

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

REPORT  
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.  
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DATE 4 June 1998

TO/DEST. Coordinator, Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Commissioner  
Social Services Department

SUBJECT/OBJET **PRIORITIES FOR SOCIAL SERVICES GRANTS**

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Community Services Committee approve the following priorities for the 1999 and 2000 allocation of project grants:**

- 1. Partnerships that help create employment initiatives;**
- 2. Community projects that help people cope with insufficient income and the effects of living in poverty, and;**
- 3. Services to ethnic and racial minorities and aboriginal groups.**

### **PURPOSE**

This report defines the 1999/2000 funding priorities for project grants.

### **BACKGROUND**

As established since 1995, the Social Services Department plans to review applications for project grants in 1999 and 2000 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 the fall of 1996, the Social Services Department and United Way/Centraide Ottawa-Carleton sponsored the development of 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.

On May 13, 1998, a number of recommendations resulting from the People's Hearings/Audiences populaires were presented to Regional Council.

Both the Poverty Funding Framework and the People's Hearings/Audiences populaires acknowledge that hardship has increased for people living in poverty. Within the context of diminished financial and personal supports to the poor, both acknowledge the importance of building individual and community capacity to help cope with insufficient income and explore new partnerships to deliver services and help people towards economic self-sufficiency.

## DISCUSSION

The Department identified three strategic performance goals for 1997-99: assist clients to obtain jobs, reduce reliance of social assistance, and assist clients to meet basic needs. These goals are implemented through the provision of employment support services in three Regional Employment Resource Centres, the purchase of training for clients, the development of community placement opportunities to help clients gain work experience, the provision of employment placement and self employment services by community agencies and the purchase of personal support services from community social services agencies. The Department will also focus future efforts on the development of employment opportunities in partnership with the business and non profit sectors.

Both the Poverty Funding Framework and the People's Hearings/Audiences populaires' recommendations encompass all strategic goals of the Department. The Poverty Funding Framework report concludes that funding in the area of poverty can be considered as a continuum which includes the five overlapping categories of; basic needs, strategies promoting self-sufficiency, strategies targeting high risk groups, community economic development initiatives, and advocacy and social action/planning. The People's Hearings/Audience populaires developed recommendations, among others, related to job training and job creation schemes and to ensuring adequate financial and other supports.

### Partnerships That Help Create Employment Initiatives

Partnerships between the business sector and social and health service organizations are needed to foster long-term employment development. Regional funds for project grants addressing this priority are intended to support outreach and coordination of activities related to community initiatives start-up. The business sector and other stakeholders may participate by providing access to capital or start-up loans or by sharing their expertise. Partnerships with the business sector and other stakeholders will need to be demonstrated.

## Community Projects That Help Cope With Insufficient Income And The Effects Of Living In Poverty

Present resources and government income supplement programs are not adequate for people to meet their basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. Initiatives which are effective in helping people cope with and address poverty issues share the following characteristics: the programs build on the strengths of individuals and the community; programs are developed by and with persons with low income so they are responsive to the reality of their lives; programs have a holistic approach that tap the resources of a wide range of partners. Resources that help people work together include a staff person from a community-based organization to help initiate programs and support their development and a community location in which to meet.

Strategies are required to assist people overcome both personal and structural barriers, enhance their ability to cope with poverty, prevent or reduce reliance on social services, and work towards economic self-sufficiency.

### 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 organizations working in these areas often represent the essential intervention enabling the integration of these groups within our community.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

During the development of the Poverty Funding Framework in the fall of 1996, discussions occurred with key informants, groups of people on low income, agencies funded by RMOC Social Services and United Way/Centraide Ottawa-Carleton, and a reference group representing a wide range of perspectives on poverty.

Throughout October 1997, close to 100 people, all of whom were living in poverty and its repercussions on their lives and those of their children, spoke about their difficulties as well as their strengths, their resources for coping, and their ideas for change. These witness testimonials (Peoples' Hearings/Audiences populaires) resulted in a number of recommendations presented to Regional Council on May 13, 1998.

The Department has traditionally worked in collaboration with community partners and values their knowledge and expertise. The Poverty Funding Framework and the People's Hearings/Audiences populaires provide the information that support the project grant funding priorities proposed for 1999 and 2000.

## FUNDING IMPLICATION

It is anticipated that \$352,981 will be available for project grants in 1999 and 2000.

CONCLUSION

The Social Services Department recommends that partnerships that help create employment initiatives, community projects that help people cope with insufficient income and the effects of living in poverty, and services to ethnic and racial minorities and aboriginal groups be given priority for project funding in 1999 and 2000.

*Approved by Dick Stewart*

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