

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT  
RAPPORT

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Our File/N/Réf.  
 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 25 June 1999

TO/DEST. Coordinator  
 Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT/OBJET **REVIEW OF REGIONAL HUMAN SERVICES FUNCTIONS**

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### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**

**That Community Services Committee receive this report for information.**

### **PURPOSE**

This report outlines my intention to undertake a review of the Human Services functions of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton, which includes:

- Public Health (including Land Ambulance)
- Social Services (including Child Care)
- Homes for the Aged
- Social Housing.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **New Roles and Services**

Prior to 1998, the Region of Ottawa-Carleton's principal human services were Social Services, Public Health and Homes for the Aged.

In 1997, the Provincial Government announced major restructuring of financing and delivery of services between the Province and municipalities. Some of the philosophy and intent of the Province is reflected in the following extracts from the document Consolidation of Municipal Service Management (produced by the WDW Project January 1998):

“The realignment of provincial and municipal responsibilities announced during the week of January 13, 1997 creates the opportunity to build more effective local systems of social and community health services. Municipalities will be assuming responsibility for Ontario Works, child care, social housing, land ambulances and public health. There will be many opportunities across these programs to simplify access to services and serve clients better, while at the same time improving cost-effectiveness through clearer accountability, better co-ordination, innovation, sharing of resources, and economies of scale.”

“For example, there are opportunities for administrative rationalization of eligibility determination and income verification for Ontario Works, child care and social housing.” (This led to the establishment of an inter-ministerial/municipal group to examine these issues.)

“The municipal service managers will be responsible for determining, within provincial policies, the most effective approaches to delivering services to clients in their area. Some delivery functions will be carried out directly by the service system manager (e.g. income support components of Ontario Works) while others may be carried out by the service system manager and/or by non-government providers (e.g. land ambulance operation).”

The Region is seeking clarity regarding this new legislated role as “service systems managers” for Ontario Works, Child Care and Social Housing, and as directed by Regional Council to be service systems managers for Homelessness. In addition, many decisions are pending, with regard to downloading of land ambulance and social housing responsibilities.

Despite the lack of clarity, we recognize that, like other governments, we can no longer defer decision-making and planning in the hope of more stable times.

### Health Department Review

On May 6, 1999 the Community Services Committee approved:

*THAT the Chief Administrative Officer, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, prepare the terms of reference for an independent review of the Health Department's structures and operations, with particular regard to how the department can meet the requirements set out by the Ontario government mandatory public health guidelines; and*

*FURTHER THAT this review build on the work already done in the Corporate Review - Health Department (1996), Internal Audit Department's Review of the Health Department (1997) and Health Department Administrative Support Resources review (1998) and that the terms of reference, budget and timelines for this review be submitted to the Community Services Committee and Council for approval.*

The issue of the Health Department's compliance with the province's mandatory public health guidelines will form the subject of specific study and may require the assistance of independent consultants with expertise in the area of public health. This particular piece of the work shall be completed by the end of 1999 in order that its budgetary implications can be taken into account before Council's consideration of the 2000 budget.

It is intended that this review of the Health Department will form part of the larger comprehensive review of the Human Services function.

### Organizational Effectiveness

Within my responsibility for effective and efficient organizational design, management practices and service delivery, I have over the recent past led or supported the review and reorganization of various functions such as: planning functions, the Environment and Transportation Departments, OC Transpo and most of the administrative and support department functions.

Similarly, an examination of the human services organizational structures within the Region is timely, and would ensure that optimum service delivery is achieved in the Human Services sector. The Human Services Management Team (myself, D. Stewart, G. Armstrong, R. Cushman, J. Potter) plan to proceed with this organizational review.

The goal is to ensure a state-of-the-art integrated human services delivery model that makes the best use of resources, and delivers the most effective services to meet the Region of Ottawa Carleton's current and anticipated mandate.

### The Review Process

This outcome of the review will best position the Human Services functions to respond in a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the current and future strategic, financial and managerial challenges.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be issued seeking external professional services to undertake a review of the current functions, the changing roles and expectations, the best practices in this industry, and to recommend a broad Human Services model and particular enhancements within each of the individual Human Services functions.

The findings of the review will be reported to the Community Services Committee and Regional Council with recommendations as appropriate.

### PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public consultation is not applicable in the development of the RFP.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The review will be funded from within the budgets of the four Human Services functions. Cost will form part of the criteria against which proposals will be evaluated. Given the extensive scope and the level and variety of expertise required for this review, no cost estimate has been developed.

Once all the proposals have been assessed, I will present a recommendation to the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee seeking approval to proceed.

*Approved by*  
*C. M. Beckstead*