

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

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 13 March 1998

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator, Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee

FROM/EXP. Acting Director, Information and Public Affairs

SUBJECT/OBJET **RESPONSE TO INQUIRY NO. C&E 12 (97)
CORPORATE IDENTIFICATION FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
PROJECTS**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee and Council approve:

- 1. That signage for all Regional construction projects clearly identify the Region of Ottawa-Carleton as the lead agency for the construction project, the expected time frame for construction work and the Region's Information Number of 560-1335.**
- 2. That all Regional facilities be clearly identified as a facility of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton.**
- 3. That all service providers under contract with RMOC be clearly identified as providing a service on behalf of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton (including all garbage and recycling vehicles).**
- 4. That staff be clearly identified as staff members of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton when interacting directly with residents/clients.**
- 5. That the Regional information number 560-1335 continue to be featured in all advertisements, publications, and signage as the telephone number to obtain information on Regional services.**
- 6. That all new services being transferred to the Region of Ottawa-Carleton be clearly identified as receiving funding from RMOC until such time as the RMOC assumes responsibility for service delivery.**

DISCUSSION

The RMOC offers a range of services to the residents of Ottawa-Carleton, including public transportation and road maintenance, social assistance, care for the elderly, drinking water supply, and public health inspections. Although all of these services are valued as essential by residents of Ottawa-Carleton, they may not all be clearly identified or readily recognized by residents as services provided by Regional Government.

As public feedback continues to be a priority for the Region of Ottawa-Carleton, and that increasingly residents are requesting transparency in the delivery of municipal services, it has never been more critical to ensure that Regional services continue to be accessible, and recognized as such.

Over the years, the RMOC has developed a solid reputation for delivering good quality municipal services that are responsive to the needs of our residents. In order to maintain the integrity of Regional services in the wake of the transfer of new services from the province, it is incumbent on the RMOC to ensure it continues to be truly accountable for programs for which it is responsible.

The litmus test for accountability is the ability of residents to quickly identify the service provider and to be able to get in touch with them. In 1990, RMOC made a decision not to introduce an automated telephone system for external client relations. Instead, a commitment was made to ensure that a human contact would be available around the clock to deal with inquiries and emergency situations. Today, the Region's 24-Hour Information Centre not only responds to inquiries about Regional services, but also maintains a data base of information on all municipal services. Residents who call the Region's 560-1335 telephone number can not only obtain information about Regional services, but can also be transferred to any other municipal service providers in Ottawa-Carleton. In 1997, the 24-Hour Regional Information Centre handled over 415,000 calls. Over 135,000 of these were directly transferred to other service providers.

Having already established the ability to respond effectively to residents through the Region's 24-Hour Information Centre, it is now timely to ensure that all Regional services are properly identified as being delivered by or on behalf of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton. This will ensure that RMOC remains fully accountable and responsive to the residents we serve.

The following recommendations will ensure that the RMOC is quickly and easily identified with each one of the services it provides, and that it maintains total accountability for services delivered through purchase of service agreement.

CONSTRUCTION SIGNAGE

With the construction season gearing up, it will be important to erect signage that clearly identifies the Region of Ottawa-Carleton as the construction project manager. The signage will also serve to indicate the time frame for the construction project and the Regional information number of 560-1335.

With construction signs currently required on all construction sites, the emphasis will now be placed on ensuring the clarity of the messages communicated on the signs, as well as prominently

displaying the RMOC's role in the project. When projects are undertaken jointly with other levels of government, if RMOC is lead project manager, it will appear as such. Other construction partners will also be recognized on the signs.

REGIONAL FACILITIES

The RMOC has over 150 facilities throughout Ottawa-Carleton. These facilities house everything from administrative offices to water pumping stations. In many cases, these facilities are service access points for residents who interact directly with Regional staff. Examples of services being delivered through Regional facilities include social assistance programs, care for the elderly, child care services, and issuing of permits. Some of the programs are delivered directly by Regional staff whereas in other cases, the RMOC has contracted for these services with outside service providers. In all cases, it is imperative that clients of these services understand the relationship between the service provider and the RMOC.

Clear guidelines will be developed for signage for all regional facilities. As part of the replacement schedule, new signs will be installed in keeping with the guidelines. Furthermore, for facilities that do not currently display signage indicating that it is a regional facility, the Information and Public Affairs Office will work with Property Services to proceed with the installation of signs that will clearly identify that it is a Region of Ottawa-Carleton facility. These guidelines will specify the requirements for both outdoor and indoor signage, the application of the corporate logo, the wording to appear in both English and French, etc.

Priority will be given to facilities that currently do not display any signage. For regional programs that operate in rented space, temporary signage will also be erected to ensure that the accountability remains with the RMOC.

PURCHASE OF SERVICE

When services to residents are provided through service or contract agreement on behalf of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton, it becomes even more critical that RMOC be clearly identified as being responsible for the program or service. Concerns or requests for information on that particular service can only be pursued if the Region of Ottawa-Carleton is clearly identified. Vehicles providing services on a contracted basis such as those involved in waste or recycling collection should be clearly labelled as providing a service on behalf of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton. Similarly, contracting companies involved in road repairs should also be identified as performing work on behalf of the RMOC.

For other types of services that are delivered through a workforce other than regional staff, it continues to be important that the RMOC be recognized as the funding agency. Signage indicating that the program is funded in part by the Region of Ottawa-Carleton would be featured in an appropriate location. This would also be the case for community projects that are funded through any of the Regional Grant programs. All grants contract should clearly stipulate the requirement for appropriate recognition of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton's contribution through signage or other means.

STAFF IDENTIFICATION

Whether in schools, community centres, homes, or meeting with community groups, Regional staff are in direct contact with residents on an ongoing basis. Once again, it is imperative that staff are well identified as they are called upon to provide various services.

For staff members who wear a uniform, a construction hat, lab coat or other types of garment, the Region of Ottawa-Carleton would clearly appear on the garment. It is proposed that these changes would occur as the various garments are being replaced. Badges would be available to other staff members who interact regularly with the public. These badges would once again feature, in both official languages, the Region of Ottawa-Carleton and the program being delivered.

24-HOUR REGIONAL INFORMATION CENTRE

As was stated earlier, the RMOC has established a strong communication function with our residents through the Region's 24-Hour Information Centre. The availability of this telephone number will continue to be featured in all advertising, publications, signage and other appropriate venues.

NEW REGIONAL SERVICES

The transfer of new responsibilities from the province will lead to a greater range of services being funded by the Region of Ottawa-Carleton. As new services are being transferred and become the full responsibility of the RMOC, it will be important to ensure that recipients of these services are aware of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton's role in the service.

In the interim, for services that are currently funded by the RMOC, signage similar to the purchase of service agreement would be installed. This signage will indicate that the program or service is funded (in part or entirely) by the Region of Ottawa-Carleton. As the RMOC assumes responsibility for service delivery, the signage would then reflect this fact.

CONSULTATION

Many staff from departments across the Corporation have been consulted during the development of this response. Departments will also be directly involved in the implementation of the recommendations.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Funds for the implementation of the recommendations will be drawn from specific project accounts throughout the Corporation.

CONCLUSION

Over the years, the RMOC has developed several innovative ways of communicating with its residents. Whether through the 24-Hour Regional Information Centre, the Intranet and Freenet, the touch-tone telephone line, community and daily newspapers, or direct mail initiatives, the Region of Ottawa-Carleton has always valued the need for providing information and receiving feed-back. As the role of the RMOC expands, that commitment to openness and transparency in the delivery of services and programs will continue to be priority.

The proposed recommendations will play a critical role in ensuring that service delivery continues to be open and accessible, and that services under RMOC's authority are easily identified by all taxpayers of Ottawa-Carleton. The ease with which residents can recognize regional services will contribute significantly to the RMOC's ability to respond to the needs of the community.

*Approved by
L. Lavoie*

LL/jl