

AYLMER-ELGIN-ST.THOMAS
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING PLAN



CSWB

General Public Survey:
Background Report

January 2021

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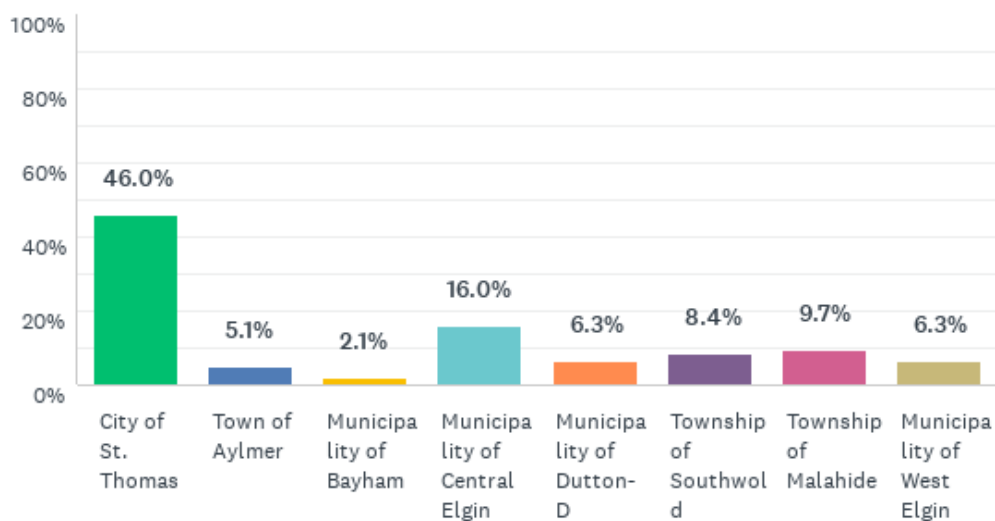
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Introduction

- The survey was open from July 27, 2020 to December 4, 2020
- 429 individuals responded to at least one question on the survey
- The survey has a confidence interval of 4.72

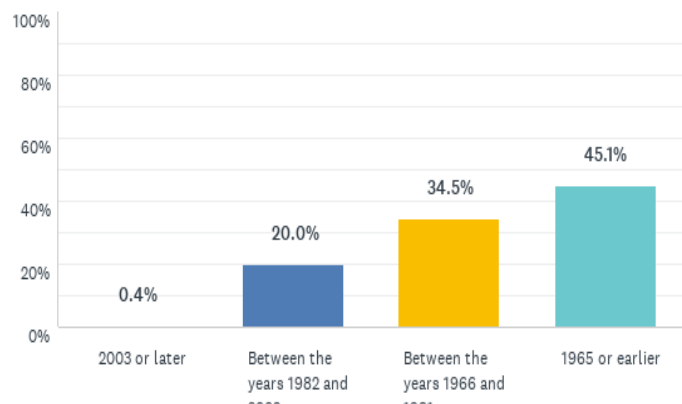
Profile of Respondents

- The majority of respondents live in the City of St. Thomas (46.0%). See the graph below for further details
- Note: Five respondents reported that they live in Bayham. The responses for Bayham should be used with caution due to the low number of responses

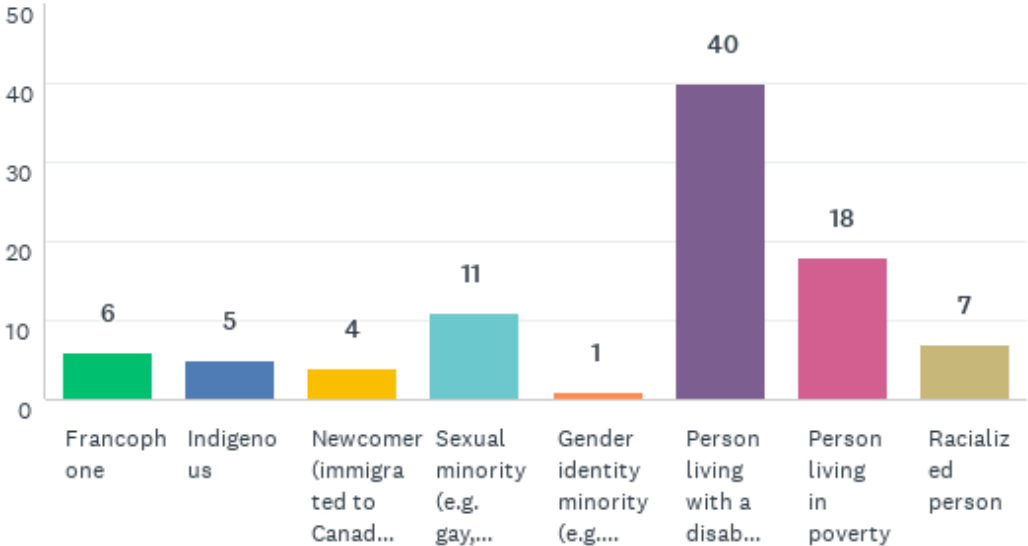


- The majority of individuals who responded to the survey were female (78.5%). 20.3% of respondents were male, and 0.8% selected “other”

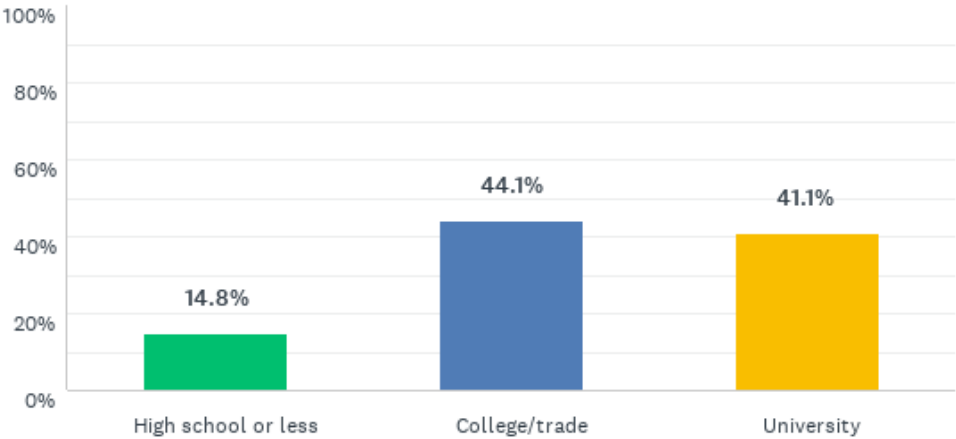
- Baby Boomers are the most frequent generation to respond to the survey (45.1%). Generation X (34.5%) and Millennials (20.0%) also had larger cohorts responding to the survey. Generation Z had 1 respondent, so, due to this low response rate, this response should not be used



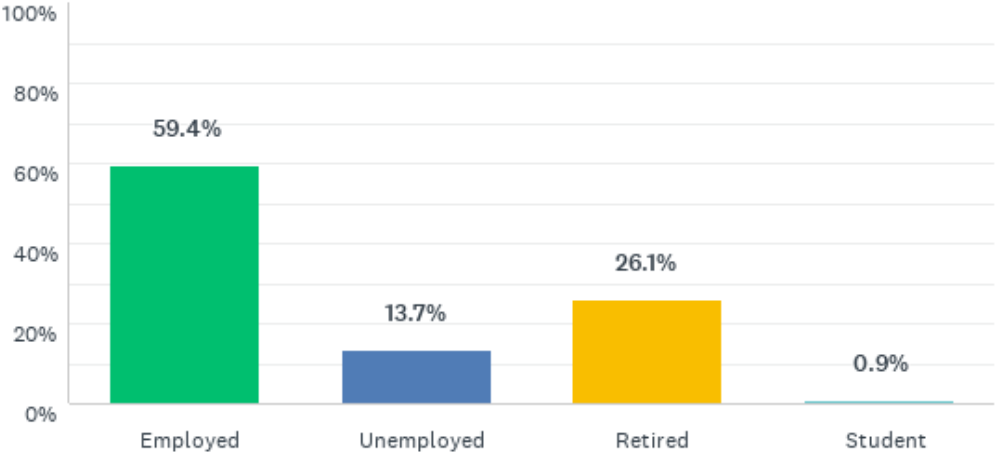
- A small number of individuals self-identified as being a member of a sub-population. The largest sub-population is comprised of persons living with a disability (40 responses). Eighteen respondents reported being a person living in poverty, and 11 respondents identified as being a sexual minority. All other sub-populations have ten or fewer responses and, due to the small number of responses, these responses should be used with caution. See the graph below for further details



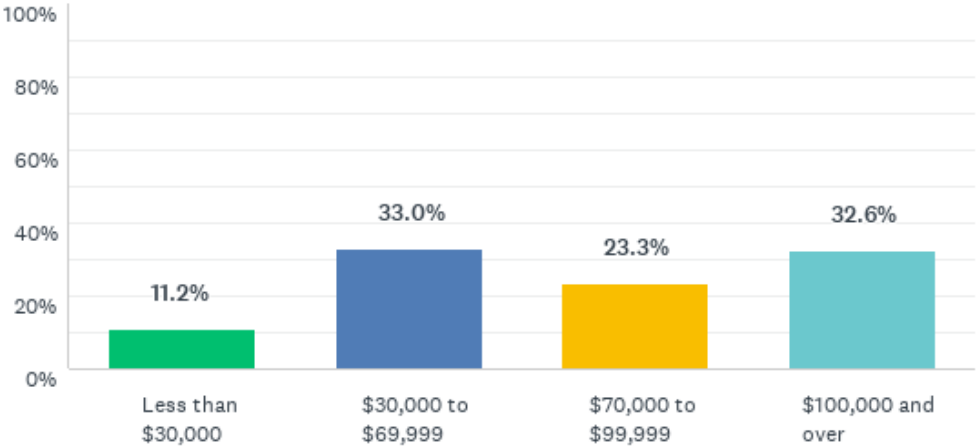
- The majority of individuals who responded to the survey have some post-secondary education, with 44.1% reporting college/trade as their highest level of education and 41.1% reporting university as their highest level of education. See the graph below for further details



- The majority of respondents to the survey are employed (59.4%). A smaller percentage are retired (26.1%), unemployed (13.7%) or are a student (0.9%). The student responses should be used with caution due to the low number of responses (2). See the graph below for further details



- The majority of respondents have an annual household income (before tax) of \$30,000 or higher. See the graph below for further details



Elements of Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB)

The general public survey was designed to gather the public's perception on 20 elements that affect community safety and well-being. The elements included in the survey are:

CSWB Element	Brief Description
Criminal Activity	Criminal activity is participating in activities that are against the law.
Discrimination, Marginalization and Racism	The unjust treatment of different people on the grounds of race, age, sexuality, gender, or the treatment of a person or group as insignificant.
Education and Skills Development	Instruction of children and youth from early learning through post-secondary. Also includes alternative learning and life skills programs.
Employment	Having paid work, a trade or profession and the work environment.
Emotional Violence	Being around controlling behaviours, whether as the perpetrator, victim or a witness.
Family Support	Help and encouragement that family members provide one another to live healthy, happy lives and supports available in the community for family members.
Financial Security	When an individual is not worried about whether their income can cover their expenses.
Food Security	Having reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious food.
Housing Security	Having a safe, reliable place to live.
Internet Access and Digital Literacy	Having access to the internet, and having the skills you need to live, learn, and work in a society where communication and access to information is increasingly through digital technologies like internet platforms, social media, and mobile devices.
Mental Health Issues	A person's psychological and emotional well-being.
Mobility Safety	Methods and measures used to prevent pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and passengers from being killed or seriously injured when moving through the community.
Physical Health Issues	The way our bodies function, influenced by personal habits, genetics and external or environmental factors. Good physical health is critical for overall well-being.
Social Behaviours	Pro-social behaviours are actions intended to benefit other people.
Social Environment	The physical and social settings where people live, including the culture in which an individual is educated or raised.
Social Support	Social support is being or feeling cared for, having assistance available from other people, and being part of a reliable network of family, friends or neighbours, whereas isolation is a total lack of interaction between an individual and society.

CSWB Element	Brief Description
Street Violence and Gang Issues	Threatening or violent activity in a neighbourhood or community that could be gang related. A gang is a group of individuals who work together to commit crimes or engage in anti-social behaviour.
Substance Use and Addiction	Overindulging in or being dependent on an addictive substance, especially alcohol or drugs, even if it does not result in self-harm or harm to others.
Transportation	Access to transportation. Transportation needs, including work, school, recreation activities, shopping, health/medical appointments, etc.
Victimization	Singling someone out for cruel or unjust treatment or the process of becoming a victim.

Overall Priority of CSWB Elements

Survey respondents were asked to provide a priority rating for each of the 20 elements noted above. They were asked what priority they felt the element should have in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, not what priority the element had for them personally. The rating was based on a 0 to 10 slider scale, ranging from 0 (“very low priority”) to 10 (“very high priority”).

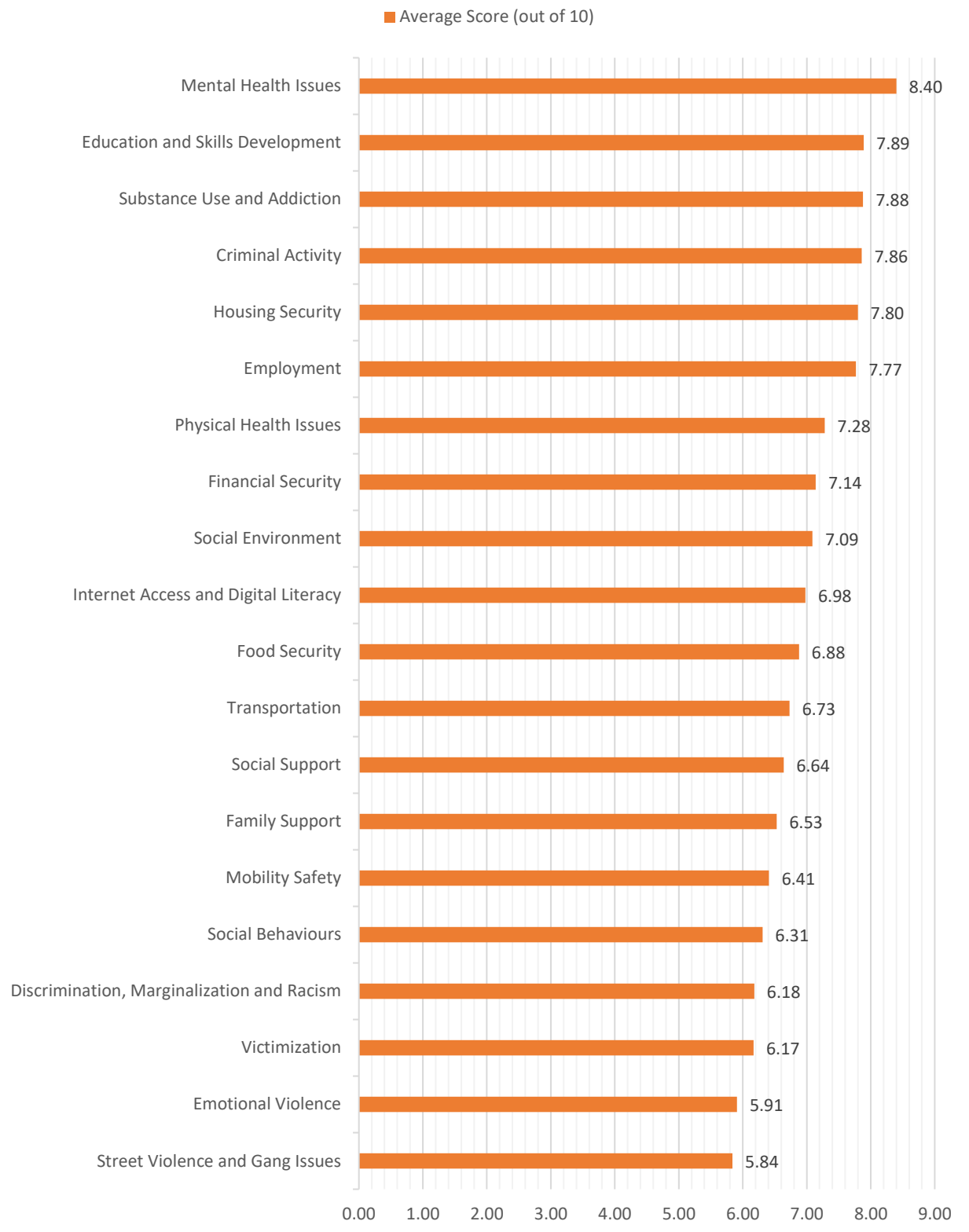
This process allowed each element to be given a priority rating independent of the priority scores of other elements in the survey. It should also be noted that all questions related to individual elements appeared on a single page in the survey, and the the pages were randomly rotated. This design mitigated against order effect across elements (for example: criminal activity has an equal chance of being rated first, last or in any other order).

The graph on the following page presents the priority ratings for each element, in order of overall average score out of 10. The higher the number out of 10, the higher the priority for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. Based on the data, it is clear that residents perceive different elements that affect community safety and well-being should have higher and lower priorities in the plan.

The top six elements identified as priorities for Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole are:

1. Mental health issues
2. Education and skills development
3. Substance use and addiction
4. Criminal activity
5. Housing security
6. Employment

Overall Priority Rating of CSWB Elements



There was some variation amongst municipalities in the top elements identified for the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The following table outlines the top five to six elements in each municipality. Note: Bayham is not included due to the low number of responses in this municipality. The colour coding of the CSWB elements reveals the pattern of common elements identified across the municipalities.

Municipality	Element #1	Element #2	Element #3	Element #4	Element #5	Element #6
Elgin County	Mental health issues	Education and skills development	Substance use and addiction	Criminal activity	Housing security	Employment
City of St. Thomas	Mental health issues	Substance use and addiction	Housing security	Criminal activity	Employment	Education and skills development
Aylmer	Mental health issues	Housing security	Substance use and addiction	Employment	Education and skills development	
Central Elgin	Substance use and addiction	Mental health issues	Criminal activity	Employment	Education and skills development	
Dutton Dunwich	Education and skills development	Employment	Internet access and digital literacy	Physical health issues	Discrimination, marginalization and racism	
Malahide	Mental health issues	Internet access and digital literacy	Education and skills development	Physical health issues	Criminal activity	Employment
Southwold	Mental health issues	Criminal activity	Employment	Education and skills development	Substance use and addiction	
West Elgin	Internet access and digital literacy	Food security	Social environment	Criminal activity	Housing security	Financial security

The following table outlines the top CSWB elements identified in the survey and in which municipality they were identified in the top five/six list. Yellow highlighting indicates the top elements identified overall for Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas. See Attachment A for a table with average scores for each element by municipality. Note: Bayham has been excluded from the list due to the low number of survey responses.

Top CSWB Elements	Municipality							
	County	St. T	A	CE	DD	M	S	We
Mental health issues	x	x	x	x		x	x	
Education and skills development	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Substance use and addiction	x	x	x	x			x	
Criminal activity	x	x		x		x	x	x
Housing security	x	x	x					x
Employment	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Internet access and digital literacy					x	x		x
Physical health issues					x	x		
Financial security								x
Social environment								x
Food security								x
Discrimination, marginalization and racism					x			

From this table it is apparent that:

- The municipalities with more survey responses weighted the overall priority of CSWB elements
- Even with the weighting, between two (Dutton Dunwich and West Elgin) to six (St. Thomas) of the overall County's top six CSWB elements are identified in each municipality
- Education and skills development and employment were identified in the top list in six out of seven municipalities
- Mental health issues and criminal activity were identified in the top list in five out of seven municipalities
- Substance use and addiction was identified in the top list in four out of seven municipalities
- Housing security was identified in the top list in three out of seven municipalities
- Other elements which should be considered for inclusion in the CSWB Plan include:
 - Internet access and digital literacy, which was identified in the top list in three out of seven municipalities (Dutton Dunwich, Malahide, West Elgin)
 - Physical health issues (for Dutton Dunwich and Malahide)

The next sections of this report detail the comments provided by respondents in each of the top identified CSWB elements.

Mental Health Issues

Based on its overall average score of 8.40 out of 10, mental health issues was the #1 overall priority for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Mental health issues include a person's psychological and emotional well-being.

In addition to this element receiving the top overall average rating, it was identified in the top CSWB elements list in five out of seven municipalities.

In terms of age there was a small differentiation in the level of priority for this element. Respondents who self-identified as Millennials felt that this element should be a higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 8.49 out of 10. Baby Boomers rated it as 8.27 out of 10, and Generation X gave it the lowest overall average score (8.11 out of 10).

Although individuals rated the impact of mental health issues on themselves and their households lower (6.75 out of 10), they rated the impact of mental health issues on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (8.13 and 8.42 respectively).

Comments as to why respondents feel mental health issues should be a priority in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan highlight the importance of this element as a key foundational piece in community safety and well being. COVID-19 has exacerbated this element, with many respondents reporting that the pandemic has impacted their mental health or the mental health of others in their community. Respondents noted the far reaching impact of mental health, making linkages between mental health and homelessness, poverty, addiction, crime, employment, and domestic violence. Some respondents noted that there is still a stigma associated with mental health.

Some respondents feel the closing of the Psychiatric Hospital in St. Thomas has had an impact on mental health in the region. Access to education about mental health, and the need for more professionals and resources to support individuals with mental health issues (especially in rural areas) were named as challenges. Another challenge that was mentioned was using the police as a primary/first response to supporting individuals with mental health issues.

Potential areas of focus/need that were identified by respondents include:

- The mental health of children and youth and resources to support them, including a focus on prevention
- Resources to support the LGBTQ+ community
- The visible number of individuals with mental health issues in St. Thomas (especially the downtown core, Talbot Street), and the perceived threat to individual's safety

- Housing options for individuals with mental health issues
- Available and affordable mental health supports/resources/services
- Mental health supports/resources/services in the western part of Elgin County and in rural areas and small towns
- The provision of wraparound care for individuals with mental health issues

See Attachment B for specific comments provided by respondents about mental health issues.

Education and Skills Development

Overall Average Score

7.89

Based on its overall average score of 7.89 out of 10, education and skills development was the #2 overall priority for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Education and skills development include the instruction of children and youth from early learning through post-secondary. It also includes alternative learning and life skills programs.

This element was identified in the top CSWB elements in six out of seven municipalities (Dutton Dunwich, Central Elgin, St. Thomas, Malahide, Aylmer, Southwold).

In terms of age, respondents who self-identified as Baby Boomers and Millennials felt that this element should be a higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 7.76 and 7.74 out of 10, respectively. Generation X respondents rated it slightly lower, with an overall average score of 7.38 out of 10.

Although individuals rated the impact of education and skills development on themselves and their households lower (6.04 out of 10), they rated the impact of education and skills development on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (8.01 and 8.15 respectively).

Overall, there were no major themes identified by respondents in terms of potential focus for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan in the area of education and skills development. Respondents highlighted the importance of education as a cornerstone in society, with strong links to employment, economic well-being, health, social skills, and decreased crime. Some respondents noted that education should support all abilities, be culturally sensitive, support diversity and anti-discrimination. The importance of life skills training, skills training for jobs, and lifelong learning were also mentioned, and a few respondents commented on the lack of school resources in West Elgin.

See Attachment C for specific comments provided by respondents about education and skills development.

Substance Use and Addiction

Overall Average Score

7.88

Based on its overall average score of 7.88 out of 10, criminal activity was the #3 overall priority for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Substance use and addiction includes overindulging in or being dependent on an addictive substance, especially alcohol or drugs, even if it does not result in self-harm or harm to others.

This element was identified in the top CSWB elements in four out of seven municipalities (St. Thomas, Central Elgin, Aylmer, Southwold).

In terms of age, respondents who self-identified as Generation X felt that this element should be a higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 8.19 out of 10. Millennials and Baby Boomers rated it slightly lower (overall average score of 7.81 and 7.53 out of 10 respectively).

Although individuals rated the impact of substance use and addiction on themselves and their households lower (4.13 out of 10), they rated the impact of substance use and addiction on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (6.96 and 7.82 respectively).

Comments as to why respondents feel substance use and addiction should be a priority in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan noted that substance use and addictions is increasing and is very prevalent in St. Thomas, specifically in the core of the city. Some respondents reported concerns with discarded needles and a growing overdose/opioid crisis. Linkages were made between addictions and other community safety and well-being elements, such as mental health, housing and homelessness, and crime. Some felt that there is a stigma attached to addictions and that public education should be a focus. A challenge reported by respondents is that there is a lack of services, supports and resources in this area, especially in small communities. Some ideas for more services included a safe injection/consumption site, treatment programs, and a rehab centre.

See Attachment D for specific comments provided by respondents about substance use and addiction.

Criminal Activity

Overall Average Score

7.88

Based on its overall average score of 7.88 out of 10, criminal activity was the #4 overall priority for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Criminal activity includes participating in activities that are against the law.

This element was identified in the top CSWB elements in five out of seven municipalities (Southwold, Central Elgin, St. Thomas, Malahide, West Elgin).

In terms of age, respondents who self-identified as Baby Boomers felt that this element should be a higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 7.93 out of 10. Generation X rated it as 7.56 out of 10, and Millennials gave it the lowest overall average score (7.21 out of 10).

Although individuals rated the impact of criminal activity on themselves and their households lower (6.33 out of 10), they rated the impact of criminal activity on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (7.35 and 7.78 respectively).

Comments as to why respondents feel criminal activity should be a priority in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan highlighted that people want to feel safe where they live. There were mixed responses as to whether or not residents felt safe, with some respondents reporting they felt safe, some reporting they felt relatively safe, and others reporting that they didn't feel safe. St. Thomas was named more frequently as a community with more criminal activity. Respondents reported that there is not a lot of serious crime in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas, but that they are experiencing and hearing about break-ins, petty theft, property theft, drug use and drug trafficking, animal cruelty, and human trafficking.

Some respondents made linkages between criminal activity and other elements of community safety and well-being. Of these comments, many felt that criminal activity is the symptom of something else and that the root cause of this type of activity lies in mental health issues, addictions, poverty, food security, unemployment, housing/homelessness, social inclusion/a sense of belonging and/or education. It was felt that by focusing on these other elements, including increasing social and mental health supports and resources, criminal activity in the region would decrease.

See Attachment E for specific comments provided by respondents about criminal activity.

Housing Security

Overall Average Score

7.80

Based on its overall average score of 7.80 out of 10, housing security was the #5 overall priority for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Housing security includes having a safe, reliable place to live.

This element was identified in the top CSWB elements in three out of seven municipalities (St. Thomas, Aylmer, West Elgin).

In terms of age, respondents who self-identified as Generation X felt that this element should be a slightly higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 7.78 out of 10. Baby Boomers rated it as 7.75 out of 10, and Millennials gave it the lowest overall average score (7.58 out of 10).

Although individuals rated the impact of housing security on themselves and their households lower (5.11 out of 10), they rated the impact of housing security on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (7.09 and 7.64 respectively).

Many respondents reported that everyone deserves safe, accessible and affordable housing, and that housing is an essential need or basic human right. Comments as to why respondents feel housing security should be a priority in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan highlighted:

- A lack of affordable housing
- An homelessness issue (especially in St. Thomas)
- Unsafe housing
- A low vacancy rate/a lack of availability of rental housing
- A lack of rental property in rural Elgin
- Too much focus on building condos/houses that are expensive to purchase
- Youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities as populations with more vulnerability in the area of housing security
- The need for a range of diverse housing options, including an increased supply of affordable rental housing, and a focus on Housing First as an approach to homelessness

As with other top rated community safety and well-being elements, housing security was linked to other elements, such as mental health, addictions, employment, education, food security, and crime. Some respondents reported that housing is a foundational component to addressing these other elements, and that by focusing on housing it will create a positive “ripple effect” on other elements that comprise community safety and well-being.

See Attachment F for specific comments provided by respondents about housing security.

Employment

Overall Average Score

7.77

Based on its overall average score of 7.77 out of 10, employment was the #6 overall priority for the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Employment includes having paid work, a trade or profession and the work environment.

This element was identified in the top CSWB elements in six out of seven municipalities (St. Thomas, Dutton Dunwich, Central Elgin, Aylmer, Southwold, Malahide).

In terms of age, respondents who self-identified as Baby Boomers felt that this element should be a slightly higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 7.74 out of 10. Generation X rated it as 7.71 out of 10, and Millennials gave it the lowest overall average score (7.51 out of 10).

Although individuals rated the impact of employment on themselves and their households lower (6.00 out of 10), they rated the impact of employment on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (7.50 and 7.80 respectively).

Comments as to why respondents feel employment should be a priority in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan highlighted employment as a key underlying factor in quality of life and overall wellness and noted its link to other community safety and well-being elements, such as housing and homelessness, health, crime, mental health, and addictions. Some respondents reported that people are working multiple jobs to make ends meet, and underlined the importance of paying a living wage. It was also reported that COVID-19 has had an impact locally with businesses closing and the resulting job losses in the community. As identified by respondents, the main issues in this CSWB element include:

- Precarious work (contract, part-time, low paying jobs, etc.)
- Transportation (the ability to get to jobs from outlying towns)
- A skills match gap between available jobs and skills of individuals looking for work (need for skills training and education for available jobs)
- Individuals are commuting to work in other municipalities as they can't find a job in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas that matches their skills/profession
- The need for fair wages (living wage, guaranteed basic income)

See Attachment G for specific comments provided by respondents about employment.

Other elements which should be considered for inclusion in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan in specific areas of Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas include:

- Internet access and digital literacy, which was identified in the top list in three out of seven municipalities (Dutton Dunwich, Malahide, West Elgin)
- Physical health issues (for Dutton Dunwich and Malahide)

Internet Access and Digital Literacy

Overall Average Score

6.98

Based on its overall average score of 6.98 out of 10, and the fact that it was identified in the top five list in three out of seven municipalities (West Elgin, Dutton Dunwich, Malahide), internet access and digital literacy should be considered for inclusion in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Of note:

- West Elgin respondents gave this element an overall average score of 8.17 out of 10 (the municipality's top priority for the CSWB Plan)
- Dutton Dunwich respondents gave this element an overall average score of 7.80 out of 10 (the municipality's second priority for the CSWB Plan)
- Malahide respondents gave this element an overall average score of 7.57 out of 10 (the municipality's second priority for the CSWB Plan)

Internet access and digital literacy includes having access to the internet, and having the skills you need to live, learn, and work in a society where communication and access to information is increasingly through digital technologies like internet platforms, social media, and mobile devices.

In terms of age, respondents who self-identified as Baby Boomers felt that this element should be a higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 7.26 out of 10. Generation X rated it as 7.00 out of 10, and Millennials gave it the lowest overall average score (6.45 out of 10).

Although individuals rated the impact of internet access and digital literacy on themselves and their households lower (6.53 out of 10), they rated the impact of internet access and digital literacy on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (7.00 and 7.25 respectively).

Comments as to why respondents from West Elgin, Dutton Dunwich, and Malahide feel internet access and digital literacy should be a priority in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan

indicate that rural internet is an issue, with the low number of providers, slow speed, intermittent service, and expensive cost of the service being named as challenges. Some respondents reported that the pandemic has exacerbated this issue, and that reliable, affordable, high speed internet is a requirement to work from home and for online learning. Some respondents stated that more providers are needed, and the price needs to be more competitive.

See Attachment H for specific comments provided by respondents from West Elgin, Dutton Dunwich, Malahide about internet access and digital literacy.

Physical Health Issues

Based on its overall average score of 7.28 out of 10, and the fact that it was identified in the top five list in two out of seven municipalities (Dutton Dunwich, Malahide), physical health issues should be considered for inclusion in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan. Of note:

- Dutton Dunwich respondents gave this element an overall average score of 7.64 out of 10 (the municipality's fourth priority for the CSWB Plan)
- Malahide respondents gave this element an overall average score of 7.39 out of 10 (the municipality's third priority for the CSWB Plan)

Physical health issues includes the way our bodies function, influenced by personal habits, genetics and external or environmental factors. Good physical health is critical for overall well-being.

In terms of age, respondents who self-identified as Baby Boomers felt that this element should be a higher priority in the CSWB Plan, rating it with an overall average score of 7.27 out of 10. Generation X rated it as 7.14 out of 10, and Millennials gave it the lowest overall average score (6.69 out of 10).

Although individuals rated the impact of physical health issues on themselves and their households lower (6.37 out of 10), they rated the impact of physical health issues on either the safety and well-being of individuals in their municipality or the safety and well-being of individuals in Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas as a whole higher (7.18 and 7.38 respectively).

Comments as to why respondents from Dutton Dunwich and Malahide feel physical health issues should be a priority in the Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas CSWB Plan underlined the need for access to medical professions and resources in their communities. Access to family physicians and specialists were named as challenges. The lack of health benefits, and the cost of dental services were also named as issues for physical health. Access to local physical activity was also named as a challenge, with travelling to St. Thomas not being seen as an acceptable solution.

Respondents also made linkages between physical health and other community safety and well-being elements, such as mental health, food security and social well-being.

See Attachment I for specific comments provided by respondents from Dutton Dunwich and Malahide about physical health issues.

Attachment A: Average Score for each Element by Municipality

Note: The top elements (by average score) are highlighted in yellow.

Element	Av. Score (overall)	St.Th	Aylmer	CE	DD	M	S	WE
Mental Health Issues	8.40	8.69	8.25	8.13	7.53	8.13	8.00	7.00
Education and Skills Development	7.89	7.70	7.25	7.78	8.20	7.39	7.25	7.20
Substance Use and Addiction	7.88	8.35	7.58	8.33	6.69	6.83	7.22	5.54
Criminal Activity	7.86	7.83	7.08	7.87	7.40	7.35	7.95	7.33
Housing Security	7.80	8.16	7.75	7.54	7.40	6.96	7.10	7.31
Employment	7.77	7.80	7.58	7.80	7.80	7.35	7.53	7.21
Physical Health Issues	7.28	7.23	6.92	7.09	7.64	7.39	6.00	6.38
Financial Security	7.14	7.46	6.67	6.97	6.60	6.36	6.61	7.31
Social Environment	7.09	7.25	7.18	6.91	7.20	6.64	6.68	7.50
Internet Access and Digital Literacy	6.98	6.70	5.09	7.31	7.80	7.57	6.60	8.17
Food Security	6.88	6.96	6.58	6.46	6.29	6.48	7.11	7.71
Transportation	6.73	6.97	5.91	6.94	6.67	5.90	6.35	7.08
Social Support	6.64	6.85	5.67	6.67	6.93	5.74	6.39	6.92
Family Support	6.53	6.44	6.36	7.07	6.73	6.05	6.63	5.55
Mobility Safety	6.41	6.39	6.00	6.17	6.07	6.00	6.68	6.31
Social Behaviours	6.31	6.49	6.30	6.29	7.00	5.95	5.33	5.58
Discrimination, Marginalization and Racism	6.18	6.27	6.64	6.06	7.57	5.96	5.17	5.54
Victimization	6.17	6.50	4.75	6.88	6.07	4.90	5.67	5.82
Emotional Violence	5.91	6.13	4.90	5.94	6.79	6.05	5.11	5.30
Street Violence and Gang Issues	5.84	5.74	4.91	6.00	5.40	5.13	5.72	5.73

Attachment B: Comments about Mental Health Issues

- 2 of my grandchildren are special needs
- A person with mental health issues can cause great grief
- A person's mental health affects our community and everyone in it!! Without good mental health, we can not have a safe community to live in
- Access to mental health assistance in a nonjudgmental way helps fight homelessness, poverty and a host of other social challenges
- Access to resources for mental health during Covid is very high, as it is an unprecedented situation I think continued support especially for youth needs to be supported
- Again above the pay grade but addiction and how poorly we deal with it cause many problems
- Again...I have good support in my life....BUT the general public and the access to Mental health professionals is lacking. This is really important
- Anxiety
- At this time of covid mental health issues, abuse and other incidence are up. This needs attention
- Attention is needed in St. Thomas; not so much outside that Municipality. All Elgin County Police Depts. and First Respondents need additional help, since they are constantly exposed and under trained or equipped
- A key that's missing in our community is spiritual healing that encourages meditation/yoga programs, as well as education in spiritual principles like appreciation, gratefulness and forgiveness which is the key to inner peace and wellness. Therefore I suggest building a healing dome or spiritual centre where people of all beliefs and cultures are welcome for the purpose of whatever spiritual healing is meaningful to them. I experienced miracles in my own life when I turned to the Holy Spirit for help. A Course in Miracles, created by Jeshua/Jesus and channeled in the 1960s through Helen Schuman, a highly respected Professor of Psychology, is considered an effective way to inner peace through choosing love and forgiveness (Love heals everything). Jeshua/Jesus stated in "A Course in Miracles" Lesson on Forgiveness: Jeshua: "Forgiveness is the key to happiness, inner peace and well-being. It is forgiveness that brings the real treasures of peace of mind. ... Yes it denies the ego its battles. Yes, it denies the ego the satisfaction of saying hateful things and poisonous phrases, but that is all. You will lose nothing but disturbance in the mind. Forgiveness brings you peace, the greatest gift you can give yourself. And peace means the body will function at a high level ... that you will live longer in a happier and more fulfilling way. Once you have a peaceful mind you feel as if you have moved into the garden of Eden and everything seems brighter. Everything seems better. It is a beautiful, beautiful experience." See also davidlynchfoundation.org for research on the value of meditation
- Because of over a century of history with the psych hospital our communities have a higher concentration of need. Assistance needs to be funded according to need and not equally between regions. Rurally, where I live, it has minimal impact but it makes me wary of going into downtown cores as the aggression and deviant behavior is escalating towards people

quietly minding our own business. St. Thomas in particular has been known for decades as needing more help than the region gets funded for

- Being a family that has been impacted by trauma depression anxiety from age 7 years old to 49 being part of this system, I know where I feel changes help needs to be done
- Cause bad people use it as an excuse and the cops are dumb enough to buy it....St. Thomas needs to hire better cops than they have that's for sure...
- Covid and many already vulnerable populations
- Currently there are a lot of issues related to mental health, especially during times of covid, so that is one reason why I have stated 10. Also, I have family members who have mental health issues and it is very difficult to get service. In the schools, they provide some money, but it is a band aid approach. In the community, organizations operate in silos and it is very difficult to get help and support for loved ones. People need to work together. I have tried desperately to get help for my daughter, but I kept coming up to road blocks. I finally was able to get some help in Sarnia at the hospital. If I wanted to get help in St. Thomas I was told to go on Tuesday certain times for an assessment. Trying to work and find help in the system was frustrating and not productive. I wanted more information to help my adult child, however, I had to call 3 different places and still came up empty. I could attend a family and friends support system, but I was unable to attend, and they would not provide me with any websites or information that they may have. Not effective
- Depression and anxiety are common in people with unstable income. My fiancé and I struggle with these things
- Disregarding the mental health of individuals hurts everyone and the current pandemic restrictions are proof that this seems to be of low priority to the health care professionals that can clearly see how negative the impact has been
- Do not like to go some places downtown and do not. Needs to clean up the homeless and people with mental health living on the streets. Clean up the paraphernalia of drugs taken on the street, allies and parks
- Drugs and homelessness due to mental health issues are blowing up in this area. Stressing police, CMHA, probation services, food banks, etc. Mental health issues are the leading causes of crimes
- Due to the fact that this area was a dumping ground for people with mental health issues over the life of the psychiatric hospital and on its closure we have an over abundance of people with mental health issues
- Especially now with the pandemic I think we are going to see a lot more people requiring supports
- Even as adults living with mental health is difficult and resources need to be available. There is a growing need in the younger populations now as well. COVID has changed the way we live to one of seclusion and isolation. Some families are not set up with the resources for caring for their spouses and children in such a long term way and they are feeling it in many ways. Children need to interact with others and being separated from friends is devastating. Many are unsure how to deal leading to depression and anxiety. Families need this support more than ever
- Even our own mental health has suffered from COVID restrictions

- Ever since the PH has been closed, there is little support for mental health. This needs to be resolved
- Everyone has their moments (or years) of instability. Helping them through to solid ground can make all the difference
- Existing mental health problems are exasperated. Much additional with fewer resources
- Families are being left to struggle with, be threatened by and house mentally ill family members due to lack of hospitalization or housing options available
- Far too many people in this community who have been diagnosed with mental illnesses and treated with medication. Because they live independently they tend to take their medication infrequently and incorrectly. They commit crimes because they are not thinking clearly and usually in withdrawal. They then begin going into psychosis and taking up emergency services resources and hospital emergency wards are continuing the Form 1 juggle. No follow ups. Just more prescriptions for some dangerousness medications that will be misused and the cycle continues
- Mental health is important because, as a community, it is not addressed in a manner that is having positive impact. As a result I and many others do not feel safe going downtown St. Thomas anymore
- For some it has a negative effect, others positive. Is this mostly related to COVID-19?
- From talking to people and dealing with students everyday that are asking for help I am aware that there is not enough resources in this area. The wait times are too long
- Good mental health affects everything else a person does in their life
- Good mental health provides a sense of well-being and happiness. Providing services to help those who struggle helps them to be healthier members of the community and builds compassion for those who struggle
- Having places in need to help people with these elements is important. Less travel is key if people need to travel to London or Toronto all the time for the help they need would be wrong on so many levels a lot of people don't drive so that's more money they are giving to cab companies instead of being able to walk, ride a bike, ride a scooter, get close family members to pick up and drop off at these places just so they can get help
- Helping those with mental health issues can prevent crime and abuse and set people up for success so they aren't a burden on the community
- Housing, Education, Economics, Employment and Social Community bring about a healthier environment for our people of our county and cities
- I believe mental health issues contribute to the homeless situation we are experiencing
- I believe that the Psychiatric Hospital needs to be re-opened, while it will likely not be old facility having both institutionalized and day programs for those with mental health issues improved their quality of life, reduced drug problems and homelessness. Not having a facility in Elgin County is a detriment to our community
- I do not believe that addictions and mental health are unrelated issues, having worked in the field for 35 years
- I don't feel like enough resources are out into mental health and wellness in this community. The old psych closed and those resources never were in the community and haven't been added

- I feel it's important to keep individuals who don't have access to support and resources safe and reduce the stigma these individuals face in our community as a safety concern to themselves and others
- I feel people of all ages need to be taught coping skills and strategies to use when experiencing any form of mental health concern
- However, mental health resources and availability of these resources have a huge positive impact on our community and that is what I wish to convey
- I have family members who struggle with staying mentally healthy and have been unable to access resources
- I have family members with mental health issues
- I have spoken with a lot of other people who have seen their mental health decline rapidly in the last few months
- I lived in St. Thomas for 14 years and we had several group homes in the neighborhood. The vast majority of the people with mental health issues were very harmless to the community. Most you could even have friendly conversations with them. Having these individuals in the community I feel is perfectly fine. What I would be worried about is the person who owns most of the group homes in St. Thomas. Are these individual with mental health issues being cared for and housed with the utmost concern with there health and safety?
- I see a lot of people out in the community who need mental supports
- I see people with mental health issues daily in my neighborhood. They seem lost and need help. Many are homeless and unable to properly care for themselves
- I struggle with mental health issues and I know a lot of others that do too
- I think EVERYONE is affected by this virus now a days.....we all need a lil help....and some are handling it well...while others aren't so much
- I think it is only specific mental illnesses that affect the community as a whole, and usually this number is low
- I work downtown St. Thomas and it is evident walking down the street all of the people who are having issues and don't have help
- If people struggling with mental health issues feel they are alone in their community due to no access to resources or just a lack thereof. Then people will only respond they way they know how... usually in times of desperation! These actions will usually be unsafe and have a negative effect on them and us. If we don't support them with housing, online, phone, and in person free support for all ages... the cost in the end will be more on our community then a proactive approach earlier on
- If we had more people to help with mental health issues maybe we wouldn't see as many suicides or depressed people around
- Important issue, especially with Covid!
- Improved resources are needed for therapy, intervention, and response to situations by police. Need a permanent team of mental health trained responders to attend calls as appropriate
- In St. Thomas we have so many people on the streets and they need to find a place for them to live so that the streets are safe to walk. Most have some sort of mental health issues

- In working with the Inn Out of the Cold Guests for the past 10 years, the enormity of the increase in homelessness due to mental health issues has become apparent. The early years of service were for abuse and job loss issues. Now, mental health issues leading to suicide are most apparent
- It affects everyone in some way, quite a few people go undiagnosed their whole lives. Not enough people get help or are given proper support and meds/help needed. There is such negative stigma around it that many are ridiculed, afraid, believe it to be untrue, etc.
- It helps keeping people of the street and families together
- Its actually scary to go to downtown St Thomas! You can see quite a few people wandering around acting a little strange and threatening. I know of the blonde woman, saw her yesterday. She is homeless, mentally ill maybe a drug addict and I have heard she is very dangerous to the public. When I passed her, she was in her own world on the sidewalk, working her hands like she was running a machine. There must be a better place for her on than on the street. I heard she spits at you and hits, punches people
- Key to safety of all
- Lack of mental health resources in small and rural communities is a significant area of need
- Large part of the population has mental health issues. The fact that there are a lot of people living in poverty, have addictions, abusive relations, all leads to mental health issues
- Living with and having supported loved ones with little or no support for mental illness is traumatic and challenging
- Lots of residents with mental health issues, lack of support, lack of community resources and lack of family doctors in the city
- Mental health affects everyone. As a community we need to move towards acceptance and ways to deal with difficult people/situations through education. Mental health plays a key role in homelessness, addiction and the ability to hold down a job. Not everyone is capable and there needs to be more safe guards to protect the vulnerable i.e. Housing and compassion in place of anger and divisiveness
- Mental health affects everything else in a society
- Mental health affects the entire community in various ways including the impact it has on the STPS i.e. draining time and resources. We need more accessible mental health in the form these people need for the long term
- Mental health along with the Covid-19 are going to be a huge part of the mental health issues, from Single Moms/Dads trying to make ends meet (childcare/education) to the elderly (feeling alone/abandoned) also the Farmers who struggle to makes ends meet-dealing with Mother nature and crop prices/world markets
- Mental health and drug addiction go together and lead to increased crime. There has been a huge negative impact to the community ever since the psych hospital closed and it will only get worse the longer treatment isn't available
- Mental health has been shown repeatedly to have an impact on job retention, addiction and recovery, criminal recidivism and financial security. Proper mental health care can be an effective intervention to self harm as well as violent behaviour impacting the community at large

- Mental health has been underrepresented and misunderstood in our community. The stigma needs to be removed
- Mental health hospitals should be recreated. Drug abuse, addiction, homelessness, crime and countless other detriments to society began their huge increase as mental health hospitals closed. Group homes are a useless waste of money
- Mental health if good, is unnoticed. Poor mental health manifests itself in so many ways. Increased crime, poorer physical health, higher unemployment and domestic violence. It is also outwardly random involving innocent victims when severe. When mild it leads to decreased productivity and poor self worth
- Mental health impacts all of us. The impact of mental health issues in our community is present every time I go outside. I live in the downtown core and witness the negative consequences of untreated mental health on people. There are individuals living in ravines, backyards and roaming the streets. Clients I work with wait very long times to meet with mental health practitioners. The system seems backlogged and inadequate to deal with the issues existing in our community currently
- Mental health is a big factor these days and needs a lot of attention
- Mental Health is a big problem in our area....I know too many people that need help
- Mental health is a huge issue - especially now with covid - people In isolation / people who have not been able to continue properly with addiction services during covid / our youth and their mental health issues - people now losing their jobs / depression the list could go in and on - this will be a huge issue going forward for municipalities
- Mental health is a topic quite often ignored in most communities. However, people with mental health problems not longer suffered from their illnesses but can have a rather negative impact on the community as a whole
- Mental health is a tough one to deal with at the street level, sometimes you just have to ignore some things and walk on
- Mental health is a very serious issue that affects many, many people. With more education and resources for our communities people may be able to access the help that they need, along with those who are responding and handling the mental health issues will be better prepared
- Mental health is an issue that is underdeveloped in our area and all of the Province. It needs to have a higher priority
- Mental health is as important as physical health
- Mental health is big in this town but with addiction being aside I feel like there is help for mental help I just think it's needs to be brought out more
- Mental health is important for rural residents and students in the communities. We are under-resourced, and the impact of neuro-developmental disorders (like FASD) is largely unaddressed. Even though FASD affects over 4% of the population and presents with over 400 mental health conditions, there is no plan to prevent, diagnose and serve this population
- Mental health is just as important as any other health related issued

- Mental health is so important and it's paramount to have the necessary resources in place to address problems before they become a big issue affecting the immediate family and the community
- Mental health is the driver for all other aspects of a person's life
- Mental health issues affect everyone and issues relating to mental health challenges occupy an ever-increasing amount of law enforcement resources (physical, financial, etc.). Schools are dealing with ever-increasing mental health needs at younger ages than in the past
- Mental health issues are a high priority in my view and need to be addressed in Elgin County even more so than they have been
- Mental health issues are a large issue in our community. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health rates have increased and are expected to increase. Mental health should be a priority when creating the community safety and well being plan
- Mental health issues are at an all time high and if we don't begin to give people strategies and support to cope and thrive covid 19 will see that worsen exponentially
- Mental health issues are being compounded because of Covid-19. We have not seen all the impact yet and we are not prepared
- Mental health issues can lead to homelessness, job issues, domestic violence, etc. Supports can minimize the negative to impact to those with mental illness and the community
- Mental health issues experienced by someone near can have devastating effects on the people around them mental and physical
- Mental health issues have caused EXTREME drug use in St. Thomas. You see them shooting up right on the streets even from your car
- Mental health issues seem to be growing, support is needed to keep everyone safe and protect the most vulnerable
- Mental health needs are rising and resources are declining. The impact is seen with increased crime, overdoses, suicide, inpatients at STEGH psychiatric care, etc.
- Mental health needs to be talked about so that we can learn more about it and how to help people
- Mental health plays a very important role in the safety and well being of community members. We still stigmatize mental health issues and still aren't in a place where we can openly discuss these topics. We have a large number of resources available but the issue is people don't want to use them. The stigma associated with mental health issues discourages people from seeking the help they need. It can make you feel ashamed, different, etc.
- Mental health resources and supports are not sufficient and lacking in the Elgin County and St. Thomas.
- Mental health resources for people of all ages need to be accessible, especially for young children
- Mental health services in the downtown have ruined the image of St. Thomas-more needs to be done to get drug users and homeless into programs that support good mental health and help them want to recover
- Mental health services provide employment opportunities. Untreated mental health issues create persons who may not be able to fully participate in main stream housing,

employment and social activities. With effective intervention these circumstance do change

- Mental health should be at the very forefront of any community planning, as mental health issues can have far reaching affects in every aspect of people's lives. Ensuring that every person has access to caring and personalized support when they need it will help avoid many other safety issues (such as violence and addiction) down the road
- Mental health supports and more funding are essential to reduce homelessness, and to ensure that the most vulnerable in our community are being supported especially right now. The mental health of children in particular during the covid-19 lockdown has had an adverse affect on many families. More support in this area is also needed to our policing system and our Healthcare systems. The LGBTQ+ community in particular requires many more resources to make this a safe place.
- Mental health supports have disappeared over the years, victim of budget cuts, etc. Community members that have mental health issues seem to be left to their own devices to live in our community. More proactive support is required
- Mental health is the silent killer in youth more needs to be done to help them
- Mental health, including addictions do not have enough support services or enough tax dollars going to improving treatment locally. The police routinely catch and release drug users because there is no other place to send them. On the other hand other mental health issues are better served by the mental health support person working with the police.
- Mental health issues are very personal. I feel that our community has some avenues for people to get help, but I also feel that without education, a person is more likely to experience mental health issues. If a priority is placed on education, a lot of issues will be diminished. But in the meantime, people need help
- Mental health and the upkeep of it by people is necessary for a good life style
- Mental illness can affect people at different stages of their lives. It ranges broadly from children suffering depression to the elderly who may be in the early stages of dementia or other. Most people with mental illness don't even know that they have it and therefore, many of the police calls are related to dealing with this element. I believe that mental health professionals should be part of the EMS system. I think that this link is key to identifying existing and new cases where police calls could be followed up by a Mental Health official on behalf of the police to enable a family to intervene when they may not know there is an issue going on with their parent or child. I think St. Thomas had this pilot project at one time but I am not sure if it still exists. Additionally, it would be resourceful for health centres to visit schools to talk about dealing with stress and offer the students options to call helplines or visit their local health centre
- Mental illness has to be addressed
- Mental illness is a growing problem in all communities and cities. Mental illness is not being supported very well. Regardless of all the help lines and community outreach centres. Hospitals are also doing a very poor job in caring for mentally ill people. This should be a provincial issue and we as a community should address to are MMP's. Institutional hospitals do a much better job of care

- Mental illness requires access to proper treatment, services to allow the person requiring help to access it quickly so the person feels safe & healthy before any further harm can be done to themselves or others
- Mental problems affect very few comparatively There are enough specialists already
- Mental well being affects one's ability to do, be and function in society positive
- Mental well being is vital to health
- More people know about mental health the better the understanding. Knowledge is key
- Most of our homeless, and those struggling with addictions have some mental illness
- Most problems are not reported to the general public
- My family and friends around me all have felt impacted due to "recent events" having unfolded earlier this year. There hasn't been one person who hasn't been affected by all of this
- Need more Mental Health Workers on the Streets working in conjunction with The Police
- Need more support to keep making positive life choices and understanding help when they do not
- Neither top or bottom of the list. And depending on how other issues are managed, it can be impacted both positively and negatively
- No help out there for continuous support. The fees are too high to talk to someone. St. Thomas has a lot
- Investing in mental health supports is an absolute necessity in the current climate. We need more funding, supports, more services and less police. We need a crisis centre. We need emergency crisis beds. We need immediate investigation into the group homes that allow people to rot and get away with charging ridiculous amounts of money for neglecting patients. We need housing for individuals living with mental health. We need better connected supports and wraparound care
- Not enough help for people
- Our community (I'm speaking for St Thomas specifically) suffers hugely with mental health issues. If we can't help our people with their mental health, then we can't help them with much else
- Our downtown is becoming dangerous to go to because there is a lack of resources for people with ongoing mental health and drug addiction issues. Many addicts have mental health struggles at the core of their addictions and we need to have a strategy to better support these people so that our downtown isn't a scary place to visit
- Our family has experienced a young member committing suicide. The impact on all the adults has been huge but even more so on the rest of the young people in the family. The community needs to work on providing access to counselling. This goes back to school and how children feel accepted for who they are no matter what their uniqueness. We have to teach all people about inclusion
- Our mentally ill citizens cannot be thrown on the street. Need help for these people. More centres. More services. Medication should not be the only alternative
- Our rates of mental illness are high. However emphasis should be placed on prevention. Focus on engaging youth so that they have more resilience and their life trajectory is

improved. Things like recreation programs, parent involvement are evidence-based ways to improve mental well being in youth

- Our world has changed, and many people are facing difficult situations
- People do not know enough about mental health. So many people have issues due to all different reasons. Everyone acts out in a different way. People need help at all hours not just 9-5
- People don't want to leave their homes
- People who are dealing with mental health issues need supports to help them cope
- People with mental health issues need support and caring. We need resources to be available and staffed appropriately
- People with MH issues can't work, fall into addiction, become homeless
- Persons with stability regarding their mental health are valuable contributing members of the community
- Poorly treated mental health issues are at the root of many other issues including homelessness, crime and drug addiction. You have to treat the root in order to have any hope of impacting the rest
- Priority for mental health issues are low everywhere. We need more done for those with mental illness
- Providing mental health support before an issue becomes a problem is by far the most humane, effective and cheapest way to deal with "mental health issues". Lack of support not only contributes to the problem but is just plain cruel!
- Resources are very hard to attain in Dutton Dunwich... I have had family members still not getting seen and have been waiting over a year
- Since the hospital closed there is many with mental health issues running around city
- So many have undiagnosed issues. Awareness and referral to resources is key
- So many homeless and druggies on the streets everywhere, so much crime, repeat offenders. We live near the courthouse so we see the huge implications of these issues daily
- So many of our safety issues stem from mental health problems
- So many people go without help due to wait times being so long. There are so many people who could use counseling or other therapies to improve their quality of life which could improve the community
- Sometimes mental health is just those wandering and no threat to others
- Speaking personally as someone who is fortunate enough to have the resources and family support to get through my mental health issues I have deep empathy for those in my town who do not. So many of our community problems are centered on mental health and addiction problems. It absolutely cannot be ignored.
- Supporting mental wellness is also a foundational component needed to allow a person to be successful in education/employment and social life; preventative programs to enhance mental wellness instead of reactionary programming will provide best long-lasting results
- Supporting the mental health of those in our community must be a priority, in particular more support is needed for youth as well as more vulnerable populations such as the LGBTQ+ population. Policing requires a larger element of mental health training and more

resources are needed for mental health support and access in general in the community for those of various income levels

- Take a walk down Talbot Street in St. Thomas... how can you not feel this way?
- Teach techniques to change perception and the world will change. I see it daily in my coaching practice
- The approach to safety and well being of individuals have to be multi-pronged. It is impossible to concentrate and improve one area alone
- The general mental health of individuals in society affects every aspect of it
- The health centre has access to mental health services but overall there are wait lists and this priority is changing due to COVID-19
- The impact of Negative Mental Health concerns are increasing in the community, affecting all aspects of the community. I believe this element should take a high priority in the plan
- The municipality has an appropriate focus on Post Traumatic Stress. More focus should be placed on the harmful effects of substance abuse - especially preventing the initial (first time) use of recreational drugs. Education about peer pressure, or avoidance of using recreational drugs to escape the reality of life is especially important. Having many well-trained support workers are highly important for all aspects of mental health
- The number of mentally ill people wandering around St. Thomas is ridiculous. It's scary and it taxes police resources. I feel unsafe when I walk early in the morning anywhere near Talbot Street
- The problem is quite small in statistical terms
- The system is broken. Everyone deserves help for mental help and we, the residents of Ontario have been begging for help for years. NO PERSON OR FAMILY should be in such a state of crisis that they have to leave their loved ones in the hospital with the intent to not return in order for the loved one to get proper help. And no person deserves to be released, without proper treatment, to fend for themselves
- The west Elgin health centre has access to mental health services but this is limited. Covid-19 may have an impact in increased services. Since there is little transportation in the area many people will not be able to access service in St. Thomas
- There appears to be little access to mental health treatment and support
- There are a lot of people in crisis here and have no clear path to help
- There are a number of mental health issues in all communities that require resources and supports for many individuals I think now more than ever. I wouldn't even hazard a guess as to how I would even go about suggesting how to implement something or where to even start
- There are homeless people who have mental health issues visiting our community. We have no shelters or services in a small town to assist them
- There are many people left behind by society due to mental health issues. We need to do better
- There are no supports for mental health except for police intervention and then many times their hands are tied because they are not being used as there are intended (policing). There needs to be a pathway that addresses the mental health issues that do not solely depend on medicines. Yes that is important however, there needs to be a multi intervention plan for

lasting success... and it is introduced at the beginning signs of trauma/mental health not when death is imminent

- There are not enough mental health resources in this area, specifically for youth i.e. 15-30 years old
- There are not enough survives in western elgin country
- There are other sectors to be considered as well as mental health issues although I do consider it to be necessary
- There are so many issues affecting mental health, this has an impact on vulnerability, drug/alcohol addiction, domestic abuse, feelings of isolation, etc. More resources are needed
- There is a common denominator here. There is very little geared to income housing available and very little employment. The welfare system needs an overhaul. It is being abused by people and it creates a stress on them and the ones that are going to work everyday
- There is a serious drug/health crises visible on the streets
- There is a significant lack of mental health service available for children and youth in Elgin County
- There is little to no mental health services in this area. I asked for a referral to a psychiatrist in September because of suicidal ideation and have received nothing but a crisis help line number. I've known people to be turned away from the hospital when seeking help with their mental health and speak with people regularly who are unable to find supports
- There is no where near enough mental health supports. Kids have to go without counselling or be put on long wait lists while things get worse. Having more supports available, especially affordable support needs to be a priority
- There is not enough resources out there for Mental health patients or the care as my husband suffers a mental illness & there is no support out there for him he don't get to see dr often at all
- There is too much mental health just be brought in and not enough help
- There isn't a lot of support in the small towns you have to travel to get the help. The police and other service workers are not trained in working with mental health people makes it harder
- These issues are impacting our city hard and causing many issues in the wake of it like increasing crime rate
- They keep saying that all the people on the streets have mental health issues. You can't safely walk down Talbot St after 6 pm in the fall/winter and feel safe. I park on the side road at Mugford shoes and I carry my keys like a weapon due to all the people loitering....you just don't feel safe
- This does not affect me
- This is a major contributing issue to other socioeconomic challenges, mental health education, awareness abs treatment needs to be normalised to decrease the negative impacts it has in community members
- This is difficult for me to rate as I personally do not have any experience with this, however I believe mental issues are a side effect not a cause, hence the low ratings.

- This is one of many factors effecting safety here. Need to balance with other factors
- Too many homeless people with mental health issues who are not receiving help. They are a danger to themselves and others
- Too many suicides. Too many people feel they have no where to go for help. We are using police to do wellness checks. That is not their job. They will be the first to tell you this
- Untreated mental health is a huge cause of addiction and crime
- Untreated mental health issues consume a great deal of resources in many sectors (police, emergency responders, health care, social services)
- We continue to see an increase in mental health issues, where resources aren't available
- We have a mental health facility in the town. We have accessed resources which we are thankful for
- We need more counsellors available for mental health support. The big issue is providing support for youth transitioning to adult services. There is a wide gap here that needs to be addressed. Again more education and awareness will have a positive effect on our community. More frontline support equals better adjusted youth and adults
- We seem to have a ridiculous number of homeless people, children in school or their parents that can't cope with life because they struggle with their mental health
- Well I suffer from mental illness for about 12 years now, and is very scary when having a break down
- Well we closed all the highbury Hilton's and St. Thomas before putting all the safe guards in place...jobs, housing, proper counselling
- When a person has a breakdown it affects them, their family, friends, and the community around them. If a child witnesses their neighbor have a breakdown, it can alter how that person sees police (if they were called or not called but needed to be). It is so impactful that this simple paragraph seems to me a drop in the bucket. Mental health issues can manifest as domestic violence, or substance abuse and so on. I thought the police services were making good headway but then I witnessed them make such a bad call that I question the amount of training they receive
- When people are having moments of crisis it is very hard to find help and consistent help and support
- When people live in a positive environment it actually results in a happy, responsible community
- When the psych hospital closed and years ago the S.T.A.R.T. centre and mental health has been very defunded, many of the people who were released were not originally from this area. They were turned on to the street with virtually no support. It was a criminal move of the government. Many of these poor people turn to self medication meaning street drugs, etc. Until the government takes some responsibility, we will continue to see things like machete wielding citizen's terrorizing people. We will continue to see overdoses and deaths. We will continue to see the rise in petty crime and violence on our streets
- With all the things impacting us from 2020 including all the crime going on in the news, mental health issues are affecting us on a day to day basis. It should be a bigger priority for our community since it effects us all

- With Elgin county being so large it is hard to access services , some people don't drive. Service providers don't always work together to benefit the families
- With poor mental health, any and all other life issues can end up taking a back seat and not get the attention they deserve for a well rounded life
- With the closure of our psychiatric facility and limited support for folks suffering mental health without the requirement to take needed medication our safety is truly threatened by people who need help desperately
- With the limited resources available for mental health assistance in our area it has put the onus on the police, who are not equipped to deal with it, and subsequently provide no long term solutions
- Without proper care, including housing and supportive care, the mentally ill become pariahs in their own community. We don't look down or ridicule some with a broken leg - why do we do so to a person with a broken mind
- Without supports mental health issues can lead to addiction, homelessness, and crime
- Working towards increasing positive mental health is very nuanced but there is a strong need to address this in the community
- You never know you are until someone in your family will requires these services

Attachment C: Comments about Education and Skills Development

- Children would definitely benefit from physical fitness, extracurricular activities. What's especially important is teaching children various tools to cope with life (how to cope with stress, sadness and anxiety), spiritual life skills such as appreciation, forgiveness, and how to cultivate inner peace, present moment mindfulness, higher consciousness. Many schools now start the day with ten minutes of meditation and research has shown incredible results. For example, see the David Lynch Foundation website and Youtube videos
- A poorly educated person can still help society
- Two of my grandkids are special needs
- Investment in education, keeping kids in school and engaged in their education is key to future success. Education is not just in books but in life skills and trades as well
- I think it's important for youth to develop life skills to ensure future success
- As an employer I can tell you our education system is failing miserably. However the cure for this is above the pay grade of the municipality. Ultimately it is up to the province as the board has very little power anymore
- I am retired so out of the work force...BUT the young kids need the skills and availability of training so they to can have a good life
- My major concern is my children's well being
- Education and skills will hopefully lead to employment and better social living health, and decrease poverty
- Families with kids need to be cared for - meant a lot when I had kids at home
- I'm health compromised so are my children so their safety is my priority
- High and affects my family but we also have a bigger group of older people in port Stanley so there are other issues to prioritize as well. Much more important in St. Thomas as there are so many problems, less money, more youth there.
- With education, things need to be revamped. In some classrooms, there may be a student who has mental health issues and need to be in alternative setting until they are able to cope. Some teachers do not follow the Individual education plan for the student so students are just passed from grade to grade. Who is providing the instructions for the accommodated students. The unions are running the schools. Health needs to be an important subject in the schools. Many schools are trying to teach mindfulness, but the teachers don't know what they are doing? It isn't just sit and think. Teachers need to act as professionals. Extracurricular in the high schools is often done in class time now if they have games, so students are losing valuable class time
- Stigma around homelessness & drug use, I live in a poorer neighbourhood with lower level of education
- Education and freedom of speech, teaching respect for all beliefs is the cornerstone of a safe community
- Uneducated young people get into trouble if they have no goals
- This will keep young people from getting into poor living conditions. And allow adults to get themselves out of poor living conditions

- Due to the overall economic well being of this community this is extremely important to prevent a continuing level of low income and poverty
- If people are educated and have skills they are more likely to work and be independent
- Education is knowledge and learning how to develop skills for success in school and the real world is very important. The children in school today are the leaders of tomorrow and some of the children in my community need skills and the practice of learning and skill development to succeed in life. Parents are not teaching this at home and it is reflecting in the children
- Necessary to be active and training skills very important to community
- A well educated society is always important. One only has to look at the events in the USA over the past year to see how important it is to avoid societal ignorance as much as possible
- One of the top issues to support oneself
- Education and skills allow for job growth. People who have steady employment tend to commit less crime making communities safer
- If people are educated and skilled they are less likely to be down the wrong path
- Education and the lack there-of has a huge impact. Many don't have it but should. Others have it and it is positive. So is it negative or positive?
- I work for the school board and see that there is a big need for change
- Educating all children no matter their level is best for our future
- Education leads to make good life choices and provides skills needed for well-paying jobs. Better jobs, better community members. Residents would be more prosperous
- Education is the most important part of anyone's life. Being able to have send children to schools to receive an education is the best thing any city or town could offer. There's a lot of places that can not afford schools or educations. Our children are our future generation and we need to help them achieve greatness in all aspects of life mainly education!
- Schooling is very important. We need to create good skills and habits from a young age. Keep kids engaged, inspired, and out of trouble
- Education and skills development is a necessity; to look after themselves in developmental community
- Education is important but I feel that education has no IMMEDIATE impact on the health and safety of our community
- Children that are not engaged, empowered or encouraged usually get involved in non-productive activities, are not building life skills and could be involved in criminal behaviour
- I have a young children in my immediate family and education and skills development are important for all children
- I feel this area is super important to economic development in the community but in terms of safety I feel other areas should be ranked higher
- Education and the life skills learned in school last a lifetime
- We have a four year old grandchild who visits daily. He is either going to be going to school and risks exposure to COVID, thus exposing everyone else in the family who have self-isolated and bubbled or he will stay home and miss out on his first year of school
- We all need to be informed
- Education is imperative for our society

- Well developed and skilled individuals with contribute positively to the community. They will have better things to do rather than hang out downtown high on drugs.
- As a parent and a person who works in family support I see everyday the impact and important this matter is to the children and families in our community
- If young people stay in school and get a good education, they will likely become productive citizens
- I have a 3 year old son who is in Daycare and just starting school this September, he is my number one priority
- I think it would reduce the crime rate if people were working
- I feel availability of the resources are important. But also parental responsibility has to be part of the objective
- So many are dropping out of school this year cause its hard to learn online
- Because eventually these school aged youth will be running free and working as adults in our community! Raising their own children... they need access to the learning supper and skills to make respectful, empathetic sessions and help dealing with tough decisions!
- Not sure how much contact police should have in the school system
- You need to start early to teach children respect
- As a former educator and leader in the area of education and skills development I have seen the impact appropriate schooling can have on both students and their parents. Also, programs for homeless people are able to assist toward independent, safe living through providing access to skill training and supports for positive experiences
- With extra curriculums and sports its hard to find safe ways to implement them
- If kids are looked after it keeps all people well
- Education and skill development plays a role in getting employment which is hoped to lessen the current social-economical situation: homelessness and food insecurity. Also life skills like banking and budgeting
- It's a key element of a healthy community
- More investment in community education and engagement
- The only way to end or limit the income inequality is to enable all to have access to the skills and opportunities to be successful and contribute to the community
- Education should be a priority everywhere and I do not see it here in St Thomas
- Because education is key to understanding diversity and learning skills to deal with and accept differences. To learn right from wrong
- Lack of education and skills impact the entire community in various forms i.e. employment equal opportunity community health
- Education is a major priority, without a decent education whether it be by book or hands on training will be crucial to our area for our future generations
- Higher education normally means less likelihood of criminal activity
- With a solid education, people have a better chance of rising above circumstances that lead to food and shelter insecurity, and financial uncertainty. While it is not a guarantee, being able to create and adjust a budget as needed, read contracts for housing, apply for better jobs for the opportunity of a better life will positively affect not just the individual but the

community as a whole. Those who, through education, can better manage the downturns are less likely to turn to criminal behaviour in desperation for survival

- When we have an educated society, everyone benefits. The development of skills helps the economy
- Education allows for the social and skills development that we all need to succeed in the world. Lack of these skills, in my opinion, lead to increased crime, mental health issues and a more poor socioeconomic status for the community as a whole
- It's our community should take some pride in our surroundings
- The children with learning differences are falling through the cracks - the schools board need to be more open minded regarding methods to help students and not what has always been "done in the past" with what they have always known - times are changing and what they thought works does not work for all students
- Education and skill development always affect a community and those that live therein
- If you don't have an education you had better be darn lucky
- Community safety and well-being starts at a young age. With the proper education and skills development with our youth we can ensure that they are prepared for their futures. making a positive impact on their communities
- All elements are important to make sure that Safety and Well-Being is being projected in all areas
- Teenagers are skipping school to do drugs and I also have a nephew who has autism but for some reason can't be in the special needs class so he is much further behind as he is not getting the one on one he needs.
- While education is a Board and Provincial responsibility, the impact of exclusionary practices and inadequate supports for students and families requires an inter-ministry and inter-governmental approach. Commitment to collaboration and understanding is important. I serve on the Special Education Advisory Committee for TVDSB and our work to combat Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder through the FASD ELMO Network is ongoing
- When a student is taken out of school due to medical reasons, when a student is able to attend again and to be told they are too old even when there are other students the same age staying the extra year because they don't want to work. The student who couldn't finish because of health issues is told they will have to complete high school in an adult school
- Educated people have plenty to keep themselves busy and don't turn to crime. They also find more employment
- Education is extremely important in all elements of society. It affects income, health, social skills and family relations
- From StatsCan: "People with higher levels of education or higher income live longer and are expected to spend a greater portion of those years in good health, compared with those with less education or a lower income"
- Anything that impacts the community as a whole in a positive way is beneficial
- People are lacking the necessary life skills to support themselves and their families. This puts a massive strain on an overburdened system and leads to generational poverty
- Education, Education, Education! Educated people make educated decisions and have a better understanding of the needs of the community

- Education and skills development can foster hope. Hope can help people make better decisions and strive for more
- Education is the key to everything safety health and well being
- Teaching our children values, life skills, job skills and confidence in themselves goes a long way in building better communities
- Reduces poverty and crime
- Education and skills are valuable tools for promoting community safety and well-being.
- When people are trained and educated, especially from an early age they are more compassionate and open minded with others and are easier to train for the workforce. It is beneficial to society in the long run
- Uneducated people have lower incomes and struggle to find housing in this area-rents away from downtown are extremely expensive
- If we don't develop positive early life experiences we will not retain youth in the area
- Proper education can have a very widespread affect on a community. However I would love to see a more adaptive approach to schooling which allows all students to thrive, not just those who can succeed in a traditional school setting
- Anti-discrimination education as well as Safe Spaces training should be embedded in business across and organizations across community as well as land acknowledgment practices with actions attached
- When everyone in our communities has access to the appropriate education and skills development program and are empowered to be successful , some social issues (poverty, unemployment, vandalism, homelessness) will be reduced
- More needs to be done the help children and education
- There needs to be a balance between training for critical thinking and training in practical life skills that makes one employable in a position the person wants to be in
- If we do not provide a healthy supportive learning environment for our children, then we are setting them up for a lifetime of struggle, in all forms. Because without a good experience in the elementary system, most won't get through high school, and those that do will most likely not end up going to college. Without education, we're done
- Education means that the children will understand about safety and well being
- I believe that children who receive education and early life skills are better prepared to take on adversity and deal with life's journey. Some parents have not received these skills during their life development and therefore cannot pass on these skills onto their children. It is community programs and especially early childhood education that helps to identify these families that might be at risk and enable early assistance and support where necessary. Much of the time, this early intervention improves nutrition and additionally, development that support better health and wellness
- Education and life skills results in less unemployed and gives one a goal to live for
- A well laid out plan training, rules to guide a community in place. Helps in an emergency situation so people can have the knowledge where to follow. Stops anxiety everyone has guidance and preparedness
- If you do not have proper knowledge, training or knowledgeable teachers, parents, peers how can one expand their knowledge & know how to act appropriately in a situation

- Education happens in the classroom
- Without education and skills people remain on O.W. or O.D.S.P. even when they don't want to
- Public apathy
- Education is knowledge, experiences, motivation
- Better education and skill help in securing better employment
- People who are busy and have things to do... are less likely to have the time to find trouble
- Many aspects involved. This one is important, but is neither most or least important.
- I'm older & have a learning disability, no help out there why start now
- Education leads to skill development and the ability to see a bright future. Cultural sensitivity is necessary to support understanding and empathy and to combat racism, especially in a small or rural setting where diversity is a challenge. Ensure to include individuals from the culture you are teaching about in the lesson plan
- Too many kids with no life skills
- Education and skills development are pivotal in the future lives of our kids and in the future of our community
- I have a young son
- If schools are a safe and caring place, no matter what the child's background, then they develop a good sense of themselves. Sports and cultural experiences keep them healthy, body and mind. That impacts the community in a positive way
- It's important that our children face a good future. Education is the key. Developing our city of skills of all kinds will help the future generation
- Elgin counties educational attainment rate is very low. With more education comes more opportunities for employment. Poverty is a significant issue. The divide between the rich and poor is growing. With that comes greater social issues including crime, violence, drug use, etc.
- Knowledge is power and helps build self-esteem. Those who are engaged in life have a purpose
- It teaches people so much. Educate kids and they will know more. Skills even adults need education and skills. You can learn something new everyday to help someone or yourself
- We need to think of our kids health!
- Bored /disenfranchised/disengaged youth can cause problems for citizens and police
- Education is the cornerstone of commitment and community. Our children 'learn' basic skills to use later in life
- Maybe if more people had the opportunity to learn skills, there would be less homelessness
- Education opens the door to more stable employment
- Our community is often overlooked. We have some great potential
- A broad education and range of skills - not just practical, as in simply learning a trade, but on a social level, can help a person a great deal in coping with life, both day to day and long term
- I am in the rural western part of elgin. Everything is 30 minutes away...not everyone has access
- No small kids in house and not doing any skill training

- Giving all students a strong educational foundation will create opportunities for employment, and positive well-being. Supporting special needs and making sure every student is connected to the community in some way is so important
- My son has special needs, his education was a disgrace, always excuses, EA's didn't want to do their jobs, wouldn't integrate into regular system, forced to be in low functioning class when capable of some regular classes. At end of grade 12 he received about a grade 9 education. No excuses accepted
- Education and skill development helps everyone long term. Uneducated and low skill people do little to help their communities
- We have recently witnessed the impact that school and education have on the community at large as well as individual families. Food insecurity, child abuse, family stress to name a few
- Builds a foundation for individuals to be contributing successful members of the community and develop skills to manage adversity and develop resiliency
- Skills and training are needed to support those who do not have the skills required for job retention. One of the largest issues with employers is a discord with skills needed for employment and the availability of those who have those skills locally to gain employment
- Post-secondary education is the critical element. Getting more modes and options of post secondary is critical. I am cynical about this as a gateway to social engineering and progressivism--postmodernism be damned
- Teach caring and everyone will benefit.
- We have to do these primary interventions when they will do the most good and have the most impact. Early intervention: Early intervention in the identification and assistance for "high risk" children, identification of learning issues, assisting parents with parenting skills, Intensive pre-school interventions to assist children to not start formal education so far behind. Stigmatizing of the child and family happens early. Ongoing enrichment programs that start as early as 1 year old should continue through the whole educational process. In this manner the children can stay in the school system, keep up and graduate. Otherwise the potential they will drop out and will not develop life skills and education that can lead to a career. This primary intervention has been proven to pay off when you consider the alternative, children and young adults who feel disenfranchised by the whole process and then become another statistic on OW and or involved in the courts
- More important than anything else in our society is for people to learn how to think... predominantly about ourselves 'in the moment'. Formal education and skills development are not structured to help in that regard as much as they could be... or should be
- Schools in West Elgin are impacted by less resources. Sports teams from other schools refuse to come to the West Elgin schools so parents have to transport. Kids miss out because of this lack of transportation. Courses are being withdrawn from the high school forcing kids to be bussed to St. Thomas which is a loss for the West Elgin area. Families then do other business in St. Thomas. There is little support for kids with special needs in west Elgin and families are encouraged to bus their kids to Glencoe or St Thomas

- The safety plan should incorporate all age demographics and children and youth are one subset of the community; however, education and skills development can have a life long impact; positively or negatively for the community
- Education and skills development place persons in a position of independence, sustainability and hope. It allows compassion, respect and initiative to replace depression, lethargy and acts of despair
- Truancy interferes with getting a good education, dropping out interferes with getting a good job, both issues have a link to poverty and criminal behavior which is bad for the community
- The economy is changing. Education needs to equip our children with the skills and knowledge they will need to adapt to it. Also, political factors require more than ever a literate public with developed thinking skills
- The schools in West Elgin have less resources than the schools in St. Thomas and courses at the high school are gradually being eliminated. If the schools close the community will be subject to families moving out. There are also limited supports for kids with special needs. Families are being encouraged to bus their kids to Glencoe or St. Thomas. This will have an impact on their inclusiveness in the communities in which they live
- Failure to secure a quality education and skills lead to dead end thinking and a sense of hopelessness
- We need to keep the kids engaged and off the streets. Also help them achieve to the best of their abilities and show we care about them
- With all that you hear in the news and on social media of cuts, etc. that are happening within the education system something needs to give and a plan is required in order to assist all and anyone looking to go to school
- Terrible technology in rural schools hinder students learning. Lack of student population limit course availability and affect students future prospects
- Free education gives everyone a chance to do better and levels the playing field
- Because any solution starts in the schools. Ministry of Education is the most important branch of the government that has a profound impact on the success of our society. All of your above points are an early warning system of what's to come if interventions are not introduced
- I have young children and would like them to have all educational resources to be a successful member of society
- The schools don't do enough to include the family or to assist with students struggling
- Education and skill development makes individuals more aware and understanding of life events and consequent
- Education is very important. It doesn't impact anyone's personal safety
- There is so much that the educational systems seems to be letting go of. There is a need for the basic of living in the day and age. A lot of the younger generation has no Idea of how to take care of themselves let alone anyone else
- Improved education and programs will make a better society
- Education is how we learn to deal with everything gong on and the more we know the more we can work together

- I have a son with special needs and there is not much close to us for support and the school is not helpful in getting him to go school. I know this is true for lots of others as well
- Anyone can be anything if given the right tools to do so without that the chance boredom kicks in and curiosity about drugs kicks in and the slippery slope of that lifestyle starts causing harm to everyone involved
- If people want educational opportunities they are available but you can't force people
- People should feel safe
- Education is critical for the development of proactive and accountable community members. Education draws younger families and businesses to a particular area thereby increasing economic prosperity and diversity
- Educating youth allows for an understanding of one's actions and the effects of those actions on others. Understanding why things work they way they do is key in prompting safety and welling being
- Without education and skills training, children, youth and un/under enjoyed adults cannot find meaningful work, which is a large factor in preventing crime
- Children need to be taught simple life skills to succeed in the real world. Giving everyone a good base helps them grow
- If we educate and take care of the young we will stop generational poverty which in turn lowers crime rates over all
- Children are the future. Effective, consistent education and skills development raises these children to be mature and responsible adult members of the society
- Step son with a disability. The school just pushes him through. They are not educated in ASD. ASD kids can do great things if encouraged. Educating the teachers is key
- The more education and awareness provided to our youth will make for a better community
- Those educated here will have a sense of pride and perhaps duty to help their community
- Education should always be a priority
- Education lets people make an educated guess not a clueless guess. Trump
- I believe and there is empirical data that agrees that if people have an opportunity to increase their skills and development they are less likely to be involved in negative activities such as drugs, shoplifting, property damage, etc. I believe that if would be a benefit to most people to have skills and development training available to all age groups
- It should go in conjunction with other support programs to help overall the community gain good employment
- Just looking at the behaviour of the children own our neighbourhood. Discipline is definitely missing
- The school systems allow for kids to have something to get their minds off of the craziness of this year. It's a way for them to have something normal being brought back into our lives
- If a person isn't learning these things at home from their parents, they need to learn it somewhere
- Without the necessary skills young people are left feeling hopeless and with little reason to move ahead
- An under educated generation becomes and unhappy and underemployed work force and a future drain on the public purse

- Lack of education and skills development can lead to less opportunities and lower income
- This is a complicated item to tackle and will need frequent revision and monitoring
- The education and skill development of youth is important for the future of our community
- Education and skill development affects and impacts everything in a community - economics, wages, healthy eating, acceptance and tolerance of others, etc.
- My husband comes from the low German community and was never encouraged to finish high school and he found high school very hard to complete. He has a great job now even without his diploma but it has affected the way he understands politics, his health, our children's education, etc. Needs to be addressed because it affects our family's well being
- Education is the most direct way out of the challenges of poverty/homelessness/addictions
- Because the education is the base in all
- Education and skills development defines the average income of a population
- Schools should not be the caretakers of our children. However, providing extracurricular activities for children is important to social development
- More opportunities for young people to learn skills and an opportunity for the employment force to be more diverse moving from manufacturing

Attachment D: Comments about Substance Use and Addiction

- A good thing about this category is the 12 step programs that are not the responsibility of government.
- A safe injection site should be a part of every community. Opiate deaths can be prevented and addiction services offered
- Addiction has been shown several times over to be the result of trauma, disconnection with society or a result of mental health. By addressing the mental health crisis, or having professional assistance available at the time of trauma, immediate and without the traumatized person being forced to pay for help, many other issues can be headed off
- Addiction has taken over our city/town. Between needles everywhere and homeless people. Crime rate has gone up due to addiction and there is very little help. Build a rehab around our area so people can get help as waiting list for rehabs are close to 9 months and with all the overdoses in this town they likely won't make it that long and be too far gone by that point
- Addiction is a curse on our towns/city. There is very little support out there for these people. The Health Unit hands out 125,000 needles a year for safety reasons...but none of those staff are on our streets to clean up the needles that are thrown all over. We have to teach our children NOT to touch.....I for one feel uncomfortable walking down Talbot St. in St. Thomas. There is no place for people to go for help. Safe places to deposit used needles is a joke...come on...you think for one second that an addict can mentally do the right thing and put his/her needles in them??? When addiction takes over...it is all consuming. We have NO place nor do the police have the authority to take them off the streets and get the help they need
- Addiction is a huge contributor to crime rates as a wholewe need to change how we as a society deal with drug addicts because prison isn't working
- Addiction is an illness and affects the whole community
- Addiction is at a very high scale level right now
- Addiction is increasing and in a small community the resources are not available and need to be addressed
- Addiction is a slippery slope that can lead to many issues. It affects more people than we will ever know. Especially during covid with boredom, anxiety, depression, etc., it is release or coping mechanism that they may turn to more often during this transition, new covid world
- Addiction problems are a big part of things like criminal activity. If people want to get help there needs to be somewhere to get help.
- Addictions lead to mental health, physical issues and often homelessness and crime. This needs attention but I feel educational support and mental health support can help with this
- Again more support here in our community. It takes far to long to get any service due to lack of service
- Again, education before addiction becomes a problem. Safe injection sites where it is a problem already
- Alcohol and drugs are too easy to get

- As a recovering alcoholic I understand the power of addiction and its impact. There is limited community support for this issue and it is entirely on the individual to seek out help...usually outside of their community
- As I said earlier there seems to be more substance and addiction issues in this area!! Some families are hearing about it and choosing not to move to this area!! That is not good!! I don't like to see this area looking like a downtown area of Toronto!!!! or the slums of Detroit
- As mentioned previously, lack resources and support to individuals in a time of need can be very dangerous. When a person's safety is at risk we don't usually make the best choices. Providing support, and answers to people struggling with addictions and violence saves lives. We need to be in a community that fosters life and supporting change. Giving someone a second chance with housing education, skills and maybe a job... saves lives!
- As previously stated, goes hand in hand with mental health, homelessness and criminal activity. I used to feel very comfortable walking through the downtown from work at 1am however that is no longer the case. In fact, for the most part, I don't leave home after dark any longer because I don't feel safe
- Cops and social and families know who are in this boat. Again mental illness
- Definitely more supports are needed
- Drug abusive affects everyone
- Drug addicts are more likely to commit crimes, which makes the entire community less safe
- Drug and alcohol addiction is running rampant in this area and we need a track force to crack down on it. There have been several OD's in this area in the past few weeks alone. With this comes theft and violence and cracking down will make us all safer
- Drug use is far too common in our area. My neighbours use drugs and become very hostile and unpredictable
- Drug use is one if not the most important issue to be addressed in St. Thomas
- Drugs are more easily available and increasingly dangerous combinations. As the mental health situations increase, drug abuse seems to increase which results in the increase in crime
- Drugs are the cause of most of the secondary issues
- During Covid-19 our community has seen more deaths related to overdose than to Covid-19 itself. Addition is a huge issue in our community and more must be done to support those who face addiction. More mental health supports are needed surrounding as well as impactful grassroots community programs that support those with addition to beat addiction, gain skills and integrate into our community. Tackling this challenge is our greatest priority and it feeds into may of the other elements presented
- Even though I do not have family or friends in need of help my job has me dealing with individuals that suffer from addiction and are looking for assistance
- Everyone wants to live in a healthy community, even those that are struggling with addictions. A more open, friendly community might give those that are living in the dark some confidence to come into the light and seek help. And a good education doesn't hurt either

- Get these needle freaks OFF THE STREET. They can't be punished for using a needle on the street, but, I can if I decide to walk downtown with no pants on? In ages past they were sent away for vagrancy and the poor house. Again not an issue that can be handled at this government level. Do we have a needle place for them to do their drugs? At this point even though I don't really support that we need to clean up the streets of their garbage and the harm they are doing by scaring kids that see them do this and me, I don't want to go down town anymore. I only go to the bank once in a blue moon but I stand with the businesses. The church with orange caution tape to keep these people off the stairs. They have no respect for private property... I, like alot of people, are DONE with the druggies
- Have family member with drug addiction cannot find housing
- Have you walked behind any business in the St. Thomas area....very scary and awful just awful
- Having the resources available to assist are crucial
- Health and mental health services are important in addressing addictions. Addressing this issue with underlying FASD is extremely challenging <https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdfs---reports-and-books---research/the-burden-and-economic-impact-of-fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-in-canada-february-2015.pdf?la=en&hash=FDDF277DFD04C4BA6BABC815FCD4D41CD43C6F93>
- Here again, the more support given early on, the less of a negative impact there will be
- Huge problem but I'm not sure how much can be done by the municipality on its own
- I am shocked by the amount of drug addiction in our area, especially among young adults. This, again, is likely linked to mental health. This is a priority
- I am sure this is an issue, but I have not experienced it here
- I believe that much of the need for these substances relates back to mental health and lack of an alternative. Addiction is a reason for homelessness because it is costly and can lead to criminal activity if the person is unable to pay for their addiction
- I do not feel safe going downtown St. Thomas alone or with my family. There is obviously a rampant homeless and substance abuse problem in this city. MUCH More needs to be done if you expect people to return to the city core. Otherwise it will be deserted and new people coming to town like myself will stop going downtown altogether in favour of the areas with nice new chain stores where we feel safe
- I don't know the statistics of how many people are affected by this, but I do feel helping those with addiction will help lower crime and abuse
- I don't encounter it, but I also know that it is there and affects many people negatively both in terms of cost, housing and mental health
- I feel it is a safety issue for young children with the needles lying around I understand it is addiction but we as a hole need to step up help these people remembering you can only help the ones that will help there self's
- I feel the government plan for helping addiction by substituting substances is not working. It is hard to deal with pain assessment issues and many get addiction to meds prescribed for pain. But control by the government is not working and need to come up with another solution to this problem. Give with work to do especially the younger people

- I hate to give this a high priority as this community is a supplier for most of these illegal activities. It's crazy...you are enabling them!!! You could at least do a no deposit no return free syringes...this is expensive and ridiculous you supplying
- I have commented about addictions in the section with mental health as they are all related. I am worried about the future with the talk of legal access to drugs for people with addictions. There is a serious opioid crisis in Canada, killing more people than covid, yet little is said about it. Prescriptions for drugs needs to be examined
- I have known people with substance issues. It is a struggle
- I have seen multiple people using crack pipes and needles right on Mary St. by the post office. Absolutely awful. Also unlawful but no one does anything to either help or deter this. My family lives near and has had to pick up used needles off their property. Addicts endanger us all with their careless ways
- I honestly don't have enough info from our municipality to make an informed decision on this
- I live and love in the world of addiction. I have observed such connection, love, caring, gentleness and have observed the destruction and trauma it causes. I have experienced loss of loved ones, loss of friends, loss of relationships. I have also gained an incredible sense of community, connection and family. My direct experience and trauma started in St. Thomas as a new mother and wife, and ended with leaving St. Thomas behind. I eventually returned to the town where incredible trauma and struggles lived for me to extend a helping hand to those continually persecuted and abused by not only the judicial system but those who claimed to be pillars in the community. Addiction has gripped this town creating fear and hysteria leading to ignorance and hate. Putting all the ducks in the automotive industry and then the subsequent closing and mass job loss, doctors being paid high amounts to give out narcotics like candy to only increase suffering after the fact has spiraled out of control. In a town with a hospital unequipped to support people who are substance dependent with detox, withdrawal or connection to services to 1 ADSTV facility who refuses to acknowledge support is needed after 4pm Monday to Friday and with a methadone clinic directly on Talbot with no dignity involved we have created a small town of would be supported to a small town of sneerers. We need a detox, we need support for frontlines, we need support for harm reduction, we need connection, to see and be seen. We need decriminalization of substances to support the paradigm shift from a punitive lens to a medical lens. We need safe supply so people aren't dying before having a chance at considering change. We need a safe consumption facility to keep people alive, and to be seen by medical professionals. It may benefit to have a bed saved at withdrawal management in partnership with Salvation Army London for individuals in our community to seek that support, should they want to. We would benefit from treatment, sober living facilities and supportive warm transfers into those programs from trusted sources. Keeping in mind that not all substances have a negative impact. Community engagement and education to dismantle fears, bias, myths and misconceptions would be helpful
- I recently visited a bank machine in St. Thomas by a methadone clinic and was disturbed to see a line up of people waiting. I wondered if people had access to other forms of substance abuse counseling? And if they had been offered as an additional coping mechanism. I have

read many stories about death by overdose these last couple years. It seems to be a problem that's not just in our municipalities

- I see it in the daily police report. I see it on the street. We care for our people and that good care and support attracts more folks with these issues. During covid it has become more visible. I avoid downtown, contrary to my commitment to shop local. All cities grow and change but this element is growing and taking over the core. I understand the increase in property crime is the direct result. I understand laws are made at a much higher government level. Our Police Service is impacted by the increase in drug usage. Open drug use on our streets is common now as is used syringes
- I think people use as a way to help with their mental illness
- I think that there are a lot of people who abuse alcohol in central elgin and there is a lack of awareness of the long term effects. I note that there are a lot of people using services in St. Thomas with significant addictions. I know that these addictions impact other services such as police, the hospital, and child welfare
- I would say that substance abuse issues are sort of part and parcel of mental health issues and definitely require the same sort of care and resources to help people
- If we tackle some of the other issues listed some addiction may be averted
- I'm honestly not sure how this affects the community. My household doesn't have issues with this, but I'm not sure about the area as a whole
- Individually, elements may not be overwhelming. But adding a few elements together, homelessness, violence and addiction can lead to difficulties in a community
- It has a big affect on children born to addicted or alcoholic moms. This impacts the child's entire life if there is a learning problem. It creates many health problems that impact the health system. It causes unnecessary suffering for families impacted by a drunk driver, an abusive mom, dad or teen.
- Its not visible in Port but very visible in St. Thomas
- Lack of resources to support people using substances and experiencing addiction; need to support most vulnerable people in our community and more than crisis response, need investment in long term support- big stigma and people don't want to talk about the difficult issues that people are dealing with than lead to substance misuse
- Lack of safe injection sites and washrooms has created a health risk to the entire population
- Laws are there to deter this behaviour. Kids will experiment but I do not see in my community a lot of impaired driving. Hopefully people have smartened up. Having said that there have been a lot of accidents involving kids and impaired drivers in the news. Mandatory intervention and licence suspension should be looked at. Impaired drivers are getting off with fines but that does not bring back a loved one. Our community has no bars or pubs so any drinking/drugs happen in ones home and hopefully the partygoers are spending the night
- Lost lives
- Many overdoses putting strain on police, paramedics, fire departments and hospitals. Many needles and drug paraphernalia in publicly accessed places such as streets, parking lots, parks and places where children and pets can be injured or die

- Many schools throughout the U.S. start with meditation - the entire school meditates for 10 minutes. The David Lynch Foundation website and Youtube videos shows research results of how providing meditation programs rewires the brain over a period of time which results in coherence within the brain. See Davidlynchfoundation.org for various research results related to transcending substance use and addiction. A key that's missing in our community is spiritual healing that encourages meditation/yoga programs, as well as education in spiritual principles like love, appreciation, gratefulness and forgiveness which is the key to inner peace and wellness. Therefore I suggest building a healing dome or spiritual centre where people of all beliefs and cultures are welcome for the purpose of whatever spiritual healing is meaningful to them
- Mental health and addiction are on the rise because of: loss of, or trauma from the past job or domestics of home lifestyles from out of work and school
- Mental Health, Addictions and Homelessness often go hand in hand. There is more of a problem here since the closure of the psychiatric hospital. It is often not easy for those affected to find the supports they need
- Methadone clinic indicates a significant issue with addiction in the community
- More resources always needed
- My brother is an addict. It is plaguing our whole society. Walk for 10 minutes downtown and you see it everywhere, needles and people high on drugs. It scares me when I walk downtown with my son. We saw someone with a needle sticking out of their arm. We need to clean up the streets
- My knowledge of this issue is not personal, so just a gut feeling of this issue
- Naloxone kits needs to be made more available, Methamphetamine use is on the rise More children are being exposed to Cannabis with legalization - proper education on storage and use needs to occur
- Need a safe injection site and detox centre
- Need more publicity detailing the impact on the legalization of marijuana for impaired driving and domestic abuse thus far. I do not agree with giving out clean needles to abusers. I do not agree that narcotics such as fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, LSD, etc. should be decriminalized. Never! Can the community bear the tax base required to effectively fight substance addictions! People know the physical, psychological and social cost to abuse of substances but do not care. Education Education Education! Illicit narcotic sales is a crime against humanity. Our justice system is too weak to deal with this effectively. Too much emphasis on reform and not enough attention to penalty and protection of society. It should be impossible for narcotics ever to be brought into the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre!
- No stoners in our area, but in town would be a different story
- Not a fan of the volume of vaping stores, nor the marijuana stores. The processing plants stink in our city. Addictions many times stem from mental health issues, inability to cope with change or loss of job and lack of supports. If communities do not provide communal spaces and programs, addictions will continue
- Not directly aware, know issues are here

- Obviously drugs run rampant in St. Thomas....Don't think the cops have done any good in the community...Just look at all the losers downtown...Makes good looks for travellers...way to clean up cops...what a fricken mess this cities in...embarrassing Chief
- Once again we need to examine the stigma associated with addiction. When we think of addiction, we often associate it with low-income individuals. What we neglect is the fact that addiction comes in all shapes and sizes. Anyone can be diagnosed with a substance use disorder. As a society we shame those with substance use disorders, leaving them as outcasts. This can increase substance use rather than decreasing. It is also quite a difficult issue to tackle. As a community we can have supports in place but unless the individual is willing to quit, the chances of quitting are much less. Please update the terminology used in relation to this topic to the most updated terms. Substance Abuse was listed in the DSM-IV-TR, the term was updated in the DSM-5 (2013) to substance use disorder. I also believe that we need to decriminalize substance use. Substance abuse disorders need to be viewed as a social issue rather than a legal issue. As seen in Portugal, the decriminalization of drugs has shown significant positive effects
- Ongoing issues affect the city greatly
- Opioids are a serious problem everywhere
- Other priorities will negate the need for this one
- Over flow of drug abuse on our streets, needles everywhere & no support to clean them up. Pay Jones for what he is volunteering to do, to help keep us safe
- People are still drinking and driving and not learning. More road stops to catch them
- People are turning to addiction because they don't have anything else
- Positive results are harder to achieve with this element, because it is more difficult to deal with due to its genetic component.
- Prevalence of methadone clinics and high rates of overdose
- Preventative programmes would be preferred
- Programs need to be in place and accessible to all
- Public safety is at risk (needles, crime, erratic and frightening behaviour). People are literally dying. The roots of addiction need to be addressed along with many more options for a variety of treatment options
- Resources need to be available to people struggling with substance abuse and addiction
- So many DUI's in St. Thomas. And some are repeat offensives
- Some people past leave them with an addiction in order to tolerate everyday issues
- St. Thomas
- St. Thomas has a huge drug problem and it appears that the additions doctors have a low priority to get people clean as I've seen the same people on the drug treatment for years and years
- Substance abuse and addiction affects an individual's self care and well being. Advice & resources need to be available to those who abuse alcohol and drugs
- Substance abuse and addiction are often related to mental health. It messes up young people. Gangs and organized crime are often related to supply. Addicts commit crimes in order to secure more drugs. Very expensive resources (police, ambulance, hospital) are

used time and time again dealing with overdoses. Knowing this is happening in the community does not help people to feel safe and secure

- Substance abuse and addiction is a concern to the well-being and safety of everyone in the community
- Substance abuse and addictions have a significant impact on the community
- Substance abuse can come from any situations. Legalizing or supporting this use by injection sites alone only compounds the problem and the associated crime and mental health issues. A more holistic approach of support, treatment, mental health, and treatment of the addiction itself needs to be made. We, in Canada, seem to attack this piecemeal
- Substance abuse is probably the main cause of the crime. Drive through downtown St. Thomas and all you see are addicts. Gross and sad
- Substance abuse is terrible here. Needles all over the place. I don't think they should get them free. You don't give free booze to an alcoholic
- Substance abuse leads to self harm and/or harm to others and is a drain on productivity for many
- Substance abuse negatively affects families and the less prevalent it is in the community, the better
- Substance use and abuse is a concern to a community in as so far as it affects the individual user. It is the responsibility of the community to provide services that help individuals with addiction and help minimize the effects of such addiction on those close to the individual. Injection sites and counselling should be of primary importance
- Substance use has increased with the pandemic and has been an issue in the past. Should be a priority in our plans
- Talbot St. is full of drug addicts shooting up...the new benches that were added to the west end are perfect for them. I realize that these benches were added to make the area look better however it just give addicts a place to shoot up. I have occasionally even seen someone lying on a bench with a needle sticking out of their arm!
- The causes here are best dealt with at higher levels of government.
- The drug use here in town is astronomical. We enable druggies and have no recovery and rehabilitation into society programs. We just give meth and free needles. This does not fix the problem. Why should we have to work and pay for medication and they get their habits facilitated for free? Fix the reason behind the addiction. Why should the community have to pick up discarded needles? Why should the library be self serve so the staff can police people shooting up in the kids bathroom or behind shelves? Wrong wrong wrong! This is now known as a bad drug town. It never used to be
- The rate of addictions can be reduced if many of the other issues, mental health, housing are addressed
- The use of harmful drugs for Inn Guests and their community friends was quite evidently increased in the past 3 years. Harm reduction training was helpful in our understanding of treatments and the kits provided by Southwestern Public Health along with safe needle disposal kits were of great help
- There appears to be a huge issue of substance abuse and homelessness and I feel this needs to be dealt with-if I lived downtown with kids I would be concerned

- THERE ARE MASSIVE ISSUES IN THIS AREA!!
- There are needles all over St. Thomas in residential areas and parks. You drive down Talbot and back side of Talbot from about Metcalfe upward and see people strung out barely functioning, some freaking out and many shooting up. Example, the parkette across from city hall there is always people shooting up it seems
- There are no resources for folx struggling with addiction. It's not just here. Our community is only as strong as our weakest link. We need to support everyone
- There is a blatant void in this community when it comes to addictions services. We need a county wide treatment facility period
- There is a moderate number of people in our community who use drugs, there is no safe place for them to consume them and harm reduction groups are constantly under fire because of fear mongering within the community. Naloxone is not readily available to people who don't have a health card and we are seeing an increasingly toxic supply due to drug busts. We need safe supply, we need safe consumption sites, we need evidence based addictions counseling, mental health and trauma counseling, proper rehabilitation facilities and supportive transitional housing to assist the most vulnerable people in our community.
- There is far too much attention spent on a very low impact activity. Officers need to be directed to curbing attitudes and directing people involved to real help channels
- There is little being done to support people with substance use issues. The judgement and fear felt must be horrific. We need compassion, supervised consumption sites, safe supply programs and treatment programs
- These people need help. Young people need more jobs. Drugs have to be stopped. Need more addiction centres or rehabs
- They need more help for people can go and stay
- T=This also a major issue causing a snowball effect on the city
- This appears to be a very big problem in St Thomas!!
- This causes a great deal of conflict between many in the community
- This element does not directly impact me. However there seems to be quite a problem with addicts in St. Thomas and little to no support programs. Again, it seems to be community members doing the support of addicts at street level. Municipalities need to look at other communities that have programs that work and have an impact for the good. And adopt those programs
- This is a higher priority due to side effects; like related crime. Unfortunately, it also seems to be more urban centered
- This is a serious issue requiring some serious considerations around a safe and secure injection site
- This is always an issue and with the homelessness and other factors it can be a real problem
- This is another by-product of a poor social net. Drug abuse happens because people have no escape from their lives and no method to find security and safety. Or in the higher classes, they have been duped by a system that placed profits over the well-being of the people the companies were serving (Especially Fentanyl)
- This is one of our largest priorities in our community. Supporting those with addiction, changing our community mindset around addiction, increasing the safety of parks and trails

to be free of needles, and treating those with addiction individuals requiring support and empathy is key. Since the start of March the number of overdoses due to street drugs has been substantially higher than those facing Covid-19 related risks. More programs and funding need to go into supporting families facing addiction, in particular as we head into a period of economic uncertainty. The approach needs to be fluid, innovative and creative

- This ties in with mental health, housing, criminal behaviour, etc. Needs to be addressed asap
- Too many addicts doing drugs wherever they want with no consequences. They are also leaving needles everywhere where young children can access them. Very dangerous
- Too many homelessness not enough help
- Too many drugs on the streets
- Too many people using drugs to cope endangering themselves and those around them. Too much drug paraphernalia on the streets and in parks
- Too many young people hooked on drugs crime on the rise
- Too much evidence of drug use and addicted persons in the community without any means of support
- Top of the list
- Tough to control
- Treatment programs over enforcement!
- Use and abuse, addictions have so many ripple events from the individual, the family the community. Neglect of children, loss of employment, impaired driving right up to and including death of self or others. The impact on the individual, the family and to society cannot be measured
- We are currently doing nothing... And it's not working... However I do feel that this is a provincial funding issue that needs to be reworked
- We are in a housing and opioid crisis during a pandemic. Not much else I can say
- We experience the consequences of drug abuse or addiction only vicariously
- We have an issue with people using needles to inject drugs in our parking garage. I see it almost daily and they leave their dirty needles on the ground. A child could potentially get hurt. Drug users have been violent on occasion. I've seen them do things that most people would not do if they were in a normal non drug induced state
- We need a safe consumption site. Covid has pushed this problem into the view of the public. People are using in the street because it is safe to do so. We need to find a location that will help supply clean needles, dispose of used needles and give people a safe space to use and get support when they are ready to make that change
- We need to address addiction and have better programs to prevent addiction instead of waiting for it to happen and waking with it after
- We need to find ways to keep individuals from addictions, more doctors might help, resources easily available to help those already in need
- While drug addiction and its associated issue have had no direct affect on my family it is an issue in St. Thomas that needs to be addressed. Many people in the community fear to walk down our main streets. Businesses refuse losing customers because of open drug use in

around their businesses. It is an issue that is also that is linked to other issues in this survey like homelessness and street violence

- Working in downtown St. Thomas, I often see people using drugs or walking around shoeless & high. I worry for them and others
- Wow let me count the ways. Progress is being made but more can be done. The sharps container are great but education is imperative to the general public - they are so misinformed about 'addicts'

Attachment E: Comments about Criminal Activity

- A frequent review of the root cause of criminal behaviour is important to be able to strategize solutions. The why is just as important as the what! Are the root causes of criminal behaviour related to poverty, despair, mental health, drug culture, relationship failure, anger/jealousy or just greed? Each has a different means of prevention
- A key that's missing in our community is spiritual healing that encourages meditation/yoga programs, as well as education in spiritual principles like appreciation, gratefulness and forgiveness which is the key to inner peace and wellness. Therefore I suggest building a healing dome or spiritual centre where people of all beliefs and cultures are welcome for the purpose of whatever spiritual healing is meaningful to them. The following is what I learned after studying A Course in Miracles, A Course in Love, and The Way of Mastery. The solution is not to look at the external world without, and wonder what to do about it, but to look within. Change within effects change without, not the other way around. Within is where you look to your own heart. Within is where you find the consciousness of unity. From within it's possible to bring Heaven to Earth. There's a global movement now to go within and be the change you want to see in the world. Personal coherence = social coherence and global coherence. (See the HeartMath Institute's Youtube video: The Heart's Intuitive Intelligence: A path to personal, social and global coherence) Thoughts and perception creates one's reality. There is another way of looking at the world (A Course in Miracles Lesson #33). A more highly evolved community understands that Love heals everything. Those who forgive and lovingly accept others as being equal (no one is greater than or less than another) are more likely to see and experience a world of peace, safety, well-being and joy. This includes everyone - and no one is judgementally excluded. Fear and judgement separates and isolates individuals, and weakens a community. Love unifies, heals and strengthens a community. Jeshua/Jesus (in many of his recently channeled books including A Course in Miracles (ACIM.org), The Way of Mastery, A Course of Love, and Youtube videos) stated that everyone is either moving towards Love or away from Love. Everything is either Love or a call to Love. The opposite of Love is fear. See Love in everything. See everything as innocence (Innocence = there is no harm. Everything is safe) - then there will be no fear, no need to judgementally attack, no grievances, etc. - then you will experience peace. The more peaceful you are within yourself, the more peaceful the world around you becomes. Every individual is personally responsible for choosing to perceive a world with either a lower consciousness of fear and judgement or a higher consciousness of love and innocence. When we are judgemental towards a person or event, it's usually because there's some sort of fear and we've given this person or event some power. And so when we give someone else the power over our own peace of mind - not only do we lose our peace of mind, but the entire world becomes a possibility for harming us. It's our own thoughts, projections and perceptions that cause us to feel unsafe. Jeshua's metaphor of the movie theatre: "Our thoughts are the film, our mind is the projector, and the screen is the world. If we see a speck on the screen - we don't rush to the screen to remove it. Rather, we clean the lens of the projector." When our thoughts are loving, we project and experience a world of kindness. We never find peace by blaming

external people and events for our misery, or by giving them credit for our well-being. We are doing it all to and for our Selves. Jeshua: "Forgiveness is the key to happiness, inner peace and well-being. It is forgiveness that brings the real treasures of peace of mind. ... Yes it denies the ego its battles. Yes, it denies the ego the satisfaction of saying hateful things and poisonous phrases, but that is all. You will lose nothing but disturbance in the mind. Forgiveness brings you peace, the greatest gift you can give yourself. And peace means the body will function at a high level ... that you will live longer in a happier and more fulfilling way. Once you have a peaceful mind you feel as if you have moved into the garden of Eden and everything seems brighter. Everything seems better. It is a beautiful, beautiful experience."

- A lot of crime, I believe is directly related to mental health. If both are addressed with the equal urgency, both problems will see a reduction in occurrence
- A lot of the "criminal" activity is associated with the manufacture, distribution of drugs. Plus There is a correlation between petty crimes against properties and drug use. Again if we better prepare our children and supervision the, they will be less likely to get involved. Plus the fact the use of drugs is still considered a criminal activity, users are less likely to seek treatment. Therefore use should be decriminalized. We also need a Strategy and necessary resources (i.e. detox, rehab beds in our county). And ongoing support
- A person has to feel safe in order to have a great life
- A safe community is a healthy thriving community
- Absence of crime is key in community well being and safety as well as attraction to the community
- Addressing underlying issues - mental health, addictions and poverty in our communities would go a long way to preventing and reducing criminal activity. Police need support and training to respond to social issue situations
- Again. Open mental health hospitals for all levels of need. Hospitals in the past were not the nightmare facilities portrayed in the movies. Long term patients had a safe happy quality of life
- All across Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford these problems are becoming a major problem. Get rid of the gangs they are a major part of the problem
- All benefit from a sense of security in their home and community
- All communities need to have safe criminal activities to assure the well being of everyone in a community
- Although it has an impact and causes a negative impact, often it is caused by other factors
- Although this type of thing is often in the news is actually is rather low in the region
- An opportunity for criminals to take advantage of a bad situation. Not interested in supporting their community or lack of empathy for others just helping themselves
- Anytime there is criminal activity in an area it is negative. Depending on the severity of the criminal activity it can affect whether people want to live in these areas. So it should always be a priority to combat criminal activity. No matter if your English or Mennonite we should all be held accountable if committing criminal activity
- Because it is rising getting more dangerous with drugs, animal cruelty, guns people getting away with it

- Being a victim of crime makes you feel so violated and unsafe. It takes a long time to become comfortable again, if you ever can. I want to feel safe in my community
- Conflating murder with petty crimes only obfuscates the reasons for criminal activity. In most cases, petty criminal activity happens due to class struggles and poor social nets
- Crime and the associated policing and court proceedings must be fair, without bias and seek fair justice. There have been calls for the abolition of the police which is ridiculous in Canada where we generally have well trained police. However, like any sector there are bad cops, bad lawyers and bad judges. I would wish to see a better policing of the system itself. It is vitally important for all our well being
- Crime appears to be low in the West Elgin area. Serious incidences anyway
- Crime continues to rise and anyone is at risk to be targeted or a victim
- Crime affects everyone, people's feeling of insecurity affects everything from property values to local business. Home prices, and schools
- Crime is bad
- Crime is often a result of other elements lacking such as mental health support, food security and a sense of belonging. Crime exists in Elgin but I would not say it is our largest issues nor does it impact my personal feelings of safety
- Crime lowers the overall value of the community
- Crime rates have risen significantly in recent months due to unemployment rates and mental health issues along with increased drug use. Through no fault of the police departments, they are under-staffed. They need help!
- Crimes are now happening in the Talbotville area. I have lived here for 20 years and have only known that the Wayside was robbed of their bank machine with a chain and truck like 10 years ago. I hear of vehicles being stolen or entered and a neighbour got his garage broken into. Community mail boxes in Talbotville have been broken into several times. This has never happened before
- Criminal activity brings fear and uncertainty to towns, municipalities. Businesses are less likely to invest, people are less likely to buy in high crime areas
- Criminal activity can affect all people indiscriminately. And have the most obvious negative impact
- Criminal activity can have many causes at its root, and focusing on the causes can alleviate the result. Proper access to mental health care, food and shelter security and an overall sense of inclusion in a community can reduce have been shown to reduce criminal behaviours.
- Criminal activity chips away at a safe environment rendering it eventually unsafe
- Criminal activity has to be stopped. Start in our schools. Youth centres. More mentors needed. Get guns off street
- Criminal activity in the area is a result of the lack of mental health supports and resources in the Elgin County and St. Thomas area, leaving police with a barrage of criminal activity to attend to
- Criminal activity is a big problem

- Criminal activity isn't as high as it is in other regions of Ontario in Elgin. St. Thomas, therefore, it should continue the way that it is. Still a priority, but wouldn't make this a top priority
- Criminal activity just scares us seniors.... If we do not feel safe in our own homes...because of unwanted criminal activity on our property...our secure space is compromised. I think the police have their hands tied when it comes to the courts
- Criminal activity of any kind will affect the way we live and the way we go about our daily lives
- Criminal activity runs rampant in St. Thomas but the cops don't do anything to help, their lack of concern makes things worse. Need better cops, ones that give a shit...these crappy cops don't make the cut, not even close...embarrassing
- Criminal activity should obviously be addressed, however as far as I am aware there is not any huge amount of violent crimes in the area
- Criminal behaviours and elements always have a negative impact on a communities' safety. Also, in order to deal with criminal situations communities have to take active action to protect themselves and the citizens
- Criminals seem to have more rights to protect them than the victim. No one enforces the by-law if they do very light fines & back on the streets
- Defund the police to fund social services appropriately
- Drug addiction and mental health seem to me to be the core of so much criminal activity in St. Thomas. I personally have been impacted by criminal behaviour in the form of a break in at our home. I also feel unsafe in the downtown core. There seems to be so much drug use and these folks seem on the edge at all times. I hate that I feel I cant go to certain parts of my town
- Drugs go hand in hand with criminal activity
- Drugs, weapons, and other crime is a feedback loop that disenfranchises citizens and actively discourages investment
- Especially St. Thomas
- Every time you turn around things are being stolen. Robberies. You have to lock every single thing up. Community safety is a top priority. People need to feel they don't need cameras and can feel safe in there own home and yard. People should be able to walk up town and feel safe
- Everyone needs to feel safe in home
- Everyone wants to feel safe where they live
- Feeling safe goes a long way
- Fix this by teaching kids how to change their brains with neuroplacity techniques and we won't have crime
- Fixing the homeless and addiction problem will help with the crime
- Focus on education and mental health will help reduce crime
- Focus on mental health and it will alleviate many of criminal problems
- For the first time in My Life (67 years old) I wondered when I went outside ...if I should have my back to the street in the middle of the day. Friends are being broken into in their homes

- Having to deal with the criminal element brings about a feeling of insecurity for the public. Living in a crime free environment is ideal. But not feasible
- Helps keep happy and positive knowing that criminal activity is low
- Homelessness, mental health and crime go hand in hand. There are too many cracks between the system and the resources used to plug the dam and it's not working. Mental health and addiction is out of control. We need a treatment facility for mental health and/or addiction. Let's get them back on track and use the resources after treatment to help them live independently, meaning they are well enough to take their meds or stay sober. Centralize the supports so people don't have to walk or take a bus from one resource to the next. This can be an obstacle for recovering addicts or mental health patients. Teach them life skills like cooking so they don't spend all their assistance money on take out food, the list goes on. Cut to the chase and open a treatment facility. Mental health unit at EGH is not the answer
- Housing and Economics, some have support some have no insurance. No jobs equals higher crime
- Human trafficking should also be concerned as a priority and probably is. It's important to this smaller community and older community people want to feel safe
- I am fortunate to live in a village within this community with little crime. However St. Thomas has a much higher crime severity rate than other south western Ontario. Why is that? What are similar cities doing that we aren't?
- I am lucky to live in an area that is rural and very low key. We have a dog in our home that is very protective of her property. Having said that, we have had in the past some break ins but I do believe they were resolved. City life is different. Policing and criminal activity go hand in hand. Without a deterrent activity may increase. Of all the examples given the one that makes me the angriest is the cruelty to animals. I believe that it should be higher on the priority list with greater fines and jail time. Again that may be the rural talking but animals are defenceless and dependant
- I am not sure what the criminal activities are but I am sure there is an impact and because of my lack of knowledge this is why I answered as I did
- I believe the Mental Health priorities can help curb these activities. Different approaches are needed to combat drug trafficking. Provincial/Federal government agencies need more control on the First Nations Reserves where often drugs, cigarettes, etc. are being sold to minors, unchecked
- I do NOT feel safe in St. Thomas. Crime is on the rise because of the drug users and soft repercussions
- I do not have much knowledge of the criminal activity in the Elgin County region. This is why I answered the way I have. I do know I have clients who take risks with over use of substances and believe drug trafficking is becoming an increasing problem
- I do not want to live in fear, in my home or community
- I don't believe we have a high crime rate in our community; I believe much of the petty theft/ break and enters are to support drug use; I live in the core of St. Thomas and see the increasing numbers of people who "appear to be" street involved and at the same time I

have not experienced anything more than someone rummaging through my unlocked car twice in 15 years

- I don't feel like I see a lot of crime taking place in our community/county as I do in other areas. I think there are more important priorities
- I feel Aylmer is not a high crime area....my perception is a safe community
- I feel like if we focus on other areas (education, mental health), etc. then we won't have nearly the criminal activity in our community that we do
- I feel punishments should be more strict. However, if you help mental health this may get lower
- I feel relatively safe in my community
- I feel that criminal activity in our area is at a lower risk with theft
- I feel the crime rate in connection with the size of our community and the presence of local and provincial police are appropriate
- I feel this way because people a shooting up with iv drugs on Talbot St. They are consistently shop lifting from Shoppers Drug Mart on Talbot St. (I have seen the cashiers watching them as they leave the stores) it is horrible!
- I feel we are well policed, but the judicial system let's us down due to lack of appropriate rehabilitation, or appropriate means to discourage crime
- I feel that overall our area does a pretty good job at dealing with criminal activity and we should be prioritizing in other areas
- I find we have more to worried about we live near a medical weed company in St. Thomas were not told it was coming to our area we have noticed more break ins, more strangers in the area this place is not fenced in has bags out side for people to steal which is bringing residents in to our quiet neighborhood were there is a school with younger kids
- I generally feel safe about the place where I live at this time
- I have concerns about people speeding and drunk driving and with people coming into my neighborhood from other areas to commit crime
- I have seen an increase in crime in my community over the years. I don't know if it is due to opportunity, (covid impacted everything) drug availability and mental health issues. This is a huge strain on Police activities. Break and enter and property theft seem to be reported almost daily. The city has grown and changed dramatically. Citizens certainly don't feel safe
- I haven't heard much in the news or social media for our region
- I know somebody with a drug addiction who drives impaired and causes problems in the community. She is known to police but does not get arrested. She refuses supports such as rehab
- I only scored the first one high because we have police in family so know the struggles they endure
- I see little criminal activity in my daily life, but I'm sure it's out there
- I think if people had better mental health many of these problems would not be an issue
- I think that dealing with some of the wellness issues of the community such as mental health, homelessness, education, and unemployment helps to teach children its not okay to break the law. It helps to elevate the self esteem of individuals and families and links at risk persons with resources other than criminal activity. All local support groups also need to

be at the table when it comes to a community based wellness plan so that they can have input and offer their expertise as to what they also see in their organizations

- I try not to be complacent about it but I am aware that I live in not only a relatively safe community but part of the world
- I want to be safe in my community!
- I want to feel safe
- I'm not sure that we have as much crime as other areas and what does occur is generally folk known to each other. Not a lot of serious crime either
- I've had my car vandalized once and broken into once while it was in my driveway. I've lived all over Canada and only had this happen in St. Thomas. It made me consider moving somewhere nicer
- If people can't work they will do things to get money
- If the other issues (mental health, education, etc.) were addressed we wouldn't have the issues of crime
- If we lessen the mental health issues and create opportunities the crime will lessen
- If we take care of our mentally ill and educate everyone criminal activity will drop. Education, compassion and understanding are key to eliminating crime
- Illegal drug use, break in and assault causing bodily harm is a huge problem in St. Thomas
- I'm seeing and hearing more reports of thieving / robbery and animal cruelty in this city compared to other smaller towns
- In the last three years I feel personally unsafe in my neighbourhood and community. There are places I used to walk with my dog that I do not go anymore. I'm sure vulnerable citizens feel even more worried for their safety on an ongoing basis
- It doesn't matter where you live it happens. No one is immune to this behaviour. Just because it hasn't impacted us personally doesn't mean it isn't happening. Everyone deserves to have equal protection. It shouldn't matter where you live, the colour of your skin, income, etc.
- It falls back to poverty and mental health issues, and unemployment. During the time of Covid, people are getting more money than they would if they worked, but they are bored, those who aren't bored are in need of something and go after it
- It seems crime is on the rise with covid
- It's important to take a preventative approach through education and access to Mha services
- It's a terrible impact on the whole neighborhood
- It's concerning because of all the criminal activity to hear about on the news
- It's huge impact to physical, mental, psychological, etc. wellbeing, if you don't feel safe in your own home, neighbourhood, and city
- I've seen a lot of broken glass on the sidewalks. This is dangerous to animals and people. Drugs- cocaine at teen parties. I've heard is common. These kids need better ways to entertain themselves. Where are the teen centres and safe places to hang out?
- Law enforcement is critical to well being
- Lawlessness leads to bad behaviour and loss of control. When people feel safe in their environment, they react better than when they live scared of all things around them

- Lowering criminal activity makes our community a safer place to live and raise families
- Majority of the crime in the area is poverty driven, if we had the supports in place to help people living in poverty crime rates would reduce dramatically
- More presence is required for more areas in town
- Most crimes you see posted are done by people on drugs. If the drug issue was addressed (mental health, jobs etc.) there would be much less crime
- Much more street crime in St. Thomas; rural areas have some but isolated and comes & goes. Unfortunately, the perception of being unsafe causes as much, if not more damage to the well being of our citizens
- No one wants to live in a high crime area
- If you live in a nice neighborhood with some bored kids that are vandalizing a lot of properties, it drives up the insurance rates. People are forced to deal with thefts, assaults, property damage, etc.
- Other solutions should be higher such as mental health supports and housing which would reduce the number of criminal offences
- Our crime is the pulse on how we are doing as a community on supporting individuals in need and the programs we have to offer...
- Our family moved here because of the lower crime rate ... this is an attractant for many families and businesses
- Our small towns are turning into criminal hotspots especially with the amount of drugs that go through this area
- People deserve to feel safe in their community. By having a lower criminal activity rate, it will also attract more business & in turn investment in the area
- People like to feel safe in their community, we leave our car unlocked, and our house too! We want our children to walk to school and bike up town safely! Thus would be the top priority for keeping people in our towns and for increasing our growth by appealing to families and the elderly to move here and stay here!!
- People need security and peace
- People need to feel safe
- People need to feel safe and secure in their communities. If they don't feel safe, they don't interact. Mental health suffers. And increased criminal element can do serious harm to all the positive efforts made in other areas including education and youth opportunities
- People want to feel safe in their community. Having a safe community would also bring more people to visit or reside in our county
- Providing a safe place for people to live helps to build a stronger community and a feeling of contentment for residents. Living in fear causes uncertainty and mistrust among residents. Police services need proper financial support to provide adequate officers and the tools they need to keep criminal activity in check
- Putting emphasis on crime doesn't prevent future crime. It doesn't make people feel better or perceive that the community is safer
- Recently criminal activity has been a rampant problem in the news, but if anything, in my opinion, mental health issues have been a root to a lot of the crime recently, and with the

protests with the police I personally feel that making criminal activity in our area a smaller priority should happen

- Recently moved and already feel threatened by criminal activity, drug use and mental health issues affecting city
- Safe communities are vital to peace of mind
- Security is a big issue
- Seems to be a lot of break in's on cars. Thefts, internet thefts, human trafficking, lots going on there, but need more helping and educated. Animal cruelty. Need education for police and city animal services on animal cruelty. A lot is passed by
- Something needs to be done with the homeless and drug users. A few should not ruin life for the many
- St. Thomas and surroundings has been getting worse with this criminal activity and mental issues
- The crime rate is affecting all of the area horribly it has to be dealt with
- The criminal activity has increased
- The drug problem in our city is getting out of hand
- The law is important for a safe community
- The majority of criminal activity locally is tied to mental health challenges, and addiction. Relative to the population Elgin County is a safe place that is low on crime
- The number of thefts from vehicle, garages, etc. has increased dramatically. My belief is it goes hand in hand with the lack of mental health treatment and drug abuse in our community. Something needs to be done immediately
- The police do a good job as far as their funding allows. Poverty needs to be alleviated, especially for the homeless
- The problem is not with our police services but with the courts. Our police officers are arresting the same people multiple times over the course of a week and the courts let them back out on a promise to appear. Not long after our police are dealing with them again. There needs to be an entire overhaul of the justice system in Canada. This is not a local problem but a national one
- The safety of our residents & families is extremely important- how can we fully live our lives if we live in fear
- The thefts and crime are out of control in our city. Criminals should be held accountable. I do not feel safe walking my dog after dark, and even during daylight some days
- Theft, Drug Trafficking, and Animal Cruelty have all been major issues in the last few years. Our family has also dealt with murder
- There appears to be rampant re-offending, or offences committed when the person is on parole, out on bail for other crimes
- There are a lot of crimes going on around here and the violence is escalating. So we need to stop it in the bud!
- There are a lot of illegal drugs on the street and a lot of crime
- There are more of these activities occurring. They need to be locked up and be accountable for their actions instead of just being issued a court date they don't show up for

- There are plenty of personnel currently. Refine your methods, Figure out how to break the repeat offender syndrome
- There have been numerous break-ins in our neighbourhood. People cannot even leave their garage doors open in broad daylight!!! Bikes are getting stolen all of the time and there was almost a huge brawl in our street. I believe this criminal activity is driven by drug addiction that is plaguing our community. We need a strategy to address drug addicts and criminals. I support our St. Thomas Police force in their hard work to keep our community safe
- There is a drug house across the street from us and we have tried for 4 years to get help and no one does anything. Everyone knows he sells there and no one does anything about it. They cause so many problems in the town
- There is inadequate police protection in Elgin county!
- There is too much petty nuisance crimes and the revolving door of addiction and mental health offenders
- These activities are most likely to harm people, and are priorities for police and justice to deal with
- These used to be such quiet residential cities. They should still be
- This community is relatively safe and most social discourse can be supported and modified if there were resources available. Housing, transitional supportive housing, basic income, improved social determinants of health, decriminalization of substances and community education. Teaching the community how to respond to individuals in crisis, and having services holistically supporting an individual, and dedicated to supporting individuals in crisis would greatly improve these issues. Teaching coping mechanism early on in life (in school curriculum), giving resources to individuals in our community who need it most and offer the opportunity to flourish would be beneficial.
- This is a local responsibility. St Thomas Police and the OPP do a great job from what I can see
- This is a no brainer. Social supports need to be improved, and mental health care in order to hope to improve the environments that produce criminals
- This is intrinsically linked to social and mental health supports. Five years ago, I never locked my doors, now I worry about being alone late at night
- This plus mental health go hand in hand. Many things are being over looked
- Though a serious issue I do feel mental health and education programs can assist in this area
- Too much trafficking from homes
- Too much theft that we installed a security camera
- You can't leave your garage door open anymore because of the things that is stolen out of them everyday
- Unavailability of conventional employment has caused huge amount of drug abuse. There is a strong market for opiates and fake opiates leading to overdoses
- Unfortunately poverty is one of the root causes of crime, minor crimes in particular. Perhaps more study should be made of the root causes of crime. The other problem is that sending a person to prison is rather like sending them to a crime university and upon graduation they have not become better people

- Vicious circle, one needs to just see violence and crime lead to drugs and round we go
- Want a safe community
- We all want to live in a low crime community
- We happen to live in a low area crime part of the city. The addition of Security Guards at the Inn Out of the Cold has brought to light the need for Mental Health Workers who have had "De-escalation Training". The latter works well in consultation with Police Officers also trained on de-escalation
- We have been broken into a number of times! and I feel that there are more drugs in the area - or stronger drugs and these drugs seem to be easy to get!
- We have experienced the theft of articles from our property and even someone coming into the home while we slept to steal cash. It makes you feel vulnerable for sure. The fraud and scams impact the community but I don't feel it is as important as the previous two elements
- We have no police presence anymore.
- We learned from our local police that we live in an area of high risk of robbery and break in because of our proximity to the highway. This on a night we forgot to close and lock our garage door and we thought we lived in a safe area 😞
- We live in an area with high rate of petty crime - theft and property damage
- We live next to the courthouse, crime has dramatically increased these past 30 years, people walking by use profanity, and threaten you when you are just having coffee, you see so much violence and negative changes in the neighbourhood, drugs being sold, stealing, people being assaulted. Very, very scary and dangerous
- We, as citizens, are all at risk. Our children are at risk. We are ALL at risk. We need a huge government intervention
- Well, crime at any level is a community responsibility. I believe we are fortunate in this area police are doing a good job of keeping are area pretty safe
- Well if you fix the other two elements you lower this element. Cops doing more calls on people with mental illness doing things off the charts because I'm off my meds...
- When growing up in St. Thomas we played in the streets until dark, walked to our friends houses, rode our bikes to the Elgin Mall. I would not feel comfortable letting my grandchildren do that these days
- When you are gainfully employed and can afford a middle class lifestyle you can afford proper mental health support and chances are your mental state will be calmer if all your bills are paid
- While criminal activity appears very low in our community we are certainly seeing issues. The need to be diligent and provide the resources to counteract crime helps to keep it out of our communities and residents safe
- While I feel safe walking in my neighbourhood at night there are areas of St. Thomas I won't walk in except when absolutely necessary
- While I have been robbed, I'm not aware of assault or murder to any extent here
- While our percentage of criminal activity is relatively low, individual incidents can have devastating impact. We cannot afford to treat even minimal possibilities in this area lightly

- While the impact can be substantial I believe this area is controlled and well monitored for the past decade and currently - thankfully the criminal impact is overall not a large factor of current concern in Elgin
- With criminals you are usually ok on the street
- With the addiction rate sky rocket right now there is a crazy amount of crime going on in our small city!
- With the amount of assaults and thefts and criminal activity, St. Thomas is becoming an unsafe place to live
- Working downtown St. Thomas I get nervous walking down the street
- Obviously criminal activity has a negative effect on our communities. And obviously we need to address it. Again, better education will produce less criminals

Attachment F: Comments about Housing Security

- A huge new fancy seniors building just opened. Like an idiot, I thought it was a respectable seniors home, government run with affordable rates. WOW...great you built a building for more F....ing Torontonians to live because my senior friends and ME still working can not afford to live there. There is too much greed in this world. So build more ugly housing 2 inches apart in Talbotville and sell them for \$400-\$600 thousands to out of towners because our workforce does not have people that can afford to purchase them. Sad really. Good Bye small town....I'll miss you when I move because of over population and traffic. Lets take care of our own town people first. I know the township/county gets a lot of tax money and that's what they want. No one actually wants to give hand outs to the unfortunate/old. I hope I die before I get really old
- A lot of people are homeless
- Accessibility remains an issue although steps are being taken to improve environment. Not a huge priority for most; due, to limited numbers needing assistance; however, should remain a HIGH item, since it has profound impact on those who need help or support
- Affordable housing is no longer available for purchase or for rentals. Older children living with parents as they can't afford to live on their own if single. New families can't begin their life without living to pay for rent, and can't afford \$500,000 mortgages starting out
- Affordable housing is not an issue it is a crisis. We will see the homeless rate skyrocket over the next year and we already have no affordable housing left
- AFFORDABLE housing is very, very hard to find in my community
- Affordable housing takes people off the street, but congregating large populations has shown to increase crime and allows the establishment of ghettos. More could be done to ensure affordable housing is available not just in the city but as part of a broader initiative to spread out and integrate this population
- Affordable housing will reduce homelessness, decrease crime and reduce the resources of our emergency services and emergency room visits
- After meaningful employment, safe and affordable housing is one of the most important elements to prevent criminal activity
- Again, I'm not aware of any significant problem here
- Although it does not affect me or the larger community directly it is a major factor in dealing with many other issues such as crime and mental health and employment
- As a person coming into my senior years I do worry about my personal housing situation. I have a home to sell for possible future rental payments but the lack of lower income housing does have me worried. I know there are many many people in St. Thomas don't have what I gave so am sure they are also worried about their old age. Also do many mentally ill people live in deplorable conditions
- At this time, housing has surpassed the average wage earnings in the area. Too many people are finding themselves house-poor, and the affordable housing in their price range is not adequate. Housing costs have become too burdensome for most, and is forcing several into poverty who are not represented by income reported poverty data. The issue of

homelessness is becoming more and more prevalent, and is creating cascading issues, such as food insecurity and mental health crisis

- Because of COVID I am facing making the hard choices of keeping a roof over my head, but doing without food and utilities. With winter coming this scares me
- Because of the huge disparity between the wealthy and the poor we are a society consumed by greed and not compassion. The United Nations has sustainable development goals that could easily be reached with a redistribution of the wealth from the top one percent
- Come on - you should know this already! Where do you expect people to live when they can't afford the rent, even if they were lucky enough to find a place?
- Contributes to mental health well being
- Cops don't protect home owners when you have criminals living next door. Don't even put in their report when someone threatens you. Bad cops in St Thomas... Terrible chief you should be ashamed for such terrible cops that don't protect good people. I think when you deal with garbage all day or night you become garbage yourself....my opinion the terrible policing in St. Thomas
- Country is heading for a long recession. People will be losing their jobs, there will be foreclosures and no where to turn
- Education to Expensive rental market · Homelessness · Overcrowding · Unsafe housing conditions like mold or building code violations · Accessibility issues for people with physical disabilities is important and help understand
- Elgin and St. Thomas currently have a housing crisis with a shortage of affordable units for those in our community. As Elgin continues to grow and attract more residents from larger communities and the GTA this will only get worse. Gentrification is pushing out those who cannot afford to live here and steps need to be taken to provide more subsidized and affordable and innovative housing options for all in particular those most vulnerable such as youth
- Especially now because of pandemic. People need more affordable housing. No job stability. Government has to help
- Every community needs consideration given to the homeless, people with physical disabilities and unsafe housing conditions.
- Every human should have a safe, affordable place to live
- Every person has the right to live in a safe environment. There is a lot of homeless people living in St Thomas
- Every question you have asked to this point has built upon the preceding ones. As desperation continues to grow, layer upon layer, it will eventually affect this element. Countermeasures to this will need to be equal to the forces driving that momentum
- Everything needs to be done in order of the highest risk to the community
- Everyone deserves a safe comfortable place to live, without this, criminal activity increases
- Everyone has to have access to safe affordable housing and food
- Everyone is equally deserving to enjoy housing security
- Everyone needs a place to call home - a place of security of person and safety from the elements that is constant

- Everyone needs a place to live. Much like mental health services, housing can affect many other aspects of peoples lives, and can cause a myriad of other issues
- Everything starts at home and if you have reasonable access to reasonable rent and a roof over your head and can afford food and other necessities this alone could change crime rates in all communities
- Government housing has never worked and just becomes a money pit. Better to encourage a vibrant housing industry by keeping development and redevelopment rules and costs to a minimum
- Haven't seen much homelessness
- Having a place to live is necessary for a good life. If you are homeless it breeds violence and crime
- Having a safe place to live helps meets basic needs to enable people to improve their life overall
- Having a safe space to live is a human right. Understandably, people with mental health issues are more difficult to house but there are many options (e.g. tiny houses) available if we truly wish to care for our WHOLE community
- Having a secure home has been revealed as a major necessity under the pandemic. I would give up some of my comfort to ensure that others are housed in a decent manner
- Having spoken with people in low income housing situations or homeless, it saddens me when I hear their struggles to obtain affordable housing with zero success
- Having stable housing can have a ripple effect in regards to ones life and mental health
- High rental prices for people on pension, disability or the unemployed impact our community by causing homelessness
- Homeless everywhere, even working people can't afford housing and now the government wants to impose capital gains taxes when we have paid our taxes on renovations, labour and income. Enough with the taxing and market ridiculous prices and wait lists. Make things better for housing
- Homelessness is a direct contributor to a feeling of unease in many residents of St. Thomas. The shelter funding that St Thomas just received will help remediate that situation much more needs to be done
- Homelessness is a huge problem on the streets here, alot of people being intimidated and scared to go downtown due to this
- Homelessness is an unbelievable crisis in all of Elgin County. To witness the number of people who have no where to live is astonishing and deeply troubling. All of the solutions feel like band aids without adequate numbers of affordable housing units, supportive housing, etc. Personally I have adult children who work yet cannot afford to live on their own. Fortunately they are safe and can stay living at home for the foreseeable future, however we are all frustrated that the "normal" developmental stage of independence is not available to them due to increasing market rents
- Homelessness leads to other issues
- Homelessness leads to street groups developing for their own purposes. This may be part of the overall aspects of our community. Especially the teen age group and the elder group of homeless people

- Hoping that communities improve homelessness and when we have heat alerts community areas get extended to be open
- Housing as a concern is dependant upon individual economic situations. However, the community has a responsibility to assure that all citizens have access to affordable housing as well as provide the opportunity for the establishment of business that can provide adequate employment for the citizens
- Housing First is imperative. We are at crisis level for affordable housing. Between rental rates that have excluded many, almost 0 vacancy rate, almost 0 available social housing and renovations and evictions have made this an imperative to work on. If we don't our homelessness rate is going to jump dramatically
- Housing first. If people do not have a safe, secure and affordable home nothing else matters. You have to choose food over shelter, you can't get good education, crime goes up, mental health struggles, stresses all increase. Housing should be the number one priority for this plan
- Housing is an essential need for everyone and is unaffordable for far too many, it seems housing prices and rental rates have increased significantly in the past 3 to 4 years. Housing is an impossible dream for many young people
- Housing is an integral part of the wellness of a community. We own our home plus a rental but we are looking at selling the rental to pay off debt. We recognize the need for affordable housing
- Housing is becoming increasingly unattainable for many. Youth and seniors are particularly vulnerable, especially if they don't have family support. The rental housing market is becoming increasingly controlled by fewer and fewer landlord conglomerates. The input of large amounts of refugees to this country has added additional unplanned pressure to available units. Affordable rents are way out of line with income which means decreased discretionary spending with the adjunct effects to the local economy. Affordable housing (more smaller units for seniors and young adults) and affordable rental units (more apartments) are highly needed. Its a huge drag on spending and the economy. Building units is a boost. Seems like a win win
- Housing is extremely unaffordable. The definition of affordable housing in Canada should be redefined and include other expenses and not just include income. Affordable housing definition is that if you pay less than 30% of your income before tax you are in a home that you can afford. This does not include many other expenses like food, insurance, utilities (if renting), etc. Housing is a huge barrier as it is very unaffordable for the average community member in Elgin County
- Housing is needed for those who are not able to function with other people in a positive manner and who have mental health issues leading to financial insecurity and loss of housing
- Housing is very hard to find. There's not enough to fill the need
- Housing is well priced here. Why I moved to Aylmer
- Housing needs to be addressed first because it impacts everything else. Also too many short term rentals in port Stanley

- Housing needs to be more affordable but this is impacted by employment rates, the economy and the drug issues that plague our city
- Housing needs vary by community
- Housing prices are high, and rental availability (especially affordable) is low. Couch surfing and youth and adult homelessness (especially in St Thomas) are important issues to address
- Housing should be affordable to all and have up keep
- Housing should continue to be improved as city grows but there are other priorities that should be addressed sooner including safety, criminal activity and drug use in order to better the community standards
- Housing that is safe, accessible and affordable is another foundational component to allow someone to be stable and maintain employment or education. A need for diverse housing options, including supports for those transitioning from homelessness or sleeping rough and all the social support services required to assist people to become independently housed
- I am in a rental, it concerns me that there is nothing affordable or even available if I was to lose my housing. Buying is becoming increasingly impossible with the outrageous rates. Fixing housing issues will also assist to minimize crime (theft, etc.)
- I am not involved in the community enough or the support groups out there to be aware of the needs of the community
- I am not well informed of the actual percentage or number of homeless in St. Thomas and Elgin County but I am aware of the programs and housing initiatives in the city. Inn out of the Cold has increased to include year round services. New housing building on the west of Talbot Street is excellent. The city is working on small apartment units over the transit station on Talbot
- I do know in our rural area there is a lack of rental units for people who are looking and what is available is highly overpriced
- I don't see any support for average low wage earners. Rents are unreasonable and I am a landlord. My son is disabled and has been on a city rental list for five years. He will be homeless AGAIN due to lack of affordable housing. We do support seniors and mental health people but not odsp recipients and the average low wage earner. This leads to a higher crime rate as folks are desperate. My son needs accessible housing. ODSP covers five hundred dollars a month for rent and is less than half of the cost of current market rent
- I feel St. Thomas has the funds to make more housing for the mentally ill and stop some of the crime
- I find that rentals are not easy to find, and when they are available, the market is very expensive (a lot of out of the area landlords)
- I got very lucky. I know many who haven't. There are homeless people and also those who live in unsafe and poor conditions because we don't have rent control measures that stop landlords from price gouging. Housing should be a human right
- I have 3 children heading off to post secondary school, one just entering his fourth year. The cost for him to buy a home in the next 5 years is mortifying. Even with a fulltime job, housing is so expensive that finding a reasonable place to live will be a daunting task. Prices go up but not relative to salaries and income. If one is selling, good on them but to purchase a home and live comfortably is a difficult task. If I had young children I may have a different

opinion but my kids are just now thinking about their future and moving out. It is weighing on our minds

- I pay over \$1,100.00 for an apartment. I see homeless people every day. The weather is getting cold and no human being should be left to sleep on the street
- I think overall this problem is well handled and we would be better to focus on jobs and opportunity so people can provide for themselves
- I think this is an important issue, but I would rather efforts be put towards crime prevention and other issues
- I wouldn't live in a community that is unsafe
- I've never had an issue
- I'm consistently seeing the same people who are homeless roaming around Talbot Street and nearby plazas on Talbot Street. Sometimes to the point they harass nearby pedestrians
- I'm living back at my parents house because I can't afford rent, and I'm older
- I'm very unsure on this one since I am a home owner and have never had to deal with finding cost effective housing
- Inadequate affordable housing is a huge issue in this region and affects the community and those most vulnerable a great deal
- It definitely needs to be addressed. I understand supply and demand affecting prices but do we have to be punished because we have citizens from GTA moving here with \$\$\$ because it is cheaper, therefore driving up the price of housing? Current citizens shouldn't be punished because that. My husband and I both work. In today's economy, the government classifies us as middle-class and basically tells us we can afford a life-style beyond our means. We have never lived beyond our means but we also can't even afford to put appropriate work into our home, which we have owned for 18 years so we can be healthy. We couldn't afford to sell because we couldn't afford to replace or rent. We have a disabled adult daughter. She is waiting for housing. We have a senior in high school whom I fear will have to live with us long after post-secondary because \$2,000/month for rent isn't affordable. That's way more than a bi-weekly paycheck if you are lucky enough to make \$30/hr. I get inflation, but the only people who get raises to accommodate economic inflation are government workers and factory workers that have had Union protection for over 20 years. This is beyond a municipal issue, but includes the provincial government. Unless we are all more equal, we are going to continue to see these issues become worse and worse
- It is well known that there is a shortage of affordable housing in our area. As St. Thomas and Elgin begin to grow in both population and economically, a process of gentrification is occurring. As we develop more, more supply of rental and affordable housing is needed in our community. The County needs to keep this in mind when working with developers. The term "affordable" is used when pitching new developments, however this term simply means "at market rate", which is often far from affordable. More incentives need to be put in place for developers to create hybrid living models where a percentage of all new housing infrastructure should be allocated as low income/subsidized. Creating more "housing developments" that creates a model of separation and highlights inequity. Development fees for new housing developments should increase across the County to make developers

accountable for some of the necessary infrastructure needed to increase our populations and services, as well as creating and supporting more nature based infrastructure such as parks and paths - in particular in Central Elgin. Simply chasing growth without parameters will only increase inequity in our communities and benefit those with higher incomes

- It seems difficult for young people to gain employment that pays the rent that's charged in this area-if you don't have low rents for minimum wage employees you lose these people who are willing to do these jobs-or if they pay rents they can't afford to have a family to support your local schools
- It's one of our basic human needs. Without adequate shelter, you can't achieve higher levels of needs. Being worried about finance and having to work extra jobs or not having a home puts huge negative strain/impact
- Lack of affordable housing has a trickle down affect and leads to other issues
- Landlords jack up the rent to compensate their units getting damaged and not wanting anyone on low income coming in and destroying it any more
- Large amount of homelessness
- Limited resources for people on limited income or seniors to access safe, affordable housing, exacerbates homelessness and street crime
- MASLOV'S history of needs states that in order for a person to feel secure that person's housing needs must be met
- More housing needed. Rental fees are expensive
- My take on affordable housing is that a lot of these people who need this type of housing have no respect for the property. I've heard and seen where people get in and stop paying rent and they destroy the premises. I know there are a lot of bad landlords but I don't think it's right to destroy the premises and stop paying your rent so you can get another tattoo and buy beer and smokes. A lot of these people have ZERO respect
- No affordable housing. Low income people have no chance to ever be able to live in a decent place. Some have to choose between rent or food
- No one should be without a roof over their heads - that is a crime right there! It shouldn't be up to volunteers, grass roots, street level organizations to assist in finding shelter for other community members. The municipal authorities need to do much more - especially as it pertains to housing development. Enact law that insists on AFFORDABLE housing being built along with the \$400k homes!
- No personal impact but aware that lack of affordable rent, properties a concern for many in our area
- Not an issue for me
- Not relevant to our community
- Once a person has a secure place to live, the possibility for employment and education is possible
- Over the 2018-2019 year the Inn Out of the Cold housed 119 Guests. In past years about 24 Guests could be helped to find rooms, Group home or apartment. That year only 4 Guests had access to re-housing opportunities as there was very little available with supportive living conditions. Most of the Guests need mental health, addiction services and care

services to be re-housed. The cost of apartments is out of their reach given the low ODSP or OW funding available

- People need a home... however / whatever they define it as
- People need to feel safe in their own homes
- People should not be living on the street or in cars
- Poor housing options, crude living conditions, high costs
- Poorly managed low-income housing can actually detract from a community
- Recently in my neighbourhood there has been a few car break-ins. So In my opinion it should be made a priority, just not a major priority
- Rent is almost impossible to pay, and when you do find a place to stay with decent rent the property usually isn't kept up well. I guess you get what you pay for
- Rent is very expensive for a city/town where there is not a ton of work unless it's minimum wage which even full time and making minimum wage one can not afford even a one bedroom apartment right now. Which leads to a lot of people being homeless or couch surfing
- Rent prices have sky rocketed and this is making it harder and harder for people to afford to have a place to live, or to find adequate housing for their families
- Rental market is very expensive and scarce causing an inordinate amount of homelessness and encampments
- Rental properties are scarce and expensive. With people moving to Elgin County from Toronto and surrounding area, prices are increasing
- Rental properties are so high it is hard to find affordable decent housing
- Rental property is very hard to find in rural Elgin
- Rentals are hard to find for fixed incomes. An elderly man explained how his neighbor vapes and smokes weed, and he cant afford to leave. Yet, he has a sensitivity to the scents
- Rentals are too high for young adults just starting off with low paying jobs
- Safe and secure housing for all will benefit everyone
- Safe, clean and affordable housing is needed. This is an issue everywhere. Need to look to other communities to see what they have done
- Safety and housing important for all. Low and high income
- Secure, safe and healthy housing can be a huge benefit on mental health. Affordable housing will contribute to a better outlook for individuals and the feeling of a safe environment
- Shortage of available, reasonably priced rental housing is a big problem in West Lorne, Rodney, Dutton for sure
- So many need housing. Housing safety units should be kept up better. That includes the property safety in units and harassment from others in community housing and by some acting for the housing
- St. Thomas spent 30 thousand dollars on a sphere for the middle of a roundabout, do you think they prioritize their housing?
- The closer to downtown the more the homeless are evident and crime and disruption is occurring. The city council needs to get a better grip on this or face losing revenue as people

will give their dollars elsewhere and business will close - an added pressure not needed in these times

- The community needs reasonable cost and high availability for houses and apartments in the community to enable it to grow
- The cost of housing and lack of good paying jobs is an issue in this city. Attracting more higher paying jobs, beyond retail, will help the city sustain the cost of housing and provide more funding to battle homelessness. However, I do feel the largest impact to homelessness is mental health and addiction
- The cost to rent a home is ridiculous. Some landlords are gouging because they can. But the cost of taxes can drive the rents up. Taxes (and water) are absolutely ridiculous here. Provide a better education, and our next generation will have the means to afford decent accommodations
- The foundation of life is safety and security. Without affordable housing folx cannot prosper
- The homeless people are often the mentally ill....they are a problem
- The issue of social housing is a difficult balance. Yes, the disabled should have affordable housing - that is a given. Where it becomes difficult is deciding whether there are those who are able to work but are unwilling. Should municipalities subsidize the unwilling's income and housing? Along with this is the balance of the benefits of a "liveable income" versus the how inflation eats up any gains made through an increase in income. Thus education and initiative become the highest priority
- The landlords charge too much for rent so than there is homeless people the government needs to stop landlords from charging outrageous rents
- The people living on the streets can't find places to live because rent is so expensive
- The rental market is outrageously high and geared income supports waitlist are long with average wait times over a year. COVID 19 has also reduced a lot of supports and the west end of Talbot street is seeing a lot more homeless individuals. Several of the apartment complexes have had to lock dumpsters because collections units were finding individuals sleeping in them which pose a risk to both parties
- The rental market is too high. Single people cannot afford the cost of rent. Ontario works doesn't even pay enough to cover the standard rent now a days. There needs to be a cap on the rental market
- The right to a safe place to live is part of the charter of rights. We are again talking about how some groups are marginalized. We see it at the food bank, Caring Cupboard and the community meals. It's roots are often education, mental health. Folks who need assistance need assistance and the community should be assisting through education not only those marginalized but the society as a whole. It's not popular but loving your neighbour as you love yourself, is the lesson our society/world needs
- The structural integrity or our homes are very important. I would think the majority of people buy a forever home and shouldn't have to worry about not being able to afford our mortgage and rent, mold issues, and or accessibility. This also should include affordable housing for our senior population as well as homelessness too. We as a community should support people of all age and social economic status... homeless shelters are just as important as affordable housing for seniors.

- There is definitely a lack of affordable housing. There is also a lack of accessible housing. Market rents are high and the cost of real estate has escalated. The youth of tomorrow will have difficulty secure decent rental or buying opportunities
- There are many affordable low income places available and more being built...the problem is those that don't want to work to move on. Government has played a huge roll in killing incentive for these
- There are many homeless people in St. Thomas. Housing for them should be away from the downtown core where they often hang out and lots of drug use happening. This is visible from cars and while walking. In St. Thomas there is a proposed site beside the new Ontario Works building on Talbot which makes no sense. People in the area finally are able to walk their dogs and be out with children once a homeless cafe moved. The housing needs to be away from residential areas as it is not right for people paying rent and mortgages to not be able to go for a walk in fear of drug paraphernalia, needles, on the street or the behaviour many of these people have shown. There needs to be police present at the shelter and nearby area if it is put in a residential area
- There are so many homeless now a days. Rent is way too expensive and welfare doesn't give enough to help so people go homeless. Then things turn bad with mental health and addiction
- There are so many low income families looking for quality housing. Some families I work with move a lot due to mold in houses and the dis-repair!! The living conditions are not good!!!! You can't seem to find a decent place to live without paying so much money!! and the Low income housing complexes add their own complications! People calling children's aid on families because they are angry with them .. just an example
- There are too many people homeless already. No one has anything to rent if there is so expensive people are being homeless again because they can't come up with first and last
- There is a major shortage of housing in our area. This has made the rents much higher and not easily affordable. We need some more apartments and affordable housing so that people can feel they have a safe place to lie their head at night
- There is a real lack of affordable housing in this area
- There is an inadequate supply of affordable safe housing for people of all ages
- There is no affordable housing! When people have to spend 2 weeks pay for rent there is a problem. I was looking at the new apartments at the old Alma college location they sent me an email stating the projected cost and it is ridiculous for an apartment that is under 700 square feet
- There is not enough affordable housing, and the affordable housing there is keeps getting torn down and brand new unaffordable stuff is being put up. Which means a lot of people that grew up here have to leave the area to find an affordable place to live!
- There is some homelessness here, and many can not afford suitable living conditions that are affordable
- There needs to be more affordable housing and public transportation options for Belmont, a car pool lot near the 401 and 74 would be a good idea so people can get to work
- There use to be a larger inventory of homes that could be purchased by lower income families and by young couples just starting out. Over the past decade or two, I have seen

the smaller towns opening up to the building of large homes over \$450K and the older homes being bought out and renovated and then resold at much higher prices. This is great for the tax base of the municipality but it is driving the younger populations away from towns so most of the activities for youth and young families do not remain supported. We need to have some degree of smaller homes also being built for people to rent or live in. This will give lower income people an opportunity to remain in a home, in their community, and have a sense of belonging

- This has been rising really needs to be addressed
- This is a problem in the area ... people need affordable housing and it is not always available here
- This is an issue that can be tied to other issues such as mental illness, financial struggles, drug dependency, etc. Solve it and other issues may be solved
- This probably won't effect me till I sell the house in about 10 years so I don't really pay attention to it
- Those who are vulnerable need to be helped
- Too hard to find a place to live rents to high
- Too many high income tenancy building being build. Get some realistic housing. Get people buying their homes by lowering entrance requirements. Then they will be tax payer not tax users
- Too many homeless as well as people living in slum conditions because rent is too high and there aren't enough rental properties available
- Too many people living on the streets because they can't afford the cost of rent
- Very limited affordable housing here. People forced to move out of community
- We are blessed...we are OK. BUT too many people cannot afford an apartment...or the ones they could afford are unsafe...dumps that should be closed up. The housing market in St. Thomas is opening up...lots of apartments being built. Getting the people off the streets and into a safe apartment is a challenge...then making sure that just because of the life style they do not trash that apartment and end up out on the street again. Mental Health Issues
- We are in a housing shortage. We need housing at all levels. We need more access to people on the list for subsidized housing, we need places for people to get into the market, we need homes for the elderly. We need more!
- We can see people living on the street now more than ever (associated with close of Psychiatric Hospital?– enough spots in new facility at Elgin General?)
- We get constant calls for housing. It affects business, services, health of the town, mental health
- We have a homeless problem, but, again, it may be linked to mental health issues and a lack of resources in that area
- We have a housing crisis in our community. We lack affordable housing that is safe and secure. For the amount that people are spending on housing, they deserve to be in a safe, clean, and secure environment. There are an abundance of run down buildings that people are living in and it breaks my heart. These buildings possibly have structural issues, lack of cleanliness and more. It is difficult for a municipality to tackle this issue as it is caused from bigger issues (Ex. Lack of a living wage)

- We have no decent affordable housing available at this time
- We have no issues personally but I know others that have a hard time affording housing, it's sad
- We have zero affordable housing in St. Thomas. We have 1 shelter where many people experiencing homelessness are either unable to access or are uncomfortable accessing. We have very little accessible group housing where I know of one individual who wasn't even able to bring their mobility scooter inside, meaning it was left out to be vandalized
- We need affordable housing in this area. Government needs a community group that sits and evaluates our areas of needs. We have a social housing government in St. Thomas with all kinds of data I'm sure. Homelessness usually has multiple reasons. Maybe we as an area could come up a plan to curb this problem in St. Thomas
- We need geared to income and apartments and affordable housing in this area. Free standing homes leave many people unable to find affordable shelter
- We need more market housing in St. Thomas not these high priced condo for seniors they forget seniors are paying to live because of the cost they cannot afford the essential we have a lot of people with families who cannot afford essential for there children and it is the kids that are doing with out
- With a .7% vacancy rate and a 28% of our population living under 25k per annum this is at crisis level. This area is sorely lacking safe and affordable housing. This creates massive overburdened waitlists, people clamoring for what is available not what best suits their needs, the hoarding of resources and housing instability. The imbalance of 500k houses and 1 bedroom units is an emergent situation. The dilapidated and crumbling buildings in the St. Thomas core alone is an absolute disgrace when we have people sleeping outside. We have 1 shelter in St. Thomas and 1 In Aylmer for people experiencing homelessness. The shelter in St. Thomas is wildly harmful, punitive and abstinence based where that creates a gap of a population of people who need help the most. Lack of stability and safety creates a poor world view to someone trapped in homelessness or poverty. It is absolutely imperative that we look at, with great urgency, what we can do to make this an immediate improvement. Implementing a housing first outlook. Implementing HIFIS for the entire region would be helpful to flag individuals most at risk, or continued risk of chronic homelessness and cue wraparound support. This goes for children and adults in our community. This is urgent and necessary
- With being on a set income housing market is very expensive
- Without adequate housing brings insecurity for person's wellbeing and wellness
- Without safe and affordable housing, there will always be risk for both residents and the homeless.
- Without safe, affordable housing people cannot prosper
- Without secure housing, everything else falls apart
- You get it...you see it...news ..everyday

Attachment G: Comments about Employment

- A community with good paying jobs will benefit from having a better standard of living. The City seems to be growing and recovering from the loss of large manufacturing. The population is growing and housing is increasing. I feel the City is in good shape re employment but not sure how Covid has contributed to job loss
- A living wage is important so residents don't need to juggle 2-3 jobs to feed and care for their families
- A living wage must be implemented.
- A living wage would allow a better life/work balance
- A lot of businesses have been gravely impacted because of covid shutdowns
- A lot of other problems go away when people have a job. From what I can see St. Thomas Elgin is encouraging businesses to locate here instead of chasing them away like London does
- Adequate job opportunities are necessary but I am not knowledgeable on employment situation in our community
- Again, a universal basic income would solve most of the issues we have right now in society. Until there is a guaranteed standard of life many of these issues before will fester and grow worse
- Again, this is important as it affects so many other issues
- All goes hand in hand with the rest
- Along with education, having secure employment is important to the health of the individuals and the whole community. Governments need to keep this element front and centre. Employment = \$\$ = housing = less homelessness, illness, crime, etc.
- Although during covid 19 it's normally very hard to land an interview let alone job
- Although we have very resourceful citizens who find ways to succeed; especially, in rural areas, this should still be a very high priority. Stable, financial security solves a lot of the other issues being discussed
- An adequate and stable income can be part of the remedy for many societal ills
- Another issue that can have a domino effect on how it impacts a persons life
- As previously stated, Canadians lack a living wage
- Availability of jobs that pay a living wage is important for the health of Community, especially as rent and housing prices are soaring
- Business have closed in Elgin county. People are losing their jobs
- Covid is going to negatively impact our economy. The government funding available in future will drop due to Debt. This community needs to prepare and think long term. Make smart choices with this plan and work together to make courageous moves that will be innovative and exciting. Innovative and exciting brings business, energy from others and financial support
- Covid took so many jobs from our entrepreneurs. We need to help those people
- Economic disparity brought about by lack of opportunity for employment does affect individuals and communities as a whole. The more money people make the more they'll

spend in the community supporting local business and that sustain the economy, and growth, of the community

- Economic prosperity will increase standard of living and will result in a safer community
- Education was not listed above as a factor for employment. With manufacturing jobs drying up -if you don't have a good education there are few alternatives. Many service industry job just don't pay enough and couples shouldn't need multiple jobs to make ends meet. However, the tax-payers that studied their brains off, worked their butts off, and saved money diligently should not be saddled with paying higher taxes to support the able but not willing. Unsafe or unhealthy work is only possible when there are not enough inspectors in the field! The legislation we already have needs to be vigorously enforced. It is up to each individual worker to consider work life balance and ensure that spouses and families do not take a back seat. I do not agree with legislating a 4 day work week to achieve this though
- Elgin county pre-covid has had an issue with skills related to employment however many job opportunities exist as our economy continues to grow and attract new business. There are many small business starting up and there is a great deal of support from the Chamber of Commerce, ESPEC, Small Business Resource Centre, Workforce Development Committee and many other planning tables. There are jobs, the challenge comes with skills training, education, employability. Many folks that are unemployed lack either skills or education to apply for the opportunities that exist. Post covid-19 however this landscape many look very different. Funds need to be allocated to innovation and entrepreneurship to provide a landscape where Elgin/St. T remain strong
- Employed individuals contribute to the community whether it be through taxes or their purchases. They're much less likely to be involved in criminal activity. They provide a positive example for others
- Employed people less crime
- Employment cannot just be minimum wage part time. There must be full time jobs with a living wage available, for employers who treat their employees fairly and with integrity and dignity
- Employment gives one purpose and direction. It is a reason to get up in the morning and get dressed. It provides self worth and money to purchase the essentials of life. Not having a job is extremely negative on the person and the family life
- Employment gives purpose and direction
- Employment has been another area that was/is extremely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Precarious work, contracts, part time work and low paying jobs are an issue and more stable jobs should be a priority for the future
- Employment impacts mental health
- Employment is in important contributor to well being
- Employment is key to all our well being. I fear the direction we are taking on Covid response is only going to make this far worse by prolonging the economic pain and unemployment for years to come
- Employment is key. It gives a sense of pride of a job well done and accomplishment. We have done a super job in bringing new employment here. As my mom always said...there are jobs for those that want them

- Employment is largely out of the hands of the general municipality. Make a nice bed and people will come to sleep there
- Employment is the biggest driver for creating better neighbourhoods. Some areas of the county are far away from good sources of employment, creating large pockets of poverty
- Employment is the source of self-sufficiency. Therefore a safe work environment and a fair, equitable rate of pay is imperative for one to support themselves and their families are integral to one to participate in their community
- Employment is very high right now
- Employment needs to get better in order to keep residents in at Thomas from moving out
- Employment skills and Employment skill training provide a dignified manner for unemployed persons to become independent. Along with the skills must come supports for removal of addictions and improvements in mental health understandings
- Everyone needs a job that can pay for the necessities of life
- Everyone needs to feel they are part of society. Having employment is crucial to that.
- Everyone wants to earn a living. Start with a great education system. (You saw that coming.) Skilled trades are always in need. Part of the plan could be to offer skilled trade education, so businesses would have a great base to hire from
- Get people working or making a living wage to be able to afford to live helps mental health, physical health, keeps people busy with less time to do criminal activities
- Getting a decent job that pays enough for a decent place to live is becoming an issue in the community
- Have opportunity - growth happens
- Having a job helps in many other areas as well
- Having a livable income/employment is important and can have a positive effect on other issues it needs to be a part of the larger holistic supports
- Having a reliable and fair source of income improves all quality of life. Equity of pay between sexes is still an issue
- Having a strategy to encourage good employers and supports for vulnerable populations to access employment are important. It feels that Elgin has been struggling with employment issues for a long time
- Having a well paid job that is rewarding is critical for the community. When there is a lot of different jobs available invites more people
- Having access to full time permanent employment allows people to stabilize and contribute to their communities; when people are getting part time/ contract/ and worse yet- temporary contracts in factories, this leads to less stable living, higher stress levels in families, less spending/ contributing to community as people are always in crisis mode
- Having access to work is needed for salary and money available to buy goods. I am retired so have no involvement in seeking work
- Having steady income will help relieve crime
- I am retired as of one year. I would like to find a job for one or two days a week. I do not drive and transit sucks in St. Thomas. I want to supplement my old age pension
- I am so glad that I am NOT in the work force. My children and Grandchildren are and I see them struggling to find jobs that will pay them a living wage. These kids do not smoke,

drink or do drugs...so no spending on needless things and they are still having trouble. So hard for the younger generation

- I am unemployed due to COVID so more local jobs that will pay enough to survive would be nice
- I believe that there are jobs but is it jobs that people want. Salary is more the issue. Proper pay for the work is essential
- I continue to commute
- I don't feel comfortable commenting on this... I don't have enough information
- I enjoying living and working in my community. People need to be able to find work they can afford to live off of. Whether it's singles parents seniors or a dual income family. Options are important and incentives for businesses to develop and remain in our county keeps people safe and happy and helps with violence and crimes on another level... ultimately it's a ripple effect!
- I feel as though our region has done a tremendous job at rebounding from the 2008 economic crisis. We have diversified and there are many companies that are hiring. It shouldn't be too hard for people to find jobs
- I feel there is employment however wages are not sufficient to house people and actually get ahead in life. People need their own transportation to travel to work to earn a decent wage but are trapped in a low wage job and cannot afford a vehicle
- I feel there is work available, some low paying jobs in agriculture not appealing to many
- I feel with the new circumstances especially with Covid, many people have suffered either a loss of employment or lack of hours. When dealing with these circumstances it affects the community and economy of our community
- I had recently lost my job of 16 years, mainly due to Covid. It has been difficult to find work in the city that would pay me enough to afford my rent and support myself
- I need to make a good living. I do not have someone to support me
- I personally work in London and so does my husband. A lot of people do. If a similar job were available more locally, I would love a shorter commute. Having close work will help the community in many ways. It will help those already here, help bring people in for a bigger tax base, and will help provide tax to the municipalities from those companies
- I think if people are given a fair wage in encourages many good things, community support, charitable donations, involvement in community. Our wages should be able to buy a house in our own community. We are seeing an exodus of people leaving the cities to enjoy rural lifestyles and find green space. It is in turn driving the costs up for housing. Our local wages in industry and agriculture have stagnated. It is becoming harder for people to find jobs that will provide for their families AND keep a good work/life balance. Well paying jobs are hard to find in our area. In some cases wages have been tiered and that has caused hardships for people starting out in life and high turn over rates for some of the largest employers in our communities. Fair wages and good jobs create healthy communities
- I think there are jobs available, maybe skills workshops could help, but a livable wage is important

- I was a Manager at Marriott and lost my job due to Covid. There are very few to no jobs in the city paying what I was previously making. Please entice new business with good paying jobs to the city
- If people are working at a living wage, it's less strain on welfare, public housing, health related services
- If people can find well paid jobs locally it benefits local merchants and possible bring in additional stores and employment
- If we create opportunities and actually see that people take them instead of remaining on the system we may have a chance of working ourselves out of this
- If we have jobs, we have a stronger more vibrant community. Those who are working contribute to the overall economy, have a stronger commitment to community and generally are more active in their community
- If you have a decent paying job, you feel better about yourself and it has a trickle down effect on your environment, our community and your well being
- If you have an entire town on temporary contracts, or minimum wage retail positions it is hard to get ahead in a meaningful way. There are no health benefits associated with a temporary contract or minimum wage retail position. We need meaningful employment where people are not dreading going to work, or scrounging at their pennies to pay their rent. We need jobs that bring out the best in people and we will have a happier community flourishing. A happy community is a healthy one!
- If you're making a good wage, you feel better about yourself
- I'm underemployed, older, no skills, disability & physical disability With no support. Need money to live
- Important for all
- In these times of C-19 this one is hard for employers and employees
- In your life time you'll be buying ten or more washing machines and how many cars? how can one afford to live and keep up with the growing economy
- Job security is an important component of overall wellness. I could not find work locally so I have to drive to London. I would have preferred to work locally. I am just grateful to have a job so I can spend locally
- job security, economic stability and security is highly important to all families in our community - this affects everything else - positively - if your personal experience is positive and negatively if your personal experience is negative
- Jobs are available but people don't need to work. Handouts don't help in the long run. If a person has no incentive to earn their way they will never get off the social assistance train. Why get your butt out of bed if you get money and food handouts. If people can afford to smoke, drink, do drugs and have high end cell phones they shouldn't get free anything. Help those that are willing to help themselves
- Jobs are the best way to provide support for people and programs. We need to encourage good paying employers to invest in our area
- Lack of employment leads to crime and mental health
- Leads to a vibrant community and the ability for all the invest in the community they live in for example restaurants, access to housing, etc.

- Let's get people back in the fields. Subsidies shouldn't be paid out to people that are able to work
- Lots of work to be had if people are willing to work
- Low wage and unsafe work environment there is work out there if they want it I would like to see it so people working for these temp agencies get paid the same as the worker they are working beside doing same job but paid less should not be allowed by government and town council
- Low wages and not enough jobs lead to other issues (i.e. housing issues). As much as there are new places coming into town, it is still difficult to find a job - let alone one that will pay enough or give you enough hours to afford things like rent and groceries. And then people who have to juggle 2-3 part time jobs are left with no work life balance or desperately in need of more and more childcare, which can also be hard to find let alone afford
- Money makes the world go round
- Most jobs in the community pay minimum wage and people can't make ends meet or even be able to afford rent on a decent place
- Most of the criminals and drug addicts don't normally keep jobs...that's how stupid this question is....
- Most people want meaningful employment
- Most people want to work and contribute. It boosts self esteem and contributes highly to over all health and well being
- Much like housing people need jobs to live. My husband and I are lucky enough to be able to work remotely from home (and did so even before the pandemic) so jobs in the area do not affect us much, however many people do not work in fields that allow that, and everyone should be able to make a living
- My Daughter has had difficulty in getting work
- My husband and I both work elsewhere ... neither of us would be able to find a job in our field here, but they us not why we live here... our teenagers however are struggling to find safe work that is not on a farm
- Need to continue to build employment opportunities for our residents, continue to grow
- Not enough good jobs outside of London
- Opportunities occupy idle hands. Stable, gainful employment improves mental health. Needs being met provides a base for personal growth and development... A positive feedback loop for economic development
- Our community has suffered since the economic downturn of 2008. People who thought they had lifetime employment found themselves without work and often without the education required to re-enter the workforce right away. They had to sell their assets and often ended up needing social assistance that did not cover their basic needs. Clients on Social Assistance are often generationally impacted and even if there are menial, low pay jobs available they have no sense of a work ethic or have no experience of the benefits of work as they have not seen it demonstrated. People feel demoralized at the thought of working for a non-living wage. It is difficult to help people in a "quick" way to see an alternative. It takes years sometimes
- People need good full time jobs with benefits and pensions. This is better for everyone

- People need money to survive, self worth, mental health and general health. Teens are struggling as they compete with all the adults.....covid issues, where does it end?
- People need to be paid more for the jobs they are doing
- People need to work however the government needs to stop making easy to stay home and not work
- People need to work. It's fundamental to maintaining mental health and reducing crime
- People should be hired for more full time jobs so they don't have to get 2-4 jobs!
- Recently some of my family members were let go from Marriott when the call centre closed, and they aren't giving them severance and their vacation pay until Sept 27th, which has put a lot of them in a dilemma of whether or not they should get another job yet. So I think it should be made a priority
- Retail stores should pay associates more, especially after this pandemic, it was extremely hard and still is, customers are rude and working with a mask is awful
- Safe, equitable, inclusive employment leads to better mental health for employees, their families and the greater community
- Self employed
- Serious unemployment and ineffective employment assistance
- So many people are looking for work! or working two jobs just trying to pay regular bills!!
- Some employers do not look past a health issue and discriminate
- St. T is doing much better bringing jobs to our area
- St. Thomas being a much smaller city than London, ON and other surrounding cities, the job opportunities are really lacking and can be harder to come by (most are just trades and / or require a good amount of viable transportation that isn't there)
- Support local businesses and Canadian products
- The city of St. Thomas needs to try to bring in companies that pay a living wage. Even \$18 an hour is nearly impossible to get by on. We need opportunities that pay enough to cover the high living costs in town. When just a 2 bedroom apartment is starting at 1,200+ plus it seems impossible for many in the area to rent at the wages and companies here
- The fact this does not affect me personally does not mean I know of others who are suffering from unemployment, underemployment or low wages. Again this problem is more provincial and federal and people rely on non profits who could use more municipal help
- The story post recession is one of economic hardship, however over the last decade this community has done a great deal of work to bring businesses back to the downtown core, and support economic growth and industry. There are a large number of jobs available in our community, however the challenge we face relates to those jobs not matching the skills available. As industry moves more towards automation and robotics more emphasis needs to be placed on supporting STEM skills in our community. Places like the STEAM Centre need to be celebrated and highlighted as community assets that can help bridge this gap
- There are always jobs. You just need to want to work. The jobs are not always the best but you can get something to tide you over if you actually want to work
- There are few job opportunities in the West Elgin area forcing people to travel. When they travel outside the area they also use services and shop outside the area. Encourage industry to expand to the outer areas of Elgin but there will also have to be infrastructure in place to

support them. Councils will have to be diligent in their efforts to move along permits, etc. to encourage and support new businesses

- There are growing opportunities for employment in our area and employers are having difficulty filling some vacancies
- There are jobs available but there are issues: - People don't have the transportation to get to the job. - People don't have the education or skills needed. - There needs to be a fair wage rate set. - Employers need to step up and pay more.
- There are jobs out there but wages too low
- There are many job opportunities in St. T (my neighbour has been offered numerous posts and I know many who drive to London for lucrative full time positions) and it's not a far drive to London for teaching and other professional opportunities. I'm not sure either that some of the employment incentive programs are appropriate, unless it's for handicapped or extremely under skilled hires
- There are many jobs out in St. Thomas area some just don't want to work when they get paid more to stay home
- There are more jobs than housing. The problem is getting full time employment. Too many people working several jobs to make ends meet
- There are probably more jobs available at present due to COVID-19 but time will tell
- There aren't many jobs in St. Thomas unless you want to work for minimum wage. I've lived in St. Thomas for 10 years and worked in St. Thomas for maybe 3 months of those 10 years because there are no jobs in my field (I'm a bookkeeper)
- There is a lot of work around, and fairly good work too. This is very positive for the community. Less work to lure students back to Aylmer after they graduate and that has a negative impact. So much work around and we have a good system to connect employer and employee
- There is next to no jobs in this town and the ones there are it's not good pay and normally part time. It makes it hard for people trying to change their lives around to get ahead
- There should be more jobs and help for the unemployed to get education to procure better jobs. Equal pay
- This is another I am not sure I can address. My husband and I both work remotely from home for different companies, so the job market in the community is completely off my radar
- This place is becoming a retirement region for Torontonians that sell their billion dollar houses and never have to work again. AND it is also just a bedroom town. Yes there are jobs in the retail/food services that don't pay enough to buy those ridiculously priced houses. And some factory jobs are still here. It just seems like there is a lack of a good future here for younger people. What's keeping them in St Thomas...their parents and their friends and that great job
- To be a well and happy person the need of sustaining employment is a real issue
- To keep our communities thriving we need to attract employers so there are jobs in the communities we live in
- Too many Friends and Their Children have lost jobs

- Transit from small outlying towns would be of great help to the un/under employed. There are few to no jobs but it is much less expensive to live here. And those with low income cannot afford vehicles and their upkeep. Plus transit would make the roads safer (less drivers) and would have a HUGE positive environmental impact
- Unemployment has an overreaching affect on all of society... more than it ought to, and far more than is necessary. More equal distribution of society's overall wealth would level most of this effect, but that's a hard sell. We've been conditioned from birth to strive for personal success, which is almost entirely equated with financial wealth. A guaranteed basic income would address all of these issues, with very positive results. It is a logical and practical approach... particularly in light of exponentially rapid advances in robotics and artificial intelligence
- Unemployment is an issue that affects everyone. Education and availability to money for further education is key to enable people to move forward with their career dreams. Some manufacturing jobs have been lost in Elgin and we haven't really been able to catch back up. Access to job opportunities in Elgin seem limited and access to well paying jobs seems even more limited. Skills assessments with local employment resources can help link individual that need jobs with employers who need their skills
- Unemployment leads to mental health issues / lack of \$ for individuals/ loss of housing for people - it gallons into greater issues for the community
- We all have good jobs. Lots of jobs out there if you want to work
- We are self employed, work online at home, so no problem for us but I've heard young people have a tough time getting a job especially with minimal skills
- We are very fortunate to live in a municipality with access to the agricultural community, that has good job opportunities at all levels
- We have a chronic issue of local employers not committing to employees and preferring to use placement agencies. The community deserves steady employment and to continue to work after the three month probation
- We have lost Ford, Sterling and more jobs, people with trades and families and mortgages can't survive by working at money mart. This town has no good jobs. My husband has two trades and has been through 5 business closures in the past 10 years. We are barely staying afloat. We need to secure more development and make hydro more affordable to bring jobs back here. Why can't we manufacture our own medicines and supplies and not rely on China and other countries? We have put ourself in a bad position, no one wants to be in Canada and start a business, covid hasn't helped at all
- We have lost a lot of good industry in our area. Its slow to return - big issue
- We have seen the impact job loss has had on our community with plant closures and how that trickled down to the service sector. I believe it's time for the community governments to lead the way in job equity
- We need a transit plan to help people in the area get to jobs in other towns when they don't drive
- We need to attract more industry with good paying jobs to the area. Companies need to be pushed to use less temporary services like HCR and hire more full time people. Companies have no respect for temp workers. They are being used like prostitutes. It's wrong!! Also

when there was lots of good paying jobs in St. Thomas neighborhoods were safer and cleaner. When those jobs left (freightliner, ford plant) neighborhoods went downhill fast. One of the reasons I moved out of St. Thomas

- We need to look closely. There are people who are on social assistance and the incentive to work for some individuals may be limited. People working for minimum wage, it is very difficult for them to get ahead. Why would someone work if they are on social assistance, living in subsidized housing, when another person may work and not be able to afford housing. Difficult situation
- When and if jobs stay the community prosper
- When people are employed, they are happier and therefore leads to a safer community. There is less time to become involved in crime or unfavourable situations
- While my income is fairly secure (retired) many in the community do not have a secure income source. Some are working more than one job. Many are working at poverty levels (minimum wage). With a minimum wage at \$14 an hour a fair and equitable wage is something many will not see. It disgusts me that we now describe a family provider working a fulltime at minimum wage as "working poor". The dream of home ownership, or sometimes reasonable living standards are out of reach of many families
- While this doesn't affect our household we left St. Thomas as young adults for work and returned 35 years later to retire close to family-I feel St. Thomas is doing better at bringing in jobs since the collapse of the auto industry (ford). I feel that housing prices and rents on the rise could influence people not being able to keep their roots here in St. Thomas - there needs to be a balance so lower income workers can also live here-there seems to be cheaper rents and more selection of availability in London which could force those public service worker to move to jobs in London if they can't find housing here-kudos for allowing smart centres to open more establishments here but we need to make sure we have housing for our workers
- Without employment- you don't have money- you don't have money you won't have food or a home!
- Without employment, there will be no future for the community
- Work makes one feel as if one is a contributor not just a useless lump
- Working promotes choices and independence

Attachment H: Comments about Internet Access and Digital Literacy

(Respondents from West Elgin, Dutton Dunwich, Malahide)

- In to-day's world this is as essential as safe drinking water or access to hydro
- We live in a very technical world and everyone in the community should have access to this and or training to use it
- As a family that lives in the rural community, so much has been unfair for quite some time (speed and pricing for what we get). We have a small business. Our internet is lacking and now with having education sectors online, things will have to change with that or our children/grandchildren will fall behind other students
- Living in a rural community the access to internet is sparse - for example my internet provider went out of business and we had one month to find another provider / choices were few and far between and what was available was certainly not feasible or fast enough - especially running a home business and now with online learning makes it even more difficult for families and much needed internet access
- Keeping the free library access would be a good way to provide this service.... Rural internet is intermittent and expensive
- Seems it is required every where from school to work
- Through the pandemic it has come to light that there are many rural areas without access to good or even any internet. This will have a detrimental affect on education and health if the government is moving towards making digital access the norm for these services. In the grand scheme of things, I do not think that this outweighs the need for basic food and shelter. I think that this is a service best delivered by a provider with municipal funds being directed to sustaining lower income persons who cannot afford to access these integrated systems. This might be part of Social Services funding like child care or OW. Perhaps all the money being invested in this area would be better redirected to basic needs rather than infrastructure that is better done by the private sector
- Highly important for students in rural areas during the pandemic. How do we clean up social media from inaccuracies without becoming "thought police"? How do we discourage people from being so narcissist (Selfish / me first mentality) on social media? Teach media safety skills at a young age
- Being connected through the internet is important now a days. Almost all that we do is connected to it
- Having access to web sites and information leads to a better understanding of problems. But also can lead to misinformation
- As a result of COVID-19 I believe more supports will be offered virtually resulting in the needs for education on virtual platforms
- We are lucky to have fibre in west Elgin but all internet is very expensive. After Covid rural internet needs to be priority
- Many families living in rural areas of Elgin do not have access to high speed internet. Education and work from home are severely impacted
- In rural towns we have limited access to internet and it is expensive yet it is required now for all jobs and programs yet we still have poor access

- The pandemic greatly exacerbated the connectivity issues and lack of access to wi-fi services in our rural communities
- Access to internet and affordable internet are issues for the rural communities in our area. It's hard if you're stuck at home in Aylmer to communicate with people "live" in larger communities. It made it hard for us to communicate with family in urban areas. Our internet was slow and we pay way more than these family members in urban areas. There is a lack of competition in our area and it has created a slow moving internet monopoly in our area. If you're a stock broker working from home during Covid in Aylmer. It's going to be frustrating to talk to clients or bosses in large urban communities
- We need to teach people to understand the effects of digital media and force media outlets to stop encouraging division
- Province/Federal government needs to cap cell phone/data/internet company rates. Affordable internet should be a basic need and has been deemed such. It is currently unaffordable.
- Some rural areas don't have reliable internet. Prices need to be more competitive
- Now, with the pandemic, internet literacy would be a huge advantage. Access to internet including those living in low income, older age adults (education) would benefit most at this time
- Lack of internet access across the whole County is a detriment to community safety and well being. Online access to the ever growing list of digital resources and services is important and necessary
- You need internet to do most things these days, there are children who live in homes without it and need to be able to have resources to access it
- Need to keep pace with the rest of the world. Whether it be for sourcing items we can't find locally, education or employment opportunities not available locally. And it's critical to maintain communication with family and friends
- We need more internet providers in Aylmer area
- Eastlink is a dreadful company with terrible customer service and outrageous pricing. Honestly I hate them. We need competition in this area. We need consistent service so kids can do their studies online especially during Covid when many may not go back to school. Something needs to be done about this
- Rural access to internet needs to be improved
- Access to reliable, AFFORDABLE high speed internet has become a basic necessity

Attachment I: Comments about Physical Health Issues

(Respondents from Dutton Dunwich and Malahide)

- Most 'problems' are self inflicted; like over-eating or lack of exercise. We could use more medical professionals; due, to access issues; however, citizens must also accept responsibility for their own personal decisions and not expect others to solve their problems for them
- The availability of medical resources in our community should be one of the top 3... people should not have to drive out of their own community to access this type of service. Specialized care and information for all types of people in city, town, and rural locations should be a standard
- Doctors are very hard to get into, or harder to find a new one taking on new patients. As for dentist, we have never had insurance coverage, so it is expensive to keep up with regular appointments, and regular eye doctor appointments as well
- Clearly if this is lacking for the community - the well-being of others it needs to be addressed as if not it will spiral into something else
- Ensuring access to physicians and specialists within our communities is important for equitable health and mental health services
- Everyone should have good health care system and financial means to it without worry to have to choose from a roof over your head to food on the table in order to get what you need medically
- Rural communities have less resources and focus these on the must haves where many of the items related to physical health are considered nice to have. These are not prioritized and therefore there are less opportunities for rural individuals to engage in physical activity. Many clubs and local groups rely on volunteers and after a while these individuals move on because they lose their enthusiasm or get burnt out. Not everyone wants to drive half an hour to St. Thomas to exercise since it is costly to do so
- Once again, root cause analysis is important. Just some ideas, but diabetes is an under-diagnosed killer. Excessively sugared foods need to be taxed higher to pay for the health care costs diabetes causes. All foods need to list not just sugar per serving, but should also list "added sugar" per serving - as in the USA. Taxes on marijuana should be higher than tobacco and alcohol. What about people that opt out of vaccinations? How will this work for Covid 19? For example, not enough information is released by media to prove that the amount of mercury in vaccinations is minuscule. Conspiracy theorists not effectively debunked on social media. Thus the conspiracy theorists are winning the publicity war!
- Physical health contributes to many factors, social well being, mental health and so on
- Health care should be a priority. Access to a healthcare provider is a basic necessity to maintain health. Chronic illnesses are on the rise. Education on things like nutrition and exercise is good. Our resources for our most vulnerable population need to meet the growing number of elderly in our community and help protect our youngest from developing bad life choices
- Wait times and lack of existence in the medical profession and the services provided need to be addressed

- Not enough family doctors, many are without physicians or health care providers, without health insurance, people don't have affordable access to dentists. Vaccines will become an issue with COVID-19
- Attracting new doctors is a huge problem everywhere. Many retiring doctors have no replacement and peoples health becomes at risk due to this
- Physical health is including access to healthy, affordable fresh fruits and vegetables/healthy diet impacts many chronic disease. The typical resident in Elgin County St. Thomas does not eat the appropriate amount of fruits and vegetables, which will lead to chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease, stroke, etc. These issues are apparent in Elgin St. Thomas and the main issue is that food is unaffordable. With the COVID-19 pandemic, food prices are increasing and job losses/etc. are on the rise. Food insecurity is a huge issue in Canada, Ontario and Elgin - St. Thomas. Food insecurity is expected to double by the end of 2020 (now at 4.4 million expected to be at 8.8 million by end of 2020). This will impact access to a healthy diet, which can lead to mental health issues, chronic disease etc. Access to physicians in Elgin County is a huge issue at this time
- Healthy people are more able to take care of themselves. Physical health impacts mental health
- For example right now I feel we don't have the same access to covid19 testing
- It took us FOUR YEARS to get a doctor here! That is so wrong on every level
- Healthy community members, healthy community... it starts with access and education
- Well my husband just had a stroke and his immune system is very low
- Fix the other elements and this falls into place
- Access to timely family doctors for all residents is a concern and needs to be available