



# ANNUAL ROAD MAP 2018

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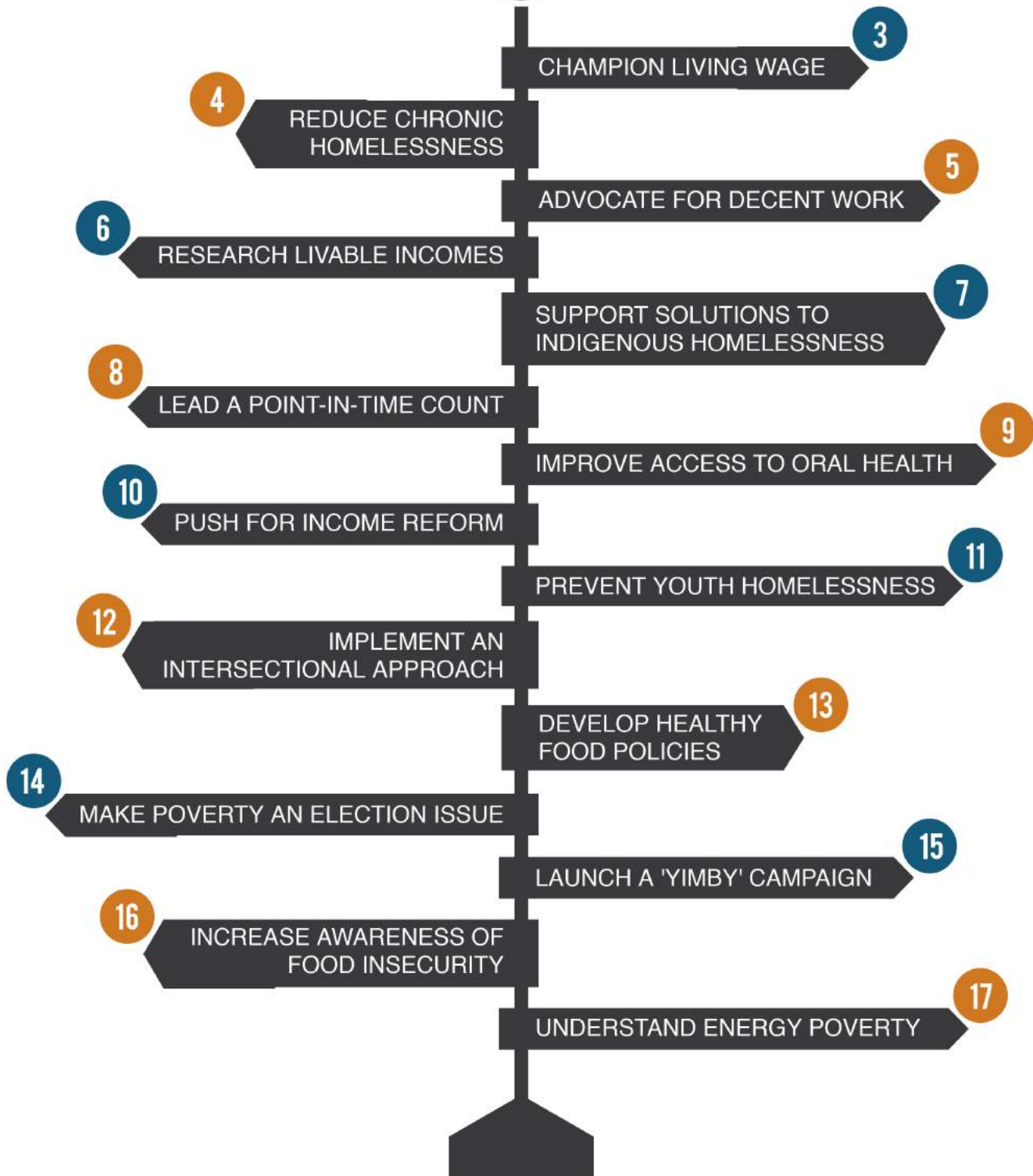
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 **POVERTY**  
GUELPH & WELLINGTON TASK FORCE FOR  
**ELIMINATION**





2018





# LIVING WAGE

A living wage is the hourly rate at which a household can meet its basic needs, once government transfers have been added to the family’s income (such as the Canada Child Tax Benefit) and deductions have been subtracted (such as income taxes). The living wage is different than the provincially mandated minimum wage. Instead, it is based on a calculation that draws on community-specific data to determine actual expenses that a family faces.

The PTF was first to calculate the living wage for Guelph-Wellington in 2013, and then provided an updated calculation in 2015. That same year, the PTF launched the Guelph-Wellington Living Wage Employer Recognition Program. To date, over 30 employers have voluntarily signed on to the program, resulting in over 2500 employees being guaranteed to earn at least a living wage.



Champion the living wage as a strategy for supporting decent work environments and strong social policy, while increasing wages by attracting and recognizing new employers to the Ontario Living Wage Employer Certification Program.

- Update Guelph-Wellington Living Wage calculation
- Host Lunch & Learn with current living wage employers
- Host annual Living Wage Employer Recognition event
- Release living wage & decent work employer profiles
- Participate in Ontario Living Wage Network
- Focus on engaging public sector employers

- Q4
- Q2
- Q4
- Ongoing
- Ongoing
- Ongoing





# CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

Chronically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year (i.e., have spent more than 180 cumulative nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation). Reducing chronic homelessness has been identified as a priority by the Government of Canada, Government of Ontario, and the 20,000 Homes Campaign.

In 2016, the PTF and the County of Wellington Social Services made a strategic decision to co-lead a local movement in support of the 20,000 Homes Campaign. The campaign in Guelph-Wellington launched with a Registry Week in April 2016, and continued to set and achieve targets aimed at reducing the number of high-acuity families and individuals experiencing homelessness. The Guelph-Wellington 20,000 Homes Campaign has launched a Coordinated Entry System, including a By-Name List, to track progress and improve efficiencies within the local homeless-serving system.



Reduce the number of families and individuals experiencing chronic homelessness by supporting evidence-driven system change.

- Provide monthly data reports on progress toward ending homelessness
- Provide a 20K Homes Progress Report
- Provide a 20K Homes Annual Report
- Achieve a Quality By-Name List
- Convene 20K Leadership & Operations Committees
- Support evaluation of Coordinated Entry System

- Ongoing
- Q2
- Q4
- Q2
- Ongoing
- Ongoing





# DECENT WORK

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all people.

From 2015 – 2017, the PTF was engaged in providing input and advocating for the implementation of recommendations as part of the Government of Ontario's Changing Workplaces Review, aimed at amending the Employment Standards Act, 2000, and Labour Relations Act, 1995. The PTF also supported calls for an increase to the minimum wage and other proposed changes that were announced as part of Bill 148, Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017. In 2017, the PTF encouraged employers to advocate for decent work, beyond paying a living wage, and released a report, *The Impacts of Working Poverty on Health & Wellbeing in Guelph-Wellington*.



Advocate and support the implementation of recommendations made in the report, *The Impacts of Working Poverty on Health & Wellbeing in Guelph-Wellington*.

Host a decent work workshop for non-profits with the Ontario Nonprofit Network  
Facilitate a series of workshops for low-wage, precarious workers  
Implement a knowledge mobilization strategy based on report recommendations

Q2  
Q3 – Q4  
Ongoing







# LIVABLE INCOMES

A livable income is the amount of income an individual or family needs to meet basic needs, maintain a safe, decent standard of living in their community, and save for future needs and goals. Livable incomes can be achieved through employment earnings, as well as government transfers and benefits, such as social assistance.

The PTF has used the 2013 and 2015 living wage calculations to start a conversation about the cost of living in our community. The living wage calculation has also been a tool to demonstrate the gap that exists between it and minimum wage, as well as social assistance rates. However, the living wage calculation is based on a basic budget that assumes two parents working full-time. It's time to ask what families and individuals need to be healthy and thrive in our community – regardless of employment status.



Research and mobilize knowledge about what it costs families and individuals to be healthy and thrive in Guelph-Wellington.

Conduct research on livable incomes in Guelph-Wellington  
Release report on livable incomes in Guelph-Wellington  
Mobilize knowledge on livable incomes in Guelph-Wellington

Q2 – Q3  
Q3  
Q3 – Q4







# INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS

In January 2016, the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness employed a Cree-Metis-Scot PhD student and consumer survivor of the streets, Jesse Thistle, to use Indigenous methodology to build a definition of homelessness. Based on deep community engagement and consultation, and with the guidance of a National Steering Committee, Thistle released the definition of Indigenous Homelessness in November 2016.

In April 2016, the PTF, in partnership with the County of Wellington, hosted a Registry Week to collect actionable data on every person experiencing homelessness, as part of the Guelph-Wellington 20,000 Homes Campaign. Nearly a quarter (22%) of respondents said they identified as Indigenous or having Indigenous ancestry, despite only 3% of individuals in Guelph-Wellington identifying as Indigenous in the National Household Survey. This is reflective of national trends which demonstrate that homelessness disproportionately impacts Indigenous peoples.



Gain deeper understanding of the experiences of Indigenous homelessness in Guelph-Wellington and facilitate and support appropriate solutions.

Prioritize engagement of Indigenous community in 2018 Registry Week  
Release report on Indigenous Homelessness in Guelph-Wellington  
Support community event on Indigenous Homelessness

Q2  
Q3  
Q4





# POINT-IN-TIME COUNT

As part of the Province's efforts to end chronic homelessness by 2025 and the long-term goal to end homelessness, the Ontario Ministry of Housing is requiring local enumeration of people experiencing homelessness as part of a Coordinated Count in 2018. Additionally, the Government of Canada launched Everyone Counts: the second nationally-coordinated Point-in-Time Count of homelessness between March 1 and April 30, 2018. To compliment the counts, communities across Canada will be combining a PiT count with Registry Weeks and period prevalence counts.

In 2016, the PTF, in partnership with the County of Wellington, conducted a combined Point in Time Count and Registry Week to launch the Guelph-Wellington 20,000 Homes Campaign. During Registry Week, 295 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness during a three-day period.



In partnership with the County of Wellington, conduct a Point-in-Time Count to provide an updated understanding of the number of people experiencing homelessness in Guelph-Wellington, as well an assessment of their experiences and needs.

Plan a 2018 Point-in-Time Count with key stakeholders and peer leaders  
Engage community volunteers to conduct a Point-in-Time Count  
Conduct a Point-in-Time Count  
Release 2018 Point-in-Time Count report

Q1 – Q2  
Q2  
Q2  
Q2 – Q3





# ORAL HEALTH

Oral health status and access to oral health services has consistently been identified as a challenge for low-income adults in Guelph-Wellington. In 2012, the Ontario Oral Health Alliance started a postcard campaign, calling for the Ontario government to extend provincial programs to include adults who cannot afford emergency dental services. In 2014, the Ontario government promised to extend free public dental programs to adults on low incomes by 2025. In 2016, the Province expanded free dental care for children from low-income families, including free preventative, routine, emergency and essential care from licensed dental providers.

In 2013, the PTF convened the Guelph-Wellington Oral Health Action Committee (OHAC) and launched a year-long research project to better understand the oral health needs of low-income adults. The report, *Barriers to Accessing Oral Health Care for Low-Income Adults in Guelph*, was released in 2015. The report set in motion increased advocacy, with a focus on delivering free public dental care as part of the Ontario Health Insurance Program (OHIP). In 2017, OHAC presented local politicians with nearly 1000 petitions supporting this call.



Support local action and advocacy efforts to improve access to oral health care for low-income community members.

- Distribute Guelph-Wellington No- and Low-Cost Oral Health Programs resource
- Present municipal resolution to support expanded access to oral health care to City of Guelph Council
- Increase awareness about barriers to oral health care for low-income adults and seniors & advocate for solutions

Ongoing  
Q2  
Ongoing





# INCOME SECURITY REFORM

In 2016, the Government of Ontario asked three working groups to examine the income security system and make recommendations on how to improve it. A report and recommendations, *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change*, was submitted by the working groups in October 2017. The recommendations focused on a broad range of issues that impact income security, including income adequacy, core health benefits, and transforming social assistance. The province welcomed feedback on the recommendations from community members and stakeholders until January 2018.

The PTF has a long history of advocating for income security reform. In January 2018, the PTF provided an official submission, informed by partners, to the Government of Ontario on the income reform recommendations. The PTF submission prioritized recommendations focused on making essential health benefits available to all low-income Ontarians, increasing income support available through social assistance, and introducing a provincial housing benefit.



Seek out opportunities to advocate for the implementation of recommendations from *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change*.

Raise awareness about prioritized recommendations during provincial election  
Actively engage in opportunities presented by the Government of Ontario to design and implement responses to recommendations

Q2  
Ongoing





# YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Youth homelessness refers to the situation and experience of young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers, but do not have the means or ability to acquire a stable, safe or consistent residence. Experts in youth homelessness note that youth homelessness in Canada is an ongoing problem for which they seem to be making slow but insufficient progress. They are calling for a new approach – the prevention of youth homelessness.

As part of the Guelph-Wellington 20,000 Homes Campaign, the PTF has closely monitored data on homelessness in our community. A report published in November 2017 by the PTF demonstrated an increase in the number of high-acuity unaccompanied youth on the By-Name List (BNL). In February 2017, there were 17 unaccompanied youth and by October 2017 there were over 40. In February 2017, unaccompanied youth accounted for 26% of the BNL and this increased to 57% by October 2017.



Increase understandings of youth homelessness in our community and mobilize partners to develop strategies focused on youth homelessness prevention.

Support data collection and analysis on youth homelessness to better understand trends

Ongoing

Support community partners to develop strategies to prevent youth homelessness

Q2 – Q3

Support community conversations with youth experiencing homelessness to ensure their input and guidance is provided to next steps

Q3 – Q4





# INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality is the study of intersections between different forms of oppressions or discrimination. As humans, we all carry a series of identities, such as socioeconomic status, that make our individual experiences of oppression unique. The intersections are endless and cannot be considered independently from one another, since they constantly interact with each other and often reinforce the oppression each brings. An intersectional approach recognizes that these multiple intersections exist in endless combinations, and they can sometimes lead to privilege and sometimes to discrimination.

In 2017, the PTF committed to adopting an intersectional approach. To guide this journey, the PTF convened an Intersectionality Advisory Committee (IAC) to provide recommendations, advice and information. The IAC members provide advice and insight from an inclusive range of marginalized communities and possess a mix of knowledge, lived experience, personal attributes and leadership.



Develop and implement aspects of an intersectional approach

Develop shared rationale for meaningful peer engagement among PTF	Q1
Provide anti-oppression training for PTF members	Q2 – Q3
Develop inclusion policy for PTF	Q1 – Q3
Develop “on-boarding” training for new PTF members	Q3 – Q4
Develop relationships between PTF and equity-seeking groups in community	Ongoing
Determine appropriate PTF membership structure and representation	Ongoing





# HEALTHY FOOD POLICIES

Healthy food environments are shaped by policies and values that promote healthy food access and procurement, and encourage participants to make healthier food choices throughout their lives. For emergency food providers, the first stage of a healthy food policy focuses on increasing fresh food access by introducing guidelines for donors that prioritize healthy offerings and monetary donations, and can restrict donations such as candy, pop, or chips.

The PTF has a long history of supporting emergency food providers to be forward-thinking and to adopt approaches that value food justice over food charity. In the past, the PTF has supported the implementation of guiding principles for eligibility criteria, encouraged providers to move to a choice-based model, and supported community food drives.



Explore and develop healthy food policies with local emergency food providers.

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| Complete scan of healthy food policies and models                                  | Q2      |
| Introduce healthy food policies and models to emergency food providers             | Q3      |
| Identify emergency food providers interested in establishing a healthy food policy | Q3      |
| Begin developing healthy food policies with selected emergency food providers      | Q3 – Q4 |







# ELECTIONS

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Ontario general election is scheduled to be held on June 7, 2018. The 2018 municipal elections in Ontario will be held on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018.

In the past, the PTF has made sure that poverty is an important election, for both candidates and voters. This has been achieved by hosting all candidate debates, providing the community with platform comparisons on poverty-related issues, publishing Q & A's with candidates, and sharing fact sheets on key priorities.



Raise awareness among candidates and voters about poverty and related issues leading up to the provincial and municipal elections.

Publish fact sheets on key election issues related to poverty	Q2 – Q4
Publish responses from election candidates on questions related to poverty	Q2 – Q4
Publish political party platform comparisons on issues related to poverty	Q2 – Q4
Provide voter information to low-income community members	Q2 – Q4





# 'YES IN MY BACKYARD' (YIMBY)

YIMBY is an acronym of “Yes In My Back Yard,” a pro-development movement in contrast and opposition to the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) phenomenon. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC), discriminatory NIMBY refers to neighbourhood opposition based on stereotypes or prejudice towards the people who live in rooming houses, group homes, social and supportive housing, boarding houses, institutional care homes and shelters.



Develop a YIMBY campaign to encourage community members to say yes to affordable homes and developments that meet the needs of low-income community members.

- Complete a scan of existing YIMBY campaigns
- Develop guidelines for YIMBY campaign
- Launch YIMBY campaign

- Q2 – Q3
- Q2 – Q3
- Q3 – Q4





# CENT\$LESS CAMPAIGN

Cent\$less is a campaign powered by the Ontario Dietitians in Public Health calling on Government of Ontario to pledge to make poverty reduction a priority and to stand behind income solutions that address food insecurity. The campaign encourages individuals and organizations to learn about food insecurity, spread the word on social media, and advocate for income solutions.

In 2016, the PTF released a position statement on household food insecurity, calling for a multi-pronged income-based response to address its root causes. In 2017, the PTF hosted a community event, *Moving Beyond Food Charity – Exploring Food Insecurity, Research, Local Experience & Action*. The event reiterated the need for income-based responses and identified opportunities for attendees to advocate.



Increase awareness of the need for income-based responses to household food insecurity by championing the Cent\$less campaign in Guelph-Wellington.

- Increase awareness of household food insecurity through Cent\$less Campaign during elections
- Develop and implement social marketing campaign for Cent\$less
- Encourage individuals and organizations to support Cent\$less Campaign

- Q2 – Q3
- Q3 – Q4
- Ongoing





# ENERGY POVERTY

Energy poverty refers to individuals who are unable to afford the energy/fuel needed to maintain their life, particularly as related to heating/cooling. Specifically, energy poverty is defined as households that spend more than 10 percent of their income on home energy. In 2011, it affected 1 million households while those households in the lowest income bracket in Ontario averaged 12% on utilities.

In 2011, the Poverty Task Force published a research profile on Energy Poverty. The PTF has raised awareness about energy poverty as part of the living wage calculations in 2013 and 2015. An understanding of this issue also promoted advocacy to develop cooling locations in the summer and a community-cold weather response plan for individuals experiencing homelessness.



To update the 2011 report on Energy Poverty and gain an in-depth understanding of its impacts on low-income families and individuals in Guelph-Wellington.

Update 2011 PTF report to reflect changes in technology, policy, regulatory, and research landscape  
Transfer knowledge to relevant decision-makers and stakeholders to mobilize resources to mitigate/alleviate energy poverty

Ongoing  
Ongoing



