

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

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 3 December 1996

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

FROM/EXP. Regional Chair

SUBJECT/OBJET **REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE IN OTTAWA-CARLETON**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee recommend Council:

- 1. Approve the guiding principles in the report of the Chief Administrative Officer, Review of Governance in Ottawa-Carleton dated 13 November 1996;**
- 2. Endorse the request by the Chair to The Honourable Al Leach, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, for the appointment of a provincial mediator to assist the Regional Municipality and the area municipalities to determine a mediated solution to municipal restructuring and service delivery changes in Ottawa-Carleton in time for the 1997 municipal elections.**

BACKGROUND

When the governance review and examination of services was requested by Regional Council in July 1996 and September 1995, it was felt that there would be generous time available for study, discussion, consultation and debate before forwarding a final position to the provincial government.

In fact, many events have nearly passed by these reviews. The Who Does What initiative has kept to its very tight schedule and is virtually complete. Provincial positions on local government reorganization in Metro Toronto and Hamilton-Wentworth are either complete or imminent. Provincial economic forecasts and grant projections are proceeding. Each week brings significant announcements and changes to the system of local government whether relating to structure, accountability, service delivery responsibilities or funding.

These uncertainties are making it increasingly difficult for municipalities to co-operate and co-ordinate their activities. Governance and service delivery in this region must, for the sake of our constituents, function in a cohesive manner that reflects the best interests of the public we were elected to serve. This breakdown has polarized our municipal partners and has gone so far that Mme. G. Lalonde, a former Mayor of The City of Vanier and a former member of the Regional Council, as well as being a member of the Who Does What Panel, has asked the provincial government to appoint a mediator to help Ottawa-Carleton resolve its impasse. The Council of the City of Ottawa has made a similar request.

I have also written to Minister Leach asking for the assistance of a mediator. There is only one taxpayer in Ottawa-Carleton and each one, regardless of where they live in this region, is entitled to public services delivered by an accountable, responsible, properly functioning, local government or local government system. Recent events suggest that survival has taken precedence over service. Many local government studies have been done over the years and for each of these, the public has been duly consulted. Now is the time for the elected officials to bring this local government evolution to a satisfactory conclusion.

It may be trite to say again that "one size does not fit all", however, no two regions are identical. The Who Does What Panel recognized these distinct characteristics and circumstances when they divided their consideration of governance into four categories, namely the North, regions within the GTA, regions outside the GTA, and Counties and separated cities.

Restructuring in Ottawa-Carleton should not be a borrowed solution from somewhere else. In recommending the appointment of a provincial mediator, I am not abdicating our responsibility, nor asking the provincial government to decide our future for us. Rather, it is my opinion that with the assistance of an external mediator to assist Ottawa-Carleton municipalities and the Region, we will reach a "made in Ottawa-Carleton" consensus on the form of local government best suited to serve the present and future needs of the residents of Ottawa-Carleton.

*Approved by
Peter Clark*