

Niagara Research and Planning Council (NRPC)

- The NRPC was formed in 2005 as concerned citizens felt the need to examine the assets and challenges of living in Niagara, how they affect our citizens and communities and to make a “call to action for a better Niagara”.
- The NRPC identified that there were challenges to obtaining reliable community-based data.
- The NRPC was committed to developing an integrated planning approach for Niagara.
- Eleven areas critical to quality of life were chosen for the focus of this initial report which are:
 - Arts, Culture and Heritage in Niagara
 - Transportation and Getting Around Niagara
 - Environment of Niagara
 - Education in Niagara
 - Housing and shelter in Niagara
 - Safety and security in Niagara
 - Health and wellness in Niagara
 - Work and Employment in Niagara
 - Income, Prosperity and Poverty in Niagara
 - Belonging and Leadership in Niagara
 - Getting Started in Niagara
- Funders were also looking for evidence of integrated planning and service delivery among the not-for-profit organizations.

- The initial planning group's goal was to create an environment, Niagara-wide, which would support the community in moving forward on integrated social planning and action.
- **Living in Niagara – 2008** provides the community with the information required to make informed decisions on which issues can be substantially addressed in a targeted way to make Niagara's future stronger, healthier and more sustainable for everyone.
- The report and the Integrated Social Planning mechanism provides a framework to:
 - Determine key issues and priorities in Niagara
 - Provide research and statistics on key issues
 - Create and maintain a community report card
 - Measure the well-being of Niagara
 - Build and strengthen community via a commitment to social development and change
 - Maximize current social resources in Niagara
 - Provide a common voice
 - Create an interface for Regional, Provincial and Federal connections
- There are 23 *Niagara-wide* agencies presently engaged that have provided resources and expertise to the project since its inception.
- The role of the public is to provide comments, insights and questions on issues identified in the report and to become involved by participating in the areas they feel strongly about.
- **Living In Niagara – 2008** is financially supported by a collaboration of Niagara funders, including the Niagara Community Foundation, Bridges Community Health Centre, Opportunities Niagara, United Way of St. Catharines and District, Ontario Trillium Foundation, and the Niagara Region. Material in the report was prepared by Dr. Heather Lee Kilty of the Leadership Institute and Brock University.

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