



# Welcoming Streets

PRESENTED BY LUISA SORRENTINO  
BELLEVILLE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT BIA

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Welcoming Streets pilot program in Guelph was initiated in response to concerns around public substance use, discarded drug paraphernalia, public intoxication and escalated behaviour around local businesses that did not always require police intervention.- WS Guelph

- Peer outreach worker(s) with lived and/or living experience with addiction, mental health and/or homelessness
- Offer outreach services that include:
  - Coordinated care plans
  - Supporting individuals in a variety of venues and targeted areas
  - Act as a advocate by providing assistance in accessing local supports
  - Respond to business concerns
  - Provide resources and education to both businesses and individuals
  - Build and maintain business relationships



# Program Goals

1. Establish & Foster Positive Relationships
1. Support with Systems Navigation & Connection to Services
1. Community Education and Prevention Planning
1. Provide effective De-escalation Support
1. To Enhance Community Safety



# FUNDING

In Belleville, this was funded in its entirety by Hastings County, in the amount of 70K in 2021 and 70K in 2022



# IMPACT

1. **Stronger engagement** between businesses and the community service sector
1. **Deeper understanding** of mental health and addictions and the types of support services available
1. **Raised awareness**, leading to an increase in more positive interactions and improved relationships between business owners and vulnerable population
1. **Stronger connections** and rapport building, leading to increased access to support services

## Welcoming Streets

JUNE - DECEMBER 2021



**100+ MEETINGS**

WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES  
AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
TO FURTHER SUPPORT AN  
INTEGRATIVE APPROACH



**OVER 280**

UNIQUE INTERACTIONS  
WITH INDIVIDUALS  
EXPERIENCING  
HOMELESSNESS



CONNECTIONS MADE WITH

**64 INDIVIDUALS**

EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

AN ESTIMATED

**85+ CALLS**



TO BPS AVOIDED BY OFFERING  
CRISIS INTERVENTION  
SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE



MORE THAN

**140 REFERRALS**

MADE TO COMMUNITY  
SUPPORTS AND SERVICES



**20+ TRAINING SESSIONS**

FACILITATED AND SHARED  
WITH BUSINESSES IN  
COLLABORATION WITH  
CORE PARTNERS



# PARTICIPANTS/PARTNERS



## Roles

### **Sara-Welcoming Streets Steward**

- Establish a rapport with members of the community in order to respond to situations that may require de-escalation and/or referrals to additional support
- Direct outreach
- Case Management
- Provide resources and education to businesses and community members that include:
  - De-escalation tip training
  - Mental Health and Addictions resources and training
  - Naloxone kits and training
  - Safe needle handling and supplies
  - Trespass to Property Act Support
- Systems navigation and referrals

### **BDIA**

- Suggestions on how to improve the downtown customer experience
- Ideas on how to change public perception of downtown Belleville

### **Belleville Polices Services**

- Welcoming Streets Steward is unavailable and you've been directed to make contact
- Immediate threat to the safety of the individual or others
- Witnessing a crime or a crime is in progress
- Emergency
- Trespass to Property Act
- IMPACT/Mental Health Support

# INNOVATION REPLICATION REPRESENTATION OUTCOME ACCESSIBILITY AND CONCLUSION

In supporting unsheltered and vulnerable individuals through **direct outreach**, individuals may access services faster. This **immediacy** results in:

- An understanding of various referral processes & appointment facilitation between client and service
- Client advocacy, person-centred care and acknowledgement of lived and living experiences
- Positive and empathetic interactions between business and individual
- The development of meaningful trusting relationships
- Reduction in calls to local police department & a proactive approach to supporting others
- Reduction in potentially violent situations
- Stronger sense of community and inclusivity
- Community partnerships (businesses and social service sector)
- Cohesive approach and a reduction in the duplication of services provided



If you need support with a situation in Downtown Belleville, please contact Sara

**Sara Behring**  
**Welcoming Streets Steward**

Monday - Friday (occasional Saturday)  
8:30AM-4:30PM  
905-933-3755  
welcome@downtownbelleville.ca



## Welcoming Streets

in Downtown Belleville

### Call Sara for:

- De-escalation support and tips
- Client support/referrals
- Safety & security resources
- Drug paraphernalia removal
- Client safety concerns (drug/alcohol use)
- Client sleeping on your property
- Community education

### Call 911 for:

- Medical emergencies
- Criminal activity and/or theft

### 24/7 Supports:

- QHC Crisis Intervention Center at **613-969-7400, Ext. 2753** when in crisis
- 211 Ontario at 1-877-330-3213 for local community and social services
- 310-OPEN at 613-310-6736 for addictions and mental health support
- Belleville Police Services (BPS) for Wellness Checks and Non-Emergent calls at 613-966-0882 Ext. 0
- Emergency Housing Hastings County at 613-771-9630, after hours at 1-877-528-9514
- Three Oaks Foundation - 24hr crisis line at 613-966-3074

### Additional Supports:

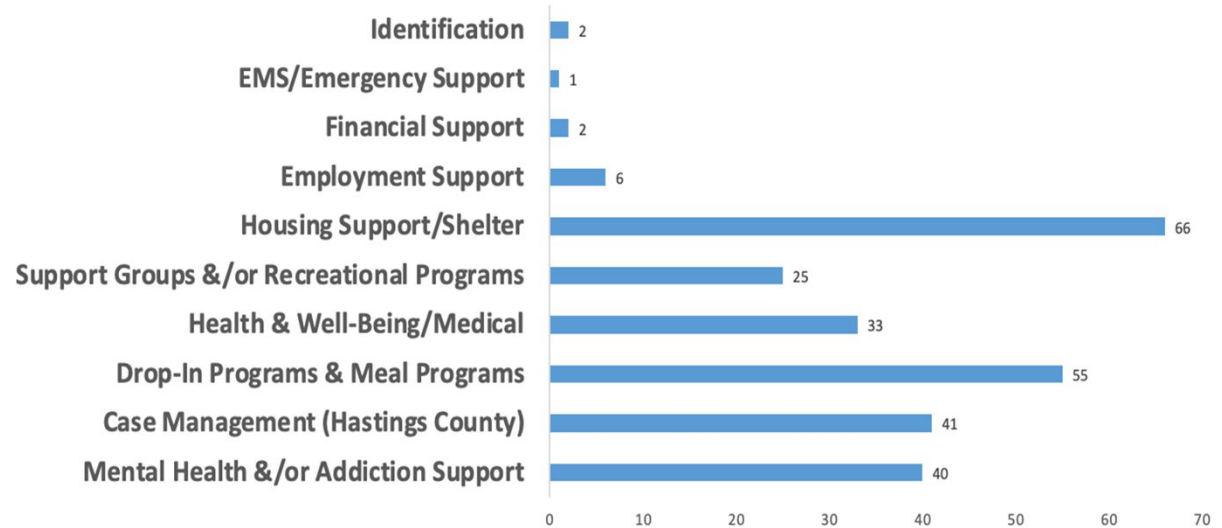
- Addictions & Mental Health Services HPE Belleville at 613-967-4734
- John Howard Society Belleville at 613-968-6628
- Ontario Addiction Treatment Centre at 613-969-7862
- Belleville & Quinte West Community Health Centre at 613-962-0000
- Hastings Housing Resource Centre at 613-969-1748



# Welcoming Streets Today

- Received and responded to >120 calls from downtown businesses alone
- Engaged in >320 unique situations downtown
- >270 referrals made to local services
- Received an estimated 18 calls from local service agencies for assistance

Supports and Referrals to Date

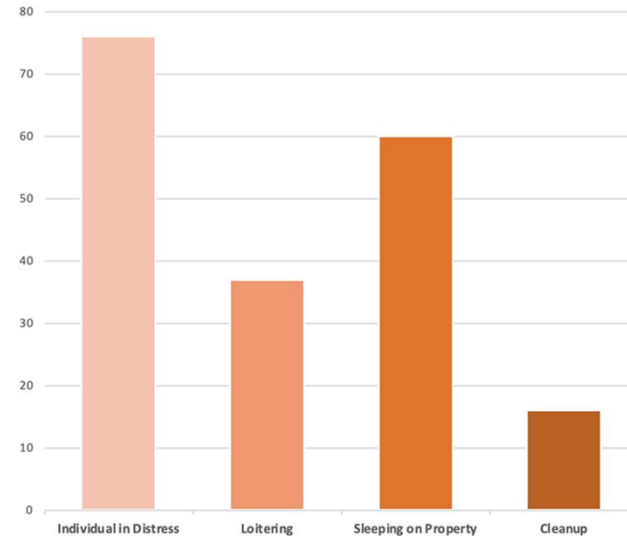


# Welcoming Streets Today

## Direct Outreach: Top 4 Calls for Service

1. Individual in distress
2. Loitering
3. Individual is sleeping on property
4. City cleanup

Top 4 Calls for Service



# Welcoming Streets Today

## Membership Involvement & Awareness

- Welcoming Streets and HPE Public Health have delivered and trained **7** businesses in how to administer **Life-Saving medication**, with **3** businesses have received safe needle handling supplies, with more businesses signed up.
- Through the Welcoming Streets Initiative **18 workshops** have been offered with approximately **54 participants** on topics such as de-escalation, mental health and addictions, trauma-informed practice, and harm-reduction.
- **7 local businesses** have partnered with Welcoming Streets, **offering goods and services** to those in need.

# Welcoming Streets Today

## Community Support



“Sara is a friendly and helpful presence who is providing resources to folks who have often given up trying to navigate a series of systems that are often complicated and difficult to navigate at the best of times. Sara is a beacon of hope and we hope we can help her shine brightly for as long as she is able to do her work in the Downtown.” - Stacey Kerr, Scalliwag Toys

“Thanks for all of the work you are doing, it is very helpful.” -Downtown Business

“Welcoming Streets is already proving to be an integral addition to our Downtown Belleville community's toolbox. Sara's one on one conflict resolution guidance has already helped us with some event-related aspects of our business that helps us as owners feel more prepared to provide an even better experience for our customers.” - Stacey Kerr, Scalliwag Toys

“As head of security at the Belleville Public Library, I can speak to the importance of Sara Berhings work with us downtown. She fosters an important link that allows us to deal with vulnerable people in our area. Getting those people the assistance they need, whilst allowing us to get to know those individuals. It's a team effort, and Sara and the street Steward program provide a vital step in community outreach.” - Jeff Bentley, Maxima Security

“We have noticed an improvement in our public spaces and Sara has been doing an amazing job working with local clients and acting as a liaison between the Library and members of the public who are experiencing homelessness and other challenges.”- Trevor Pross, CEO Belleville Public Library and John M. Parrott Art Gallery