

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

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE	20 August 1997
TO/DEST.	Coordinator Community Services Committee
FROM/EXP.	Commissioner Social Services Department
SUBJECT/OBJET	ONTARIO WORKS BUSINESS PLAN - UPDATE

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council:

- a) **Approve the adjusted service targets and budget as proposed;**
- b) **Receive the provincial response relating to Council's amendment to the Community Placement standards.**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Regional Council on significant changes to Ottawa-Carleton's proposed service targets and budget for the final Ontario Works Business Plan. It also provides updates on the motions passed by Regional Council in April 1997 amending the Business Plan.

BACKGROUND

On May 2, 1996, Community Services Committee received an information report entitled Ontario Works (OW), apprising the Committee of the upcoming Provincial initiative. In March 1997, Community Services Committee received the Ottawa-Carleton Business Plan for Ontario Works. The Business Plan outlined overall information about program design and delivery, including service targets and budgets. Community Services Committee and Regional Council approved the Plan, including amendments related to Community Participation Placements, agency funding and a motion to create an independent volunteer panel to evaluate the success of the program. The

Department subsequently undertook negotiations with the Province and developed a final Business Plan based on these negotiations.

DISCUSSION

1. Adjustments to Service Targets and Budgets

Service Targets

Community Services Committee and Council approved the motion that:

- 1 b) *should the negotiation process with Queen's Park lead to significant changes to the Business Plan, that such changes be brought back to Committee and Council for approval.*

The Department recommended what it considered to be realistic service targets in the Business Plan approved by Regional Council. The Department took a conservative approach in order to successfully achieve the targets through a gradual implementation of the program over three years.

Subsequently, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) refused to accept these targets. A letter from the Ministry dated July 15, 1997 indicated that the Department would need to meet bottom-line Provincial requirements, i.e. a minimum of 10% of a municipality's employable caseload in Employment Placement and a minimum of 15% of the employable caseload in Community Participation (see correspondence in Annex A).

Therefore the following adjustments have been made to Employment Placement and Community Participation targets:

Service Targets - Employment Placement

Previous Targets - EP	1997	1998	1999
Employment Placement			
# of participants with requirements placed in jobs	57	225	225
# of participants without requirements placed in jobs	6	25	25
Total	63	250	250

New Targets - EP	1997	1998	1999
Employment Placement			
# of participants with requirements placed in jobs	63	252	252
#of participants without requirements placed in jobs	6	23	23
Total	69	275	275

Service Targets - Community Participation

Previous Targets - CP	1997	1998	1999
Community Participation*			
# of placement/months for participants with requirements	57	225	225
# of placement/months for participants without requirements	6	25	25
Total	63	250	250

New Targets - CP	1997	1998	1999
Community Participation*			
# of placement/months for participants with requirements	144	745	1,238
# of placement/months for participants without requirements	16	80	137
Total	160	825	1,375

*Placement/month is defined as 70 hours per month. Therefore, it is anticipated that there will be a number of participants involved to equal one placement/month.

Budget

Ontario Works funding will replace the existing Employment Programs funding effective October 1, 1997. The 1997 revised budget is attached. (see Annex B)

Funding under Ontario Works is contingent on achieving the negotiated service targets. In 1997 an additional \$19,618 of Regional funding is required. Funding for 1998 will be determined as part of the 1998 Budget process.

2. Concerns Related to Community Participation

Community Services Committee and Council approved a number of related motions concerning the Community Participation (CP) component of the Business Plan, as follows:

1 c) The Social Services Department work to resolve the following community concerns:

i) the administrative cost of community placements for agencies

The Department will share the fees for Community Placements with agencies based on the following plan developed in consultation with community agencies:

% of CP Funding Available to Agencies

Community project placements*	100%
Placements with community agencies **	50%
Self-initiated placements	variable (depending on circumstances)

*Community organizes project.

**The Department matches clients to available placements.

ii) the administration of sanctions for recipients and the policing role that may have to be played by agencies

The Department was able to negotiate with MCSS an openness to self-initiated placements based on a two-party agreement between the Department and the client. The Department is developing the process for self-initiated placements.

Where a 3-party agreement is in place, agencies will be required to report attendance and to evaluate participant performance. However, any decisions around sanctions would be entirely the responsibility of the Department. Moreover, the goal of the Department is to resolve difficulties and re-negotiate service plans.

iii) the lack of clarity on agency involvement in selecting and screening participants

In all cases, agencies will be involved in the screening and selection of participants. The Department will respect agencies' own processes for screening and selecting volunteers, and agencies will never be required to accept a participant who does not meet their needs.

iv) the limited placement choices for francophone clients

The Department has bilingual Placement Development staff who will actively solicit francophone placement opportunities.

- v) *the difficulty for agencies to plan and provide continuity of service with short-term placements*

No change has been made to the six-month limit on placements in the Provincial program guidelines. The Department is restricted by these guidelines. However, it should be noted that it is possible to extend placements to 11 months in cases where training is involved in the placement.

- vi) *the redefinition of disability*

and

- vii) *the impact on who will be required to participate in the program*

New legislation affecting people with disabilities has been tabled. However, the detailed regulations, including the definition of disability, are not yet available. The Department will monitor this issue as information becomes available.

3. Concerns related to Agency Funding

Community Services Committee and Council approved the motion:

- 1 d) *That community agencies that receive regional funding be assured they will not be expected to provide workfare placements as a condition of that funding.*

The Department has stated this commitment explicitly in all Departmental consultations and focus groups with external agencies.

4. Amendment to Standards for Community Participation Placements

The Provincial Guidelines for the OW program specified that all community placements will be subject to the following standards:

1. No more than six months at any one placement;
2. No more than 70 hours per month (hours not to exceed the participants benefit level/minimum wage);
3. No minimum monthly hours;
4. Non-profit or public sector organization must agree to supervise the placement; participating organizations must comply with applicable labour relations, occupational health and safety, human rights and freedom of information and protection of privacy regulations;
5. The Department will have an appeal process in place to resolve any issues that arise;
6. Community Placements must not violate collective agreements;

7. Community placements must not undertake work which was performed through a paid position with the past two years.

Community Services Committee and Council amended the Business Plan to include the following additional standard for community placements in Ottawa-Carleton:

- 1 e) *Placements cannot be made in workplaces that have seen downsizing or layoffs in previous 24 months.*

The attached correspondence from the Ministry of Community and Social Services expresses concern that this additional standard would make the CP component unworkable by removing too many placement opportunities (Annex A). The Department has also been advised verbally by the local area office that a Business Plan including this standard would not receive Provincial approval. Therefore, this additional standard has not been included in Ottawa-Carleton's final Business Plan.

5. Volunteer Panel

Community Service Committee and Council passed the following amendment to the Business Plan:

- 3) *That an independent volunteer panel be struck to evaluate how successful the Region's Ontario Works program has been and report at the one-year and two-year marks to Regional Council. That this panel include representatives of social service agencies, business, academia, labour, the broader community and social assistance recipients.*

The Department has been approached by a local group external to the Department, comprising social service agencies, the Social Planning Council, labour and clients, that has expressed interest in forming the independent volunteer panel. The Department clarified its need for constructive external criticism, and the local group is considering whether or not to take on this role. The group has also indicated that, should it go forward, it would undertake to include representation from business and academia.

SUMMARY

This report provides information on increased service targets and budget adjustments to Ottawa-Carleton's Business Plan to reflect Provincial minimum requirements. It also provides an update on the motions passed by Regional Council amending the Business Plan and the Department's follow-up to these motions.

*Approved by
Dick Stewart*

CP/

Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

10 Rideau Street
Ottawa ON K1N 9J1
(613) 234-1188

Ministère des
Services sociaux
et communautaires

10, rue Rideau
Ottawa ON K1N 9J1
(613) 234-1188



July 15, 1997

Mr. Dick Stewart
Commissioner of Social Services
Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton
5th floor
495 Richmond Road
Ottawa, ON
K2A 0G3

Dear Mr. ~~Dick~~ Stewart:

As we continue negotiations on the design and implementation of Ontario Works in Ottawa-Carleton, I should like to respond to two areas in the Business Plan presented to Regional Council on April 9, 1997:

1. Service Targets

The Provincial Guidelines for Ontario Works stipulate that at program maturity (by the end of 1998), municipalities should have a balanced program and funding approach with comparable levels of participation and cost for the Community Participation and Employment Placement components of Ontario Works.

Another communiqué on this issue, released in April 1997 after your Business Plan had been submitted to Council, provides explicit information on the provincial requirements for service levels in Ontario Works' program components at program maturity: a minimum of 15% of a municipality's employable caseload in Community Participation and a minimum of 10% of the employable caseload in Employment Placement.

The service targets in your Business Plan to Council do not meet the requirement for a balanced program by the end of 1998. The Ottawa Area is not prepared to approve your Business Plan with these service targets and expects that they will be revised to reflect the provincial requirements for appropriate service levels at program maturity as documented above.

2. Community Services Committee Recommendation 1 (e) proposes that an additional standard be added to the section in your business plan on Community Participation stating that:

"Placements cannot be made in workplaces that have seen downsizing or lay offs in the previous 24 months".

The Area Office is concerned that this recommendation will unduly limit your department in its efforts to develop a range of community placements. The net effect would be a reduction in choices and opportunities for participants as well as restrictions on non-profit organizations, interested in supporting their clients in innovative projects within their organizations.

It should be noted that the Provincial Guidelines for Ontario Works address the issue of displacement of paid employees by Ontario Works' participants through the following standards:

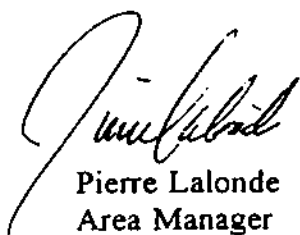
- o the placement must not violate any collective agreement provision governing the assignment of work, including the contracting out of work, e.g. participants in unpaid placements must not do bargaining unit work.
- o displacement: community or paid employment must not displace any paid employment in the participating organization (including any associated or related organization), e.g.
 - duties currently held by an employee
 - duties performed by an employee who has been laid off and has recall rights under a collective agreement
 - duties of an employee who is on a leave of absence
 - a collection of duties previously held by employees, within a minimum of two years.

It is also worth noting the experience of first site municipalities in implementing the community participation component of Ontario Works. Many of these municipalities have found that community placements are a popular choice of activity for participants. This may result in clients having to wait until an appropriate placement becomes available. Unduly restricting the development of placements could result in lengthy waiting lists for participants in Ottawa-Carleton.

For these reasons, we recommend that your Department discuss with the Community Services Committee the removal of this amendment to your Business Plan .

I trust that this information will assist your Department in developing your Ontario Works' program by clarifying provincial expectations and standards,

Sincerely,



Pierre Lalonde
Area Manager

c.c.: Iona Quinn
Bob Crook

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA CARLETON

ANNEX B

	RMO 1997 APPROVED BUDGET	REVISED REQUIREMENT			DIFFERENCE
		JAN-SEPT	OCT-DEC	TOTAL	
Salary and Benefits	3,324,445	2,486,503	850,511	3,337,014	12,569
Program Costs	867,648	648,953	203,509	852,462	(15,186)
	4,192,093	3,135,456	1,054,020	4,189,476	(2,617)
Community Participation			64,867	64,867	64,867
Payments to Employment Placement and Self Employment Agencies			21,466	21,466	21,466
ERE Supports	686,031	513,114	520,000	1,033,114	347,083
CPE Supports			278,000	278,000	278,000
Disability Access			10,000	10,000	10,000
Child Care-Informal	346,315	259,025	86,500	345,525	(790)
Child Care-Formal	828,049	619,335	192,146	811,481	(16,568)
	6,052,488	4,526,930	2,226,999	6,753,929	701,441
Provincial Funding	5,139,582	3,847,406	1,973,999	5,821,405	681,823
Net	912,906	679,524	253,000	932,524	19,618