



**SECC**  
SOUTH ESSEX COMMUNITY COUNCIL

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

2014 -2017

## I. BACKGROUND

In 1973 a group of concerned citizens articulated the need for social services to assist individuals in the Southeastern sector of Essex County. In June 1976, Letters Patent were issued which established the South Essex Community Council for the following (summarized) purposes:

- to meet the needs and problems of individuals and the community
- to co-ordinate and direct existing services
- to encourage the provision of needed services in the community
- to meet needs and problems which are of ethnic, economic, social or other origin.

South Essex was defined as the municipalities of Leamington, Kingsville and Chatham-Kent.

Since 1976 the organization (SECC) has grown significantly in programs, staff and financial assistance. Currently in its 40<sup>th</sup> year of service, SECC employs 60 full and part time staff. It is supported by an annual budget of \$3.7 million dollars which is provided by eight (8) separate funding sources at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. Additional funds are secured through internal fundraising, primarily through events. Many programs are also supported by the 425 volunteers who assist with program delivery.

SECC provides services in three separate locations: Leamington, Kingsville and Windsor under four (4) broad categories: a) Language and Settlement; b) Employment and Training; c) Community Home Support Services; and d) Support Services. See Appendix A for a full listing of programs and services.

SECC's operating budget is funded through a variety of sources. They are:

### a) Federal

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada \$730,000

### b) Provincial

- Ministry of Health and Long Term Care/ Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) \$617,561
- Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities \$1,723,127
- Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration \$56,231

### c) Municipal

- Municipalities of Chatham-Kent \$1,261
- Municipality of the Town of Leamington \$13,207
- Municipality of Kingsville \$6,724

<b>d) Fundraising</b>	
• Diamonds and Denim	\$28,000
• Chillifest	\$8,000
<b>e) Private Donations</b>	\$10,500
<b>f) User Fees</b>	\$277,885

Governance is provided by a volunteer Board of Directors, who meet monthly, and through the activities of the Board through its Executive, Finance and Governance Committees.

In 2009, the Board of Directors initiated the development of a strategic plan that was developed by a Strategic Planning Task Force. The Task Force was jointly chaired by the Chair of the Board’s Governance Committee and the Executive Director, and included the Manager of Human Resources, one department coordinator and up to four other staff members, all from different departments. This was to ensure the input of all SECC staff in the development of the strategic plan, something that had been lack in previous strategic planning exercises.

The Task Force worked well, so when it was time to re-new the strategic plan and begin setting priorities, the Board appointed 3 board members to the task force and asked the Executive Director to seek out 4 staff members to engage in the strategic planning process for 2014-17.

Over the past three years, much work has been done to ensure the new mission, vision and values statements developed in the 2011-14 strategic plan are a part of the fabric of SECC. Some good progress has been made, particularly as it pertains to the mission and values. See Appendix B for the Mission, Vision and Values.

## **II. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

The strategic planning process consisted of the following activities:

- Board review of the 2011-14 Strategic Plan
- Appointment of the task force
- Environmental analysis (staff satisfaction survey, SWOT analysis, volunteer survey, Fundraising Task Force report, 2013 Community Needs Assessment Report)
- Identifying priorities
- Developing an action plan

### **III. SECC STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE**

The Task Force consisted of the following members from SECC:

- Darcey Bendig, Program Leader, Employment Connections
- Anne Marie Boutros, Board member
- Stephe Gard, Welcoming Communities Program
- Bryon Gero, Chairperson, SECC Board of Directors
- Maria Gomer, Vice Chair, SECC Board of Directors
- Carolyn Warkentin, Executive Director
- Noreen Wiebe, Program Leader, Volunteer Services
- Mark Wybenga, Department Coordinator, Community Home Support Services

The mandate of the Task Force was:

- to develop a new three-year strategic plan and strategic direction for the years 2014-2017
- to include all staff in the development of the plan and strategic directions
- to encourage intra agency communication and ideas leading to the development of a new strategic plan
- to prepare an implementation plan for the strategic directions with measurable objectives.

**IV. REVIEW OF THE 2011-14 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The SECC Board of Directors evaluated the performance measures of the strategic plan and the overall performance of the board and agency with respect to accomplishing the goals set out in the 2011-14 Work Plan. This evaluation occurred on October 22, 2013.

**Strategic Priority #1: PROMOTION**

Objectives	Activities	Performance Measures
<p><b>Develop a comprehensive agency-wide marketing strategy.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Position paper describing the type of strategy to be used, who will be targeted and how this will be accomplished.</li> <li>2. Develop a plan               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Social Media Policy</li> <li>b) Re-branding project</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Develop a budget to implement the strategy</li> </ol>	<p>Increased community awareness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 15% increase in community outreach activities (2013); 25% increase by 2014</li> <li>b) 15% increase in # of volunteers recruited (2013); 25% increase by 2014</li> </ol> <p>Client Satisfaction Surveys</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 85% of clients report they are satisfied with the service they receive</li> </ol>

**Evaluation:**

The Board agreed that more work is needed, although a good many things were accomplished in this strategic plan. The development of a communication strategy will be a critical piece of the next strategic plan and moving this priority forward. It was agreed that enormous steps have been taken to make SECC more visible in the community.

Work is needed to ensure consistency with client satisfaction surveys. Currently, most programs are doing them independently, but we have no definitive and consistent way of proving that our services are better than other service providers.

There is also a challenge in keeping staff abreast of programs delivered by SECC. When there is turnover or movement between departments, this can become difficult to manage. It was suggested that program information be a part of the employee handbook.

## Strategic Priority #2: FUND DEVELOPMENT

Objectives	Outcomes	Performance Measures
<b>Seek out innovative partnerships with local businesses</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Position paper which identifies the types of local businesses to be targeted</li> <li>2. A detailed plan which describes how local businesses will be approached and by whom</li> </ol>	Establish 1 new business partnerships by March 31, 2014
<b>Develop a culture of giving in the agency</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agreement to serve signed by Board members.</li> <li>2. Provide staff the opportunity to assign donations to SECC</li> <li>3. Provide staff education re: donations to the agency.</li> </ol>	20 % increase in staff/board giving for 2012
<b>Develop a strategic plan for fund development</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss event planning vs donor centred approach to fund development at board level</li> <li>2. Create a board chaired Task Force to develop a strategic plan.</li> <li>3. Develop and approve a Fund Development Plan</li> <li>4. Hire a fund developer</li> </ol>	Comprehensive Fund Raising Plan that will increase corporate and private donations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% in 2013</li> <li>• 40% in 2014</li> </ul> Increase government funding by 10-15%

### Evaluation:

Although the action of establishing a culture of giving did not achieve what was initially forecast, the board discussed some other ways to promote this. Some suggestions included:

- Setting up a system for paying memberships
- Sending out an annual donation letter (at the same time each year)
- Sending out information to volunteers

It was also discussed that the lack of participation may be telling us something about the way staff are feeling and about the organizational culture itself. The Board agreed it may be worth surveying the staff to get some insight. It was suggested that volunteering should be considered in the culture of giving. It was also recognized that staff are often asked to donate funds to other causes by co-workers or within the organization. They may be “tapped out”. It was suggested that perhaps the organization should come up with an annual plan for giving so that staff are able to plan.

Overall, the board felt that significant progress had been made with respect to moving this priority forward. The organization will need to ensure that it takes into account,

recommendations made in the Fund Raising Task Force Report and moves those forward in the new strategic plan.

**Strategic Priority #3: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
<b>Conduct a Community Needs Assessment</b>	1. Conduct a needs assessment; publish the results	Understanding of gaps in service  Development of plan to address the gaps identified by assessment  New service delivery collaborations  New programs/initiatives/system integrations
<b>Develop an orientation and training program for employees</b>	1. Conduct an assessment of current practices and policies regarding orientation and training; identify training priorities  2. Develop a comprehensive plan for orientation of new staff and on-going training for all staff.	
<b>Develop a strategic plan for fund development</b>	5. Discuss event planning vs donor centred approach to fund development at board level  6. Create a board chaired Task Force to develop a strategic plan.  7. Develop and approve a Fund Development Plan  8. Hire a fund developer	Comprehensive Fund Raising Plan that will increase corporate and private donations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% in 2013</li> <li>• 40% in 2014</li> </ul> Increase government funding by 10-15%

**Evaluation:**

The board felt that significant improvements were made with respect to this priority. Policy development over the past three years has been good, and very good training and orientation program has been developed. This will need on-going monitoring. The board also discussed the challenge of establishing a plan for moving staff into leadership positions, once we have established clear expectations through job descriptions and performance evaluations.

The Community Needs Assessment Report will play a critical role in the development of the next strategic plan.

## **V. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN**

The ENVIRONMENTAL scan phase consisted of discussion and consultation with board, staff and volunteers. The following resources and activities provided additional information:

### **A) Fundraising Task Force Report**

The Board of Directors identified fund development as a priority in its strategic plan for 2011-13, and assembled a Task Force of SECC staff and board members. The Task Force's mandate was to evaluate current fundraising strategies, make recommendations to the Board of Directors and put together a strategic plan for fund development. The following recommendations were made:

- 1) Hire a fundraising coordinator
- 2) Develop fundraising policies
- 3) Develop a communication strategy that coincides with SECC's new brand and overall marketing plan.
- 4) Develop a donor program.
- 5) Look for opportunities to partner with other non-profits in fundraising endeavors.
- 6) Conduct feasibility studies on existing programs to evaluate the potential for generating new revenue through service delivery and user fees

### **B) Community Needs Assessment**

South Essex Community Council conducted a Community Needs Assessment in 2013 as part of the previous strategic plan. The report included demographic information regarding the communities SECC serves. This information can be found in Appendix C.

The Community Needs Assessment Report made the following recommendations:

1. Conduct additional research on the needs of area youth.
2. Develop better partnerships with area schools.
3. Develop a business plan to expand transportation services for those who need it.
4. Develop a partnership with Economic Development to help increase the number of good employment opportunities.
5. Poverty Advocacy
6. Develop a comprehensive outreach plan.
7. Advocate for better mental health and addictions services in the County.
8. Further explore the need for emergency shelter and engage partners to develop a plan for possible development and implementation.



### C) Volunteer/Client Survey

A volunteer/client survey was distributed to get feedback on how volunteers and clients see SECC.

There were a total of 77 surveys completed.

Questions included:

1. When you think of SECC, what words come to mind?  
Top 5 trending words/phrases used to describe SECC:  
Helpful/helping/help; service; community; good; friendly;  
caring/kind/compassionate
2. What would you say are SECC's greatest strengths?  
Top 5 trending words/phrases/ideas to describe SECC's strengths:  
Helping/helpful/help; Staff; Accessibility (hours, location, many services under one roof); Kind/caring/nice; friendly
3. In our 2013 Community Needs Assessment, SECC pin-pointed eight recommendations. From the list below, please choose the top three priorities that you think SECC should be involved in.
  - Develop partnerships to help increase the number of good employment opportunities
  - Address the needs of low-income individuals
  - Advocate for better mental health and addictions services in the County
4. Promotion and Outreach continue to be in the forefront of SECC's strategic plan. What suggestions do you have to improve promotion and community outreach?
  - Develop partnerships
  - Continue accessible/flexible hours
  - Advertising (radio, newspaper, posters, flyers, etc.)
  - Speak to churches; do presentations in churches

Several respondents commented that they felt SECC was already well known in the community.

5. SECC's values are Service, Education, Compassion and Collaboration. Please rate SECC on each of the value statements listed below, with 1 being the lowest rating and 4 being the highest.

Service=3.6

Education=3.6  
Compassion=3.7  
Collaboration=3.6

**D) Priorities Identified by the Board of Directors**

- Marketing
- Fund Development
- Exploring new programs/new opportunities
- Youth programming
- Staff Training, succession planning staff development, further leadership development
- Advocacy

**E) Priorities Identified by the Staff**

- Improving staff/management relations
- Program Development/Relevance
- Increasing the number of programs
- Promotion
- Developing partnerships
- Dealing with addictions
- Poverty
- Foster innovation

**F) Issues and Trends which will likely Impact SECC programs in the future**

- constant changes with funders; less money to do more
- change of government
- changing funder initiatives may not fit with SECC's mandate
- need for secure, non-government funds
- growing appetite for social enterprise
- Heinz closure
- slow economic growth and high unemployment
- aging population
- continuing pressure and sector expectations for services to be delivered by professional, trained and qualified staff (staff recruitment and retention)

**VI. PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE TASK FORCE**

Three priorities were identified by the Strategic Planning Task Force. The following lists those priorities along with themes or categories that will be developed throughout the life

of the 2014-17 Strategic Plan.

**1) Program Development**

- Develop new and innovative programming
- Further Develop SECC's Volunteer Services Program
- Explore Trends/Gaps in Service

**2) Fund Development**

- Membership
- Fundraising

**3) Communication—Marketing, Community Outreach & Advocacy**

- Community Committees
- Communication
- Outreach
- Client Service

These priorities were identified as a result of the environmental scan and consultation with board and staff.

The 2014-17 Work Plan outlines the specifics around how the above-mentioned priorities will be carried out over the next 3 years.

**VII. CONCLUSION**

The SECC Board of Directors is very pleased with the work that has been done to develop the 2014-17 Strategic Plan. Evaluation of the plan will be on-going, with reports made to the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan will also be outlined in the Annual Service Plan, a document that will be used by board and staff to evaluate overall performance of individuals, programs, departments and the organization as a whole.

The SECC Board of Directors is invested in the Strategic Planning process and believes strongly that a good Strategic Plan will build on the skills and talents of staff and volunteers, and will position the organization in such a way as to ensure that it continues to meet its mission every day: *“Helping people. Improving lives.”*

## APPENDIX A

### SECC Programs and Services

- a) **Language & Settlement Services** provide settlement assistance in the following activity streams:
- Orientation Services (federal and provincial funding)
  - Language Training
  - Welcoming Communities
  - Care for Newcomer Children
- b) **Employment and Training Services** provide one-to-one employment counseling, job placement, pre-employment workshops to unemployed individuals and persons with disabilities. Programs include:
- Employment Connections (Employment Ontario)
  - Employment Edge (Ontario Employment Assistance Service)
  - Summer Jobs Service (Employment Ontario)
  - Youth Employment Fund (Employment Ontario)
  - Literacy and Basic Skills (Employment Ontario)
  - CAP (Industry Canada)
- c) **Community Home Support Services** which includes services for seniors and people with disabilities, is funded by the Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network, and consists of:
- Meals on Wheels
  - Erie Shore Transit
  - Day Away
  - Foot Care Clinic
  - Security Check and Friendly Visitation
  - Home Maintenance and Repair
- d) Support Services are additional short term special projects and other programs that support the work of SECC. These include:
- Community Information
  - Volunteer Services
  - Coats for Kids
  - Income Tax Clinic
  - Keep the Heat
  - Emergency Grocery Card Program
  - Personal Supply Closet.

## APPENDIX B

**MISSION:** Helping People. Improving Lives

**VISION:** To be a leader in community, social and health related service innovation

**VALUES:**

Excellence in:

**Service**

We will provide a client-centred approach in all of our service delivery, always keeping in mind that the people we serve are our number one priority.

The service we provide will always be professional and courteous, adhering to SECC's Customer Service guidelines and procedures, which are available upon request.

**Education**

We promote the benefits of education to our clients and encourage an atmosphere of continuous learning within the organization.

Our staff will be knowledgeable and well-informed regarding programs and services within the organization and throughout the broader community.

**Compassion**

We will serve our clients with the utmost respect and caring for their individual circumstances and needs. We will honour the diversity of our clients and we will not discriminate based on ethnicity, culture, religion, sex, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

**Collaboration**

In an effort to best serve our clients, we will seek out ways to engage in innovative partnerships with other service providers in our community.

We will work together within the organization, collaborating with other departments and programs to achieve the best outcomes for our clients.

## APPENDIX C

### Demographic Information of South Essex

	Leamington	Kingsville	Wheatley
Population in 2011	31,254	21,362	2,925
Population in 2006	31,113	20,908	2,322
Total Population by Age Groups			
0-15	6,020	3,935	695
16-19	1,560	1,110	170
20-29	3,745	2,290	345
30-44	5,615	4,285	530
45-64	6,304	6,225	740
65-79	4,000	2,505	225
80+	2,040	995	115
Median Age of Population	41.7	42.0	37.8
Total # of census families in private households	8,735	6,105	835
Total lone parent families	1,425	710	85
Average # of children at home per census family	1.1	1.1	1.2
Non-official languages (top 10)	German 3540 Portuguese 1140 Arabic 920 Spanish 900 Italian 740 Dutch 150 Tagalog 130 (Pilipino, Filipino) Slovak 125 Thai 95 Vietnamese 85	German 1560 Spanish 700 Italian 310 Portuguese 295 Dutch 175 Slovak 116 Hungarian 60 Arabic 55 Polish 50 Chinese 35	German 520 Portuguese 85 Dutch 20 Italian 10 Arabic 5 Spanish 5

*Statistics Canada. 2012. Leamington, Ontario (Code 0463) and Ontario (Code 35) (table).*

