



## **COMMUNITY SAFETY & SOCIAL SERVICES – AGENDA REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** 12 November 2024

**Subject:** Building Safer Communities Fund Update Q4 2024

**Directorate:** Community Safety and Social Services

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### **Issue:**

The Community Safety and Social Services Standing Committee is being presented with an update on the progress of the two initiatives identified in the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF) project.

### **Policy / Council Direction:**

The BSCF project aligns with Council's 2023-26 Caring Community Focus Area.

### **Background:**

In May of 2022, Administration was notified by Public Safety Canada (PSC) that the City of Airdrie was selected to receive approximately \$1 million dollars, as part of the Building Safer Communities Fund which has been allocated to municipalities and Indigenous governments to put in place community-led projects to combat gun and gang violence.

Once Administration was notified by PSC, strategy development began which included the hiring of an external consultant to survey and evaluate feedback from youth and youth-serving organizations in Airdrie to understand youth violence and bullying in the community. Based on the feedback collected in 2022, the Airdrie Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Strategy was finalized in 2023, which outlined options for next steps in addressing youth safety.

In January 2024, the City of Airdrie, and Public Safety Canada (PSC) made the official announcement to inform the community that the City has been awarded the grant.

Based on the strategy, Administration focused on two initiatives aimed to foster positive relationships with youth and prevent unsafe or violent behaviour, which included:

1. City Administration and community partners work together to implement an evidence-based approach that improves youth outcomes, through an evidence-based framework, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)<sup>1</sup>.
2. Develop a wrap-around support initiative focused on youth between the ages of 14 and 18 who are experiencing vulnerabilities and at risk of entering gun and gang violence.

To introduce the project, Administration held a workshop in March with social-serving organizations, RCMP, Rocky View Schools (RVS), and the Chamber of Commerce. Following the workshop, an open house was organized for residents to learn more about the project.

## **Progress to Date**

### **Initiative One: Community Approach – Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

The purpose of this initiative is to provide Airdrie youth-serving organizations and City Administration an opportunity to gain experience in an evidence-based framework called Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

To date, the following accomplishments include:

- April 2024: A PBIS introductory training for City Administration which included Genesis Place, Arenas and Parks staff.
- June 2024: Airdrie youth-serving organizations participated in PBIS training.
- September 2024: youth-serving groups participated in the remaining PBIS training.

Both internal departments and external community groups are equally receiving the PBIS training and Administration is preparing for upcoming training sessions that will focus on implementation. Administration is also exploring the best option to support our groups in finding a sustainable approach that continues this work in our community following the training.

### **Initiative Two: Wrap around supports – Positive Directions**

Initiative two's focus is to provide wrap-around supports to youth who may be at risk of participating in behaviours related to gun violence and gang activity. Through a coordinated referral process (*referrals from RVS only*), program staff will support youth by connecting them to community supports as well as providing direct support that helps meet their goals.

The Positive Directions project team is finalizing documents and processes to prepare for program implementation starting in November 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> Center on PBIS. Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports. PBIS is an evidenced-based framework that supports students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health. When implemented, it improves social emotional competence, academic success, and school climate. <https://www.pbis.org/pbis/what-is-pbis>, (accessed 15 October 2024).

In summary, both initiatives continue to move forward and would not be possible without the support and commitment from our community partners.

**Administration Recommendation:**

Administration recommends that the Community Safety and Social Services Standing Committee accept the Budling Safer Communities Fund Update for information.

**Alternatives/Implications:**

This item is for information.

**Budget Implications:**

There are no budget implications currently.

**Communications and Engagement:**

Administration will continue to work with the communications department to create a community outreach plan to share information on the projects progress.

**Recommendation:**

That the Community Safety and Social Services Committee accept the Building Safer Communities Fund Update report for Information.

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Attachments:	None