

# 2018 | ACTIVITY REPORT



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE WATERLOO REGION



# TURNING UP THE VOLUME

MAKING SURE EVERY VOICE COUNTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Board ..... 2

Overview of the SDC ..... 3

List of Activities ..... 4

    Lived Experience Groups ..... 4

    Community Dialogue ..... 5

    Strong Neighbourhoods ..... 6

    Social Service Navigation ..... 7

Partnerships ..... 8

Financial Information ..... 9

Staff & Board Members .....10

**Prepared by the board and staff of the SDCWR, June 2019**





## LETTER FROM THE BOARD

In selecting our theme for this year's AGM many images and ideas resonated - that of a Phoenix, the Idea of Moving Forward, Renewal and Refresh - Every Voice Counts.

Indeed, over the past year the very capable staff of SDCWR continued to pick up the pieces from the unexpected passing of our longtime leader Trudy Beaulne and meet the challenge and opportunity brought by a new provincial government, new municipal leadership, Wellbeing Waterloo Region and the potential transformation in their partner Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network.

Every Voice Counts became the tagline in the Fall, as SDCWR organized municipal leadership all-candidate meetings with outstanding partners and St John Church and embarked on a new fundraising and social media campaign. A campaign that sought to give voice for instance to some of the stalwart volunteers on our Disability and Human Rights

Group who work diligently for equity and recognition in politics and policy making.

Progress continued on the Civic Hub for grassroots organizations; support flowed and a structure started to come together although funding is still seemingly just out of reach. Community connectors gave of their time to work on Region of Waterloo Wellbeing surveys with those living on low income.

The Festival of Neighbourhoods was going through a transformative process in 2018 and is firmly kept on course through a dedication to social inclusion and resilience.

In 2019, the Board started strategic planning and defining the vision of what the SDCWR will look like in the future. We invite you our members and partners to celebrate the year behind us and look collaboratively forward to the one ahead.

Best,  
Diana Bumstead  
Secretary, 2018-19

## OVERVIEW

The Social Development Centre Waterloo Region was created in 1967 with the goal of cultivating community knowledge and advancing social justice in the region. Over the past 52 years we have continually adapted to our community's needs, shifting our projects to support current gaps. Today our main focuses are supporting lived experience groups, fostering connection in neighbourhoods, cultivating community dialogue, and making social service information and navigation accessible.



## LIVED EXPERIENCE GROUPS

**Disabilities and Human Rights (DHR)** | The DHR lived experience group is comprised of approximately 10 members who have a disability or are passionate about inclusion. The DHR group is a forum for members to discuss, raise awareness, and plan actions to advocate for accessibility. The SDC provides meeting space, training, and logistical support to DHR. The group tackled the snow removal issues, social policy in the pre-election platforms and facilitated conversations at the meet the candidates forums.

**Awareness of Low Income Voices (ALIVE)** | The group brings together people who have or are experiencing poverty to share their views with decision-makers and leaders in the community. The SDC provides meeting space, archive, bookkeeping, and general support to ALIVE. Guests at the ALIVE conversations were provincial and municipal candidates, MPP Laura Mae Lindo, the Director of GRT, and the coordinator of Put Food in the Budget.

**Renters Educating and Networking Together (RENT)** | The tenants associations advocate on behalf of tenants, and seek to educate renters on their rights and responsibilities. The SDC has been on the RENT Executive since 2014 and has supported the organizing of forums and meetings.

**Wellbeing Waterloo Region Survey** | Community connectors with experience of living on low income supported the engagement and collection of the Wellbeing Waterloo Region surveys. By organizing drop-in sessions, the team directly helped 144 people with disabilities & living on low or no income, to fill out the surveys, and distributed an additional 500 surveys. The connectors also provided input on the survey questions & the process.



## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

**Civic Hub** | 40 Grassroots organizations across the community all recognize the need for a common space in which to work, collaborate, and innovate. The SDC leads this initiative together with St John Church, facilitating meetings of the collective of 40 organizations, developing terms of reference, and exploring partnerships for resource development.

**Meet the Candidates Sessions** | 2018 Municipal and Provincial elections in Waterloo Region again raised concerns of timely information sharing about the process and the candidates. SDC participated in the Civic Tech initiative to create a web portal for the municipal elections. SDC also conducted five participatory meet the candidates sessions where residents and candidates could engage in a two-way dialogue about issues in the community.

At the provincial meet the candidates forums, we welcomed over 350 residents in three ridings. The topics ranged from affordable housing to environmental justice. At the municipal meet the candidates events we gathered close to 250 residents in table conversations in Kitchener and Waterloo and besides affordable housing, we focused on the democratic process and involvement of marginalized groups in decision-making.





## STRONG NEIGHBOURHOODS

**Festival of Neighbourhoods** | The SDC supports the City of Kitchener's Festival of Neighbourhoods by providing coordination, mobilizing Kitchener neighbourhoods through door-to-door initiatives, and offering the Neighbourhood Connection Award. The award was renamed the **Trudy Beaulne Award**, in memory of one of the founders and the most dedicated champions of neighbourhood work in the region. The 2018 winner of the Trudy Beaulne Award, committed to improving social conditions of its residents, are Victoria Park neighbours.

**Traynor-Fairway Pedestrian Crossing** | The SDC continues collaboration with the Traynor-Vanier residents and many vocal advocates to ensure the construction of a pedestrian crossing over the recently fenced light rail transit (LRT) tracks. The fence and tracks currently block residents' access to nearby amenities, forcing people to make long commutes that were previously unnecessary. As the testing of the trains started at the end of 2018 the need for a timely response was greater than before to ensure safety of pedestrians.

**Becoming Neighbours Campaign** | As part of the campaign led by the Community Council on Refugee and Immigrant Concerns' #Becoming Neighbours, SDC conducted neighbourhood outreach to 200 households to promote the connections between refugee families and those settled for a long time. Cultural and language divides are not easy to erase, but with more conversations and connections built, we can see change start.



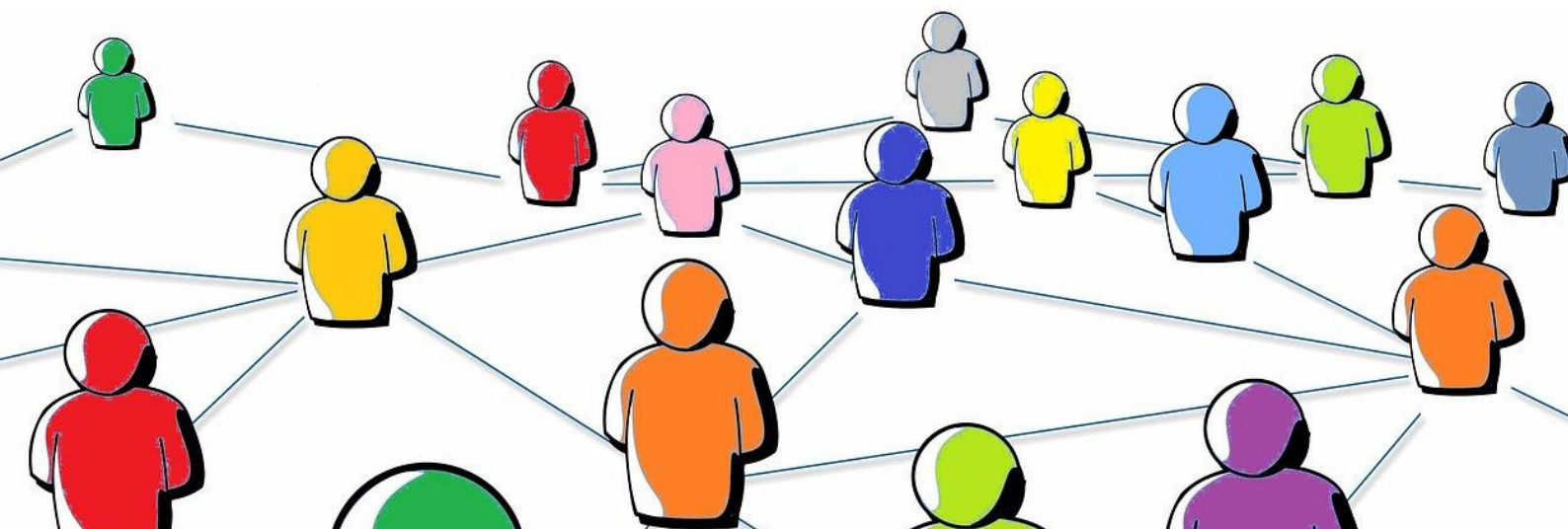
## SUPPORT SYSTEMS NAVIGATION

**Healthline Database Management** | The SDC continues to provide data transfers to the Waterloo-Wellington Local Health Integrated Network's Healthline database, ensuring that residents in Waterloo Region have reliable and current access to health and community service information.

**Income Support for Older Adults Chart** | The SDC has created a service system navigation chart regarding financial supports for older adults, to help service providers and older adults find relevant programs. The creation of this chart involved extensive engagement with service providers and clients.

**Ontario Electricity Support Program Administration (OESP)** | Through the administration of the program, the SDC helps with the application process for the electricity bill relief for households on moderate income. During that process, it also provides information and referrals to a range of demographics including low-income residents, people with disabilities, international students, newcomers, and seniors regarding income security and social services. In 2018, the SDC helped over 237 households with the OESP applications.

**Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP)** | In 2018, the SDC helped over 30 households with the LEAP applications as the coordination of the program is outside of the region and requires manual verification of eligibility.





## COLLABORATION AND REPRESENTATION

**Wellbeing Waterloo Region** | In support of the work mobilizing knowledge and resources to improve the overall health and social outcomes for all the residents, SDC continued with its participation in the Social Inclusion Work Group and Measurement and Monitoring Work Group. It also had representation at the Reference Group, supporting the decision-making process for the overall goal setting of this collective impact initiative.

**Multicultural Connection WR** | As a participant in the Social Inclusion Work Group of the Immigration Partnership, SDC provided opportunities for outreach in the neighbourhoods and supported the planning and facilitation of the first forum for the ethno-cultural groups. The representatives of a number of diverse communities came together to define what they saw as the immediate needs and challenges to be addressed, in their own voice: resources & space, representation & advocacy, coordinated supports.

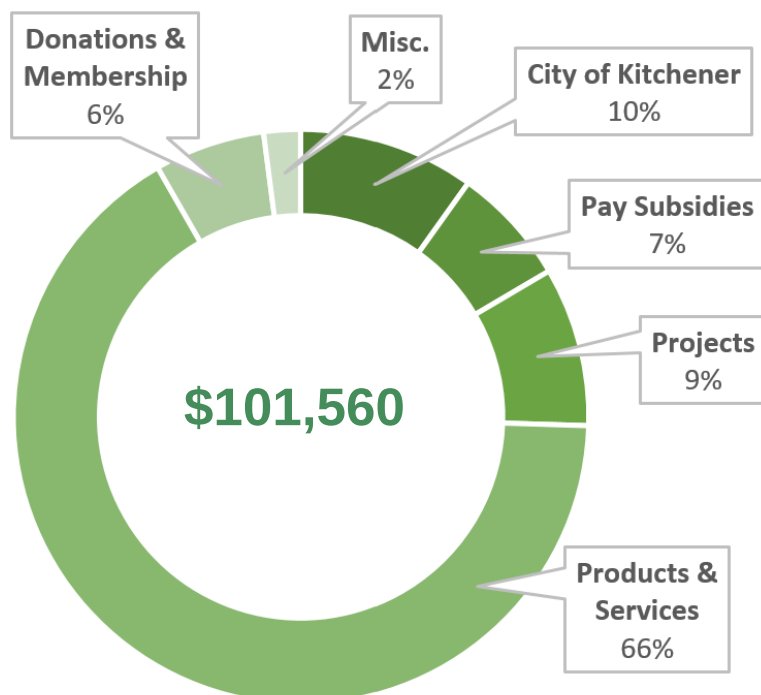
**WRDSB Equity and Inclusion Advisory** | The SDC is a member of the Waterloo Region District School Board's Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group, and it co-chairs the work that focuses on the equity and hiring practices, marginalization based on poverty, sexual and gender expression, skin colour and faith.

**Student Wellbeing** | The SDC was a part of the Equity in Education task force, a regional task force of the Social Planning Network of Ontario knowledge network. Through this task force, we support projects to address the impact of poverty in the education system, including the review of fundraising practices and procedures.

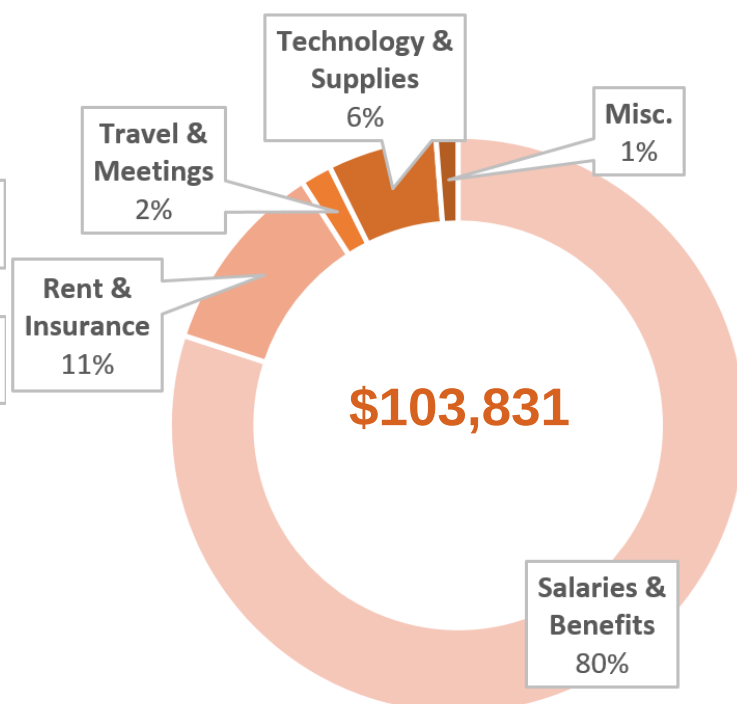


## FINANCES SUMMARY

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES



### FUNDING PARTNERS



## BOARD AND STAFF

# 2

### FULL TIME STAFF

We commend the staff for their extreme dedication and contributions made above and beyond the hours paid for their work.

Aleksandra Petrovic,  
Community Planning and Development  
Lead, since 2012  
Festival of Neighbourhoods Coordinator,  
since 2012  
Executive Director, since March 2018

Todd Turnbull, Data and Information  
Systems Lead, since 1994.

# 2

### SUMMER STUDENTS

Jada Wong, Social Planning Associate

Jonathan Klassen, Community Resource  
Associate

# 6

### WORKING BOARD MEMBERS

Dedication  
Experience  
Thoughtfulness

Nathan Pike, Treasurer

Diana Bumstead, Secretary

Brad Ullner, Director

Barbara Spronk, Director

Ambika Opal, Director

Chris Hodnett, Director

We have worked with over 40 dedicated community connectors and partner organizations during the course of the year that made neighbourhood outreach, research projects and events possible and successful.

Wholehearted thanks to you all!



---

**Connect with us!**  
**Your Voice Counts Too**

**Social Development Centre Waterloo Region**

23 Water St North, Kitchener ON N2H 5A4

519-579-3800

[sdcwr@waterlooregion.org](mailto:sdcwr@waterlooregion.org)

[www.waterlooregion.org](http://www.waterlooregion.org)



[/SDCWR](https://www.facebook.com/SDCWR)



[@SPCofKW](https://twitter.com/SPCofKW)



[KWSocialPlanning](https://www.youtube.com/KWSocialPlanning)