



Community Social Planning Council

The Social Planning Council of Kitchener-Waterloo (SPCKW) is a non-government, public benefit community leader committed to promoting social development in Waterloo Region. With a mission to advance community through active participation and objective knowledge, SPCKW works to achieve its vision for a healthy, fair and sustainable community where all can participate in finding solutions. Appendix A has more details on goals, values and activities.

Structure

From its very beginnings, SPCKW has relied on advisory and action groups to get community input and to provide guidance for community projects and initiatives. Since 2007, continuing groups focusing on disabilities and human rights and poverty elimination have been supported, proving to be excellent ways to structure SPCKW work in meaningful and manageable ways.

In 2014, the Board of Directors discussed a proposal to develop a Social Planning 'Community' Council as an important part of the overall organizational structure. The following lays out the purpose, structure and function of this Community Council.

Purpose

The purpose of the *Community* Social Planning Council is to:

- a) Create a citizen forum to discuss social development issues that affect people who live in Waterloo Region;
- b) Enhance, validate and expand the organization's knowledge base;
- c) Provide a community voice for social development issues;
- d) Ensure the organization is strongly anchored in the local community context; and
- e) Provide a sustainable foundation for continued community based social development activity.

Membership

Board of Directors are ex officio council members plus up to 10 community appointees who:

- Are committed to the values and mission of the organization.
- Are members of the organization.
- Have established knowledge and networks significant to social development.
- Are interested in knowledge exchange for community benefit.
- Live or work in Waterloo Region.

Length of Term: Two year renewable commitment



Appendix A:

Social Planning Council Kitchener-Waterloo

Community Information Centre Waterloo Region

Vision Statement updated October 2014

We are a non-government, public benefit community leader committed to promoting social development in Waterloo Region.

Our Vision is for a healthy, fair and sustainable community where all can participate in finding solutions.

Our Mission is to advance community through active participation and objective knowledge.

Our Goals are to:

1. Increase understanding of social resources, assets, issues, needs and context of the local community by those who need this knowledge to take action.
2. Increase citizen participation in social, economic and political life of the community.
3. Build social cohesion through relationships, collaboration and community action.
4. Reduce inequitable access to knowledge resources resulting from emerging technologies.
5. Develop the social infrastructure of the community – people, organizations, services and policies.

Our Activities:

- We actively engage and collaborate on issues important to citizens living in Waterloo Region.
- We gather, apply, distribute and archive information on human services and community needs in Waterloo Region.

Outcomes of our Services

People, individuals, groups and agencies, are more:

1. Informed and have more options for dealing with their concerns.
2. Connected and have stronger relationships so they have somewhere to turn.
3. Involved, have a voice and take action.

Social Planning Council of Kitchener-Waterloo: Values

Social Justice	We are committed to equal treatment and fair access for all members of the community.
Participatory Democracy	We value democracy practiced daily and encourage everyone to participate in decisions or on issues that affect people.
Community Knowledge	We believe local community based knowledge is a public good and is essential to help all stakeholders understand the community and its people, assets, resources and needs.
Diversity	We recognize, highly value and seek out the multi-dimensional character of community members which includes a rich variety of backgrounds, abilities and experiences.
Relationship Building (Social Capital)	We are committed to building positive relationships in all areas of community and in our face to face contacts, organizational connections and community action.

Operating Principles

Community	We focus on geographic community where we find issues and seek solutions. We acknowledge and work with communities of interest as ways people come together to improve quality of life.
Accountability	We are accountable to the community and seek direction from those who use our services and from our membership. Our governing board is elected annually by community members.
Independence	Being community-driven and accountable, we have greater freedom than public sector organizations or direct service providers, to critique existing policies and systems or to propose alternatives.
Knowledge-based Action	We link independent research and lived community experience to the development of action proposals and solutions to identified problems that eliminate inequity and injustice.
Inclusion	We aim to engage everyone, especially those whose voices are not typically heard. When we do engage we will be mindful of how we do this to be as inclusive as possible.
Collaboration	We work in partnership and collaboration with others to share resources, expertise and/or experience.
Effectiveness and Efficiency	We aim to provide effective services based on efficient operations and innovative use of technology that builds on our long tradition of knowledge management and community engagement skills.