



Social Planning Council Oxford
www.spcoxford.ca

LIVING WAGE REPORT

Zero Poverty Resolution

DECEMBER 2017

WELLBEING DEFINED

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing defines wellbeing as “the presence of the highest possibility of quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture” - (Canadian Index of Wellbeing, 2016)

ANALYSIS OF WELLBEING IN OXFORD

The Community Wellbeing Survey (2016) denotes five major themes related to wellbeing. Community Engagement, Accessibility, Quality of Work, Health Behaviours and Perceptions and Environmental Concerns were used as a basis of comparison for varying demographics in Oxford. For purposes of comparison, demographic information such as household income, age, household living arrangements, length of residency in Oxford County and geographical location was collected to focus in on the most vulnerable populations. According to the Community Wellbeing Survey, residents of Oxford County in the lowest household income category indicated the lowest level of personal wellbeing “on almost every characteristic compared in each of the five themes.”

Residents of Tillsonburg and Woodstock, in terms of geographical location, measured the lowest levels of life satisfaction and wellbeing. Financial hardship in covering basic living costs affected overall satisfaction and wellbeing on a larger scale than other wellbeing indicators. A living wage in Oxford County would allow for income security to cover basic necessities and in turn improve the wellbeing of Oxford County residents with emphasis on the impact on the two largest communities of Tillsonburg and Woodstock.

447 Hunter Street, Woodstock, ON , N4S 4G7

Tel: (519) 602-2421 | Website: www.spcoxford.ca | Email: info@spcoxford.ca

facebook.com/spcoxford | twitter.com/spcoxford

What can Oxford County do to improve wellbeing?

The vision of the Social Planning of Oxford (SPCO) is to ensure the wellbeing of every citizen in Oxford County. In order to achieve this, insight into how residents view their own wellbeing can indicate areas of improvement within the scope of the SPCO.

Based on the evaluation of the Oxford Community Wellbeing Survey administered in the spring of 2016, household income and job security are among top priorities. The SPCO believes a focus on understanding and calculating a **living wage** in Oxford County would be conducive to improving the financial situation of families in the region as well as improve overall life satisfaction and wellbeing.

What is a living wage?

Initiatives in communities around Ontario and Canada as a whole surround the idea of the living wage. Living Wage Canada defines a living wage as the rate of pay needed to “get families out of severe financial stress by lifting them out of poverty and providing a basic level of income security” (Living Wage Canada, 2013).

Living wages in communities around the country use the National Living Wage Framework to ensure “a consistent living wage definition, calculation methodology and strategy for recognizing corporate and community leadership who commit to pass a living wage policy” (Canadian Living Wage Framework, 2015). Oxford County has been identified as an emerging community in need of a calculated living wage based on the cost of living in Oxford communities. The Social Planning Council has analyzed the results of the Community Wellbeing Survey for the purposes of further identifying families in need of economic policy change to better their lives. Bringing a living wage to Oxford improves the wellbeing of families and improves their abilities to become participating and thriving members of respective communities.

“Oxford County has been identified as an emerging community in need of a calculated living wage.”

According to the National Living Framework Principles, a living wage ensures families have sufficient income to cover basic living costs, promotes social inclusion, supports healthy life stage development, relieves financial stress, encompasses conservative estimates in support of maintain good business practices and promotes the improvement of other social programs such as child care (Canadian Living Wage Framework, 2015).

GOALS OF THE SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL

With the support of the community and invested parties, the Social Planning Council hopes to have a living wage calculated for Oxford County in order to continue to meet the visionary goals of improving the wellbeing of Oxford County Residents.



REFERENCES

Future Oxford (2016). Oxford County Community Wellbeing Survey: A Comparison of Oxford Residents on Selected Aspects of their Wellbeing. http://www.futureoxford.ca/Portals/CommunitySustainabilityPlan/Documents/Reports/CIW/CIW_OxfordCommunityWellbeingSurvey_Report%2020161214.pdf

Living Wage Canada (2013). What is a Living Wage? <http://www.livingwagecanada.ca/index.php/about-living-wage/>

Canadian Living Wage Framework (2015). http://www.livingwagecanada.ca/files/8714/4500/2147/Living_Wage_Full_Document_oct_2015.pdf

447 Hunter Street, Woodstock, ON , N4S 4G7

Tel: (519) 602-2421 | Website: www.spcoxford.ca | Email: info@spcoxford.ca
facebook.com/spcoxford | twitter.com/spcoxford