

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

**REPORT  
RAPPORT**

Our File/N/Réf.  
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 16 May 1997

TO/DEST. Coordinator, Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Commissioner  
Social Services Department

SUBJECT/OBJET **SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES FOR 1998  
PROJECT (ONE-TIME) GRANTS**

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**DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Community Services Committee approve the following priorities for the 1998 allocation of project (one-time) grants:**

- 1. Initiatives which impact positively on reducing poverty and its effects;**
- 2. Initiatives which reduce homelessness or provide services to people who are homeless;**
- 3. Services to ethnic and racial minorities and aboriginal groups.**

**PURPOSE**

This report defines the 1998 funding priorities for project grants.

**BACKGROUND**

As established in 1995, the Social Services Department will review applications for project grants for 1998 in collaboration with the RMOC Health Department and United Way/Centraide Ottawa-Carleton. Within this streamlined approach, each funder continues to establish priorities related to its specific mandate.

In 1996, staff from the Department, United Way/Centraide and the Ministry of Community and Social Services identified, among other issues, the need to be clear on what low-income people themselves need and want, determine “best practices” and effective interventions, models of service, reach agreement on what types of programs to fund, and assist funders in establishing priorities for funding.

In the fall of 1996, the Social Services Department and United Way/Centraide jointly hired a consultant to develop a Poverty Funding Framework for the funding of programs and services specifically designed to strengthen the capacity of the community to respond to poverty and to promote self-sufficiency. This framework influenced the development of priorities for project funding in 1998.

## DISCUSSION

In the development of its Strategic priorities for 1997-99, the Department identified three strategic performance goals: assisting clients to obtain jobs, reducing reliance on Social Services Department services, and assisting clients to meet basic needs.

The Poverty Funding Framework encompasses all strategic goals of the Social Services Department. Funding in the area of poverty can be considered as a continuum which includes five overlapping categories which are basic needs, strategies promoting self-sufficiency, strategies targeting high risk groups, community economic development initiatives, and advocacy and social action/planning.

It is suggested that community economic development, would be more appropriately funded by developing partnerships between the business and voluntary sectors.

Information gathered from interviews and literature during the data collection phase of the Poverty Funding Framework indicate that respondents support initiatives which alleviate poverty without promoting dependence and which develop self-sufficiency without ignoring the day-to-day realities of those in need. Programs considered to be effective shared several characteristics. The projects were developed from the community up to increase resiliency in both individuals and the community; they were developed by and with persons with low-incomes and were responsive to the reality of their lives; and they had a holistic approach which tapped the resources of a wide range of partners.

### Initiatives which impact positively on reducing poverty and its effects

Present resources and government income supplement programs are not adequate for people to meet their basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. Strategies which enhance the capacity of people to cope with insufficient income aim to build individual and community capacity by reducing isolation and increasing skills. These programs often develop an infrastructure to assist people with meeting their basic needs in a cooperative manner.

Capacity building strategies are required to assist people overcome both personal and structural barriers which lead to reduced dependency on Social Services and to economic self-sufficiency.

Initiatives which reduce homelessness and provide services to people who are homeless

The issue of **homelessness** continues to be relevant to the Department since people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless continue to be one of the most vulnerable groups in the Region. Projects which address poverty and its impact in relation to this group would receive primary consideration.

Services to ethnic and racial minorities and aboriginal groups

There is a continued need for funding in matters dealing with racism and **services to ethnic and racial minorities and aboriginal groups**. Community-based organisations working in these areas often represent the essential intervention enabling the integration of these groups within our community. Projects which address poverty and its impact in relation to these groups would receive primary consideration.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public consultation occurred over the course of past months. They included key informant interviews, discussion groups with low income people, meetings with agencies funded by RMOC Social Services and United Way/Centraide and discussions with a reference group.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

Is anticipated that \$346,981 will be available for project grants in 1998.

CONCLUSION

The Social Service Department recommends that initiatives which impact positively on reducing poverty and its effects, address the issue of homelessness, and which enable the integration of ethnic and racial minorities and aboriginal groups be given priority for project funding in 1998.

*Approved by  
Dick Stewart  
Commissioner*

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