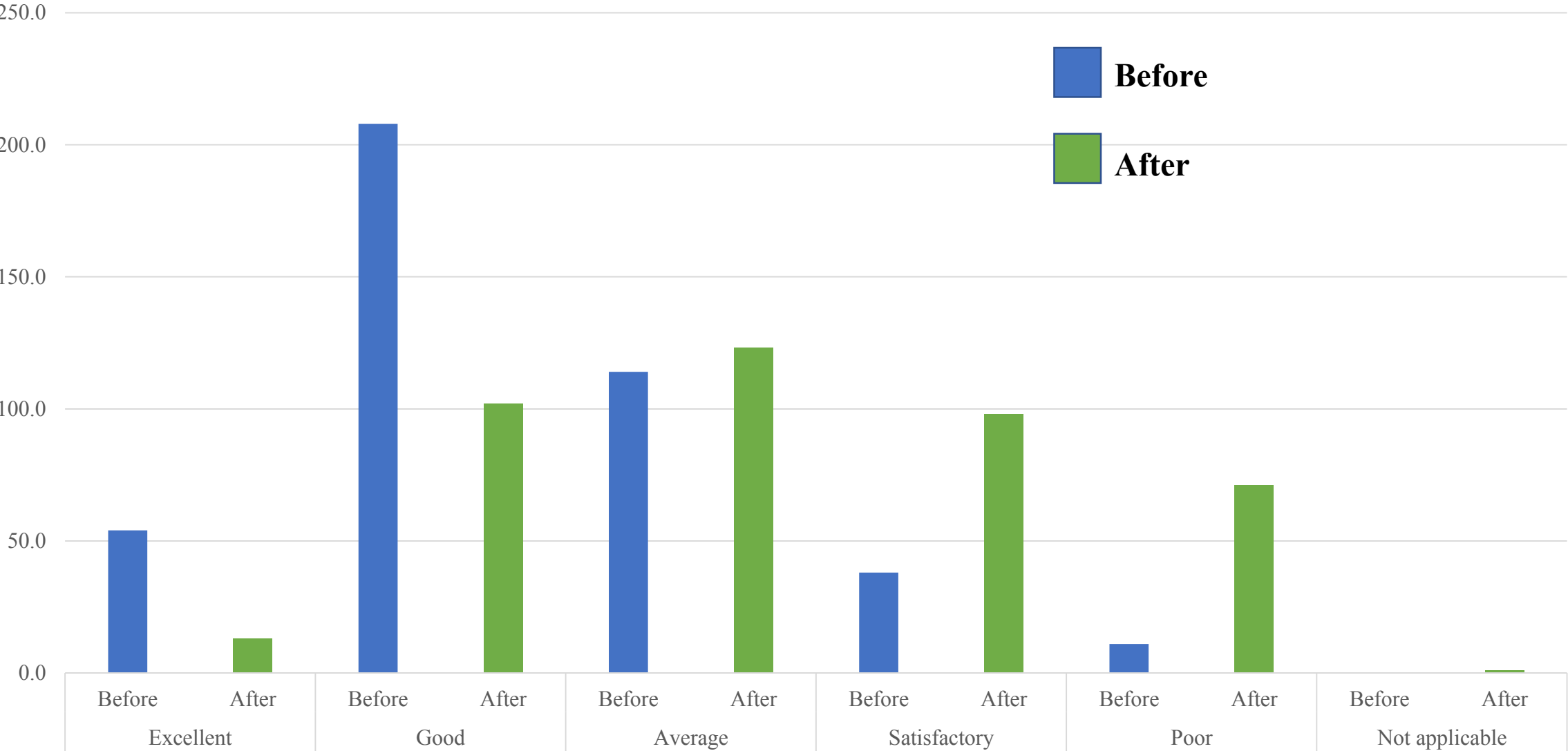
Results: Mental Health by Age, Female, Before/After



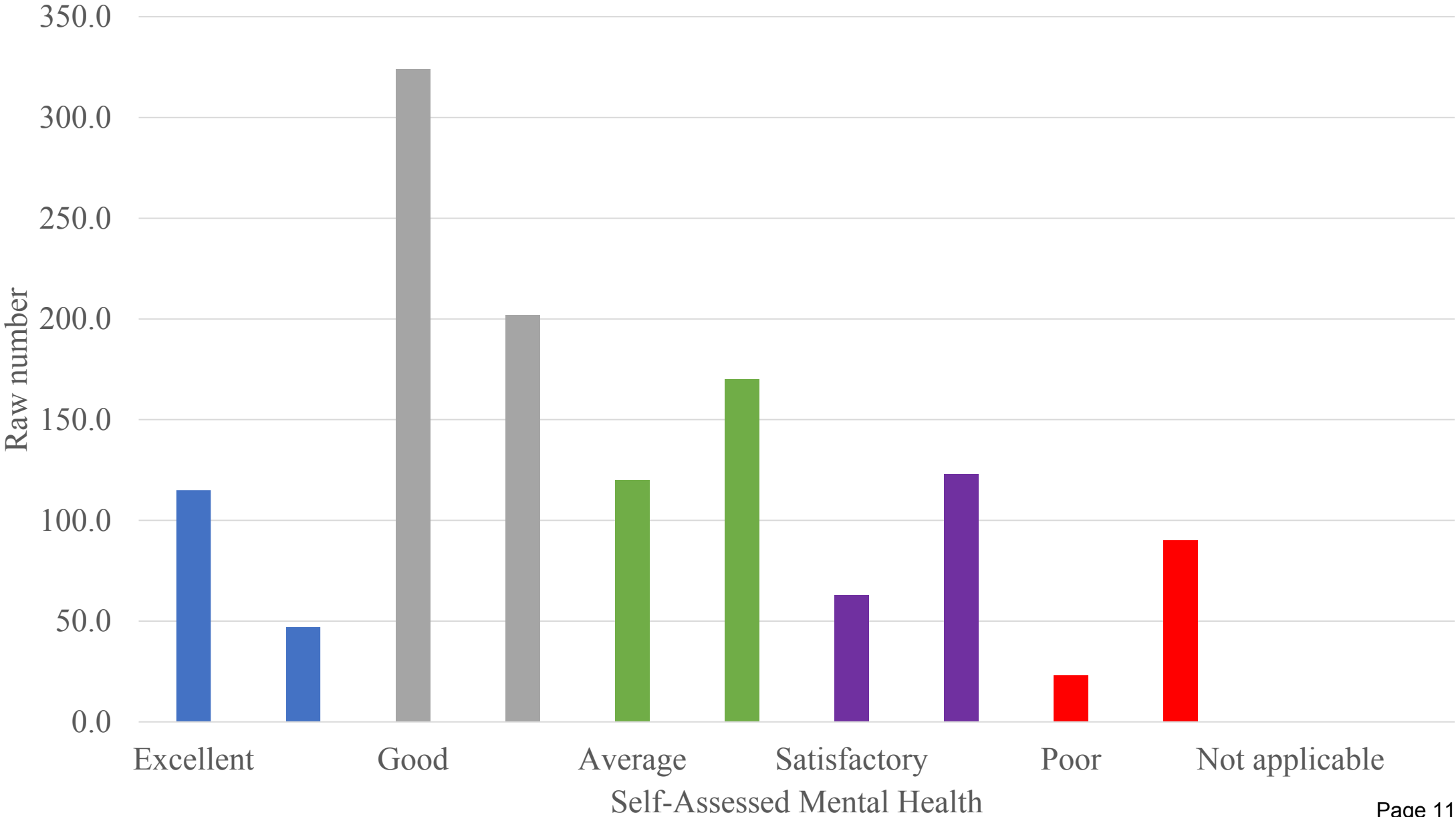
Results: Mental Health by Age, Male, Before/After



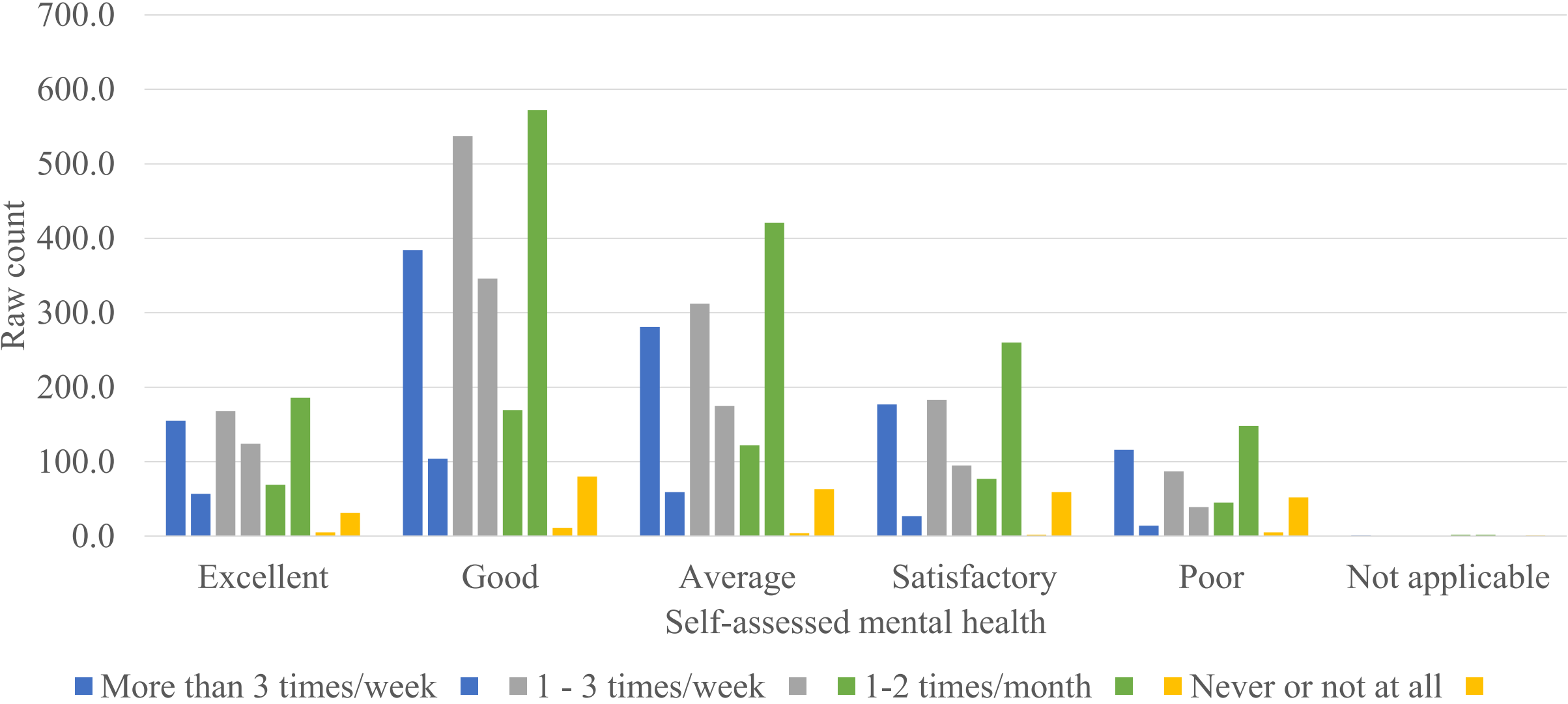
Results: Mental Health, Female, 18 – 39, Before/After



Results: Mental Health, Income (<\$50,000 (excl. ret.)), Before/After



Results: Mental Health by Social Behavior, Before/After



Policy implications

Social Behaviour

Risk Management





Next steps

Complete analysis

- Need to highlight the uniqueness of rural communities
- Promote rural resiliency

Qualitative data

- Focus groups/interview
- Art visualizations

Mobilization

- Journals articles
- Technical reports
- Infographics

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