

1. REGION'S TASK FORCE ON EMPLOYMENT: "PARTNERS FOR JOBS"

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve this report and the Region's role to provide overall leadership for the Strategic Directions contained in the Final Report of the Task Force on Employment.

DOCUMENTATION

1. Social Services Commissioner's report dated 4 Oct 99 is immediately attached.
immediately
2. Extract of Draft Community Services Committee Minute, 21 Oct 99, follows the report and contains a record of all votes.
3. Report, "Partners for Jobs/Partenaires pour l'emploi", June/juin 1999, and list of Projects Currently Underway are on file with the Regional Clerk.

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.
 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 4 October 1999

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator
 Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Commissioner
 Social Services

SUBJECT/OBJET **REGION'S TASK FORCE ON EMPLOYMENT :
 PARTNERS FOR JOBS**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Services Committee approve this report and the Region's role to provide overall leadership for the Strategic Directions contained in the Final Report of the Task Force on Employment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 1999, the Region's Task Force on Employment: Partners for Jobs was established. The objective of the Task Force was to develop an Employment Strategy targeted to the unemployed, the underemployed and social assistance clients of Ottawa-Carleton.

The Final Report of the Task Force on Employment: Partners for Jobs has been completed. It contains strategic directions and priorities developed by the members of the Task Force and Working Group. It also integrates feedback from individuals and organizations involved in the consultation process. Please refer to Annex 1 for details on the Final Report of the Task Force on Employment: Partners for Jobs.

The Task Force has recommended that a Partners for Jobs: Action Phase be established until March 2000. The Social Services will have a leadership role to coordinate, chair, convene meetings and to provide the required support and resources to this initiative.

The mandate of the Partners for Jobs: Action Phase will be:

- (1) to strengthen the networks established with the various sectors (employers, labour, education, training, community agencies, economic development agencies, people living on low incomes, etc.),
- (2) to continue to identify new partnerships related to employment development and,
- (3) to operationalize the strategic directions and priorities contained in the Final Report.

BACKGROUND

In January 1999, the Region's Task Force on Employment: Partners for Jobs was established. The Task Force was co-chaired by John Kelly, CEO, JetForm Corporation and Andrée Lortie, President of La Cité collégiale. The Task Force was assisted by a Working Group chaired by Dick Stewart, Commissioner of Social Services. The Task Force and Working Group were comprised of representatives of: the business community; the francophone community; labour; the educational sector; the Local Training Advisory Board; community agencies; community members; the health services sector; economic development agencies; the Ottawa Board of Trade and Regroupement des gens d'affaires; social policy advocates and representatives from the Task Force on Poverty. In addition, there were representatives of all three levels of government.

The Task Force was given a mandate by the Chair of the Region to develop an Employment Strategy within 6 months. The goals of the Employment Strategy were to:

- (1) integrate labour force development with economic development;
- (2) reduce and prevent unemployment;
- (3) increase labour force participation;
- (4) identify and reduce skill shortages;
- (5) increase access to training and employment services;
- (6) reduce barriers to employment;
- (7) strengthen and develop the labour force and,
- (8) create a sustainable framework for labour force development.

The focus of the Employment Strategy was on the employment needs of the unemployed, the underemployed and social assistance clients.

The Task Force and Working Group members identified short and longer term strategies including nine pilot initiatives to strengthen the workforce, increase participation in the labour force, remove barriers to employment and provide supports and training. The Final Report identified 9 Strategic Directions and 34 specific actions.

CONSULTATION

The Task Force and Working Group members developed an Interim Report and consulted with representatives of their networks. In addition, a web site was developed to provide information to the community-at-large and to solicit ideas, comments and suggestions related to employment development. The Interim Report was placed on the web site as well. A telephone access line was established to receive telephone comments on the work of the Task Force. Several consultations were organized with members of the general public who expressed an interest in the work of the Task Force.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The strategic directions which have been identified by the Task Force require the Region to provide overall leadership for the development of a comprehensive, community-based Employment Strategy. The Region is required to ensure that there is an ongoing structure to support, implement, maintain and update the strategy. There is also an expectation that the momentum will continue to build on the pilot initiatives identified by the Task Force and to further identify additional opportunities. The strategy acknowledges that there are many public policies and program rules which need to be changed in order to remove barriers to employment. The Region will be expected to work in collaboration with other levels of government to implement the strategy. One of the requirements will be improvements to the labour force information system as a foundation for the strategy. In addition, the role of technology will be examined in such areas as training, labour force information and literacy. The partners will seek alternative funding arrangements for a range of supports to employment development and the Region will develop a public awareness campaign.

The Pilot Projects which have been identified by members of the Task Force and Working Group are being implemented. Policies will be changed and emergency and transition employment supports will be developed.

The Final Report identifies strategic directions and priorities as a foundation for the development of the local workforce and prevention of unemployment in our community. This framework acknowledges that all sectors of the community have a role to play and that partnerships are essential to make this initiative a reality.

The Task Force has recommended that a Partners for Jobs: Action Phase be established for a 6 month period effective October, 1999 - March, 2000. The Action Phase will have a mandate to strengthen the networks; to continue to focus on employment; to advise and recommend specific actions to Regional Council, the Provincial and Federal governments and to implement the identified strategic directions and priorities.

The next steps will be for members of the Partners for Jobs: Action Phase to take the strategic directions and priorities identified in the attached report and to proceed with development and implementation of the identified initiatives. A progress report will be submitted in April, 2000.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The preliminary cost of the 9 Pilot Projects is approximately \$591,000. The projects expect to receive funding from the federal, provincial and regional governments as well as the private sector. The Regional contribution to date is \$122,400, allocated as follows:

(1) Foreign Trained Teacher Project :	\$ 43,400
(2) La Clé de l'opportunité :	\$ 54,000
(3) Biotechnology Project :	\$ 25,000
Total Regional contribution	<u>\$122,400</u>

Regional Social Services is not requesting any additional funding in 1999 . It is anticipated that any additional funding required will be provided for the pilots through the existing 1999 budget.

CONCLUSION

The Task Force on Employment has achieved its objective of developing an Employment Strategy within six months. The Task Force has brought together representatives from business; education; training; community agencies; advocacy groups; economic development agencies; people living on low incomes etc. to share expertise and to develop new partnerships.

The Employment Strategy is a framework of change and action. It identifies 9 strategic priorities and 34 actions which are the foundation for the development of the local workforce and prevention of unemployment in this community. The Strategy acknowledges that all sectors of the community have a role to play and that partnerships are essential to make this initiative a reality.

The next steps will be for members of the Action Phase (October, 1999 - March, 2000) to implement the Strategic Directions and Priorities, to develop additional partnerships related to employment development and to report the progress of the Action Phase in April, 2000.

Approved by
D. Stewart

Extract of Draft Minute
Community Services Committee
21 October 1999

REGION'S TASK FORCE ON EMPLOYMENT: "PARTNERS FOR JOBS"

- Social Services Commissioner's report dated 4 Oct 99
- "Partners for Jobs/Partenaires pour l'emploi", June/juin 1999, issued separately
- Projects Currently Underway/Projets déjà en cours, issued separately

The Regional Chair, Bob Chiarelli, introduced the item. He began by saying the Task Force presented an unique opportunity for the partners to come to the table with a collective agenda. Chair Chiarelli acknowledged the Task Force Co-Chairs, Mr. John Kelly from JetForm Corporation and Ms. Andrée Lortie, from la Cité collégiale.

Chair Chiarelli spoke about the Task Force identifying nine pilot projects to strengthen the workforce, as well as nine Strategic Directions and a number of specific actions. He expressed his pleasure in participating as Regional Chair and in the fact that all was done within existing budgets. Chair Chiarelli highlighted the contribution made to the Task Force by the Chair of the Community Services Committee, Alex Munter, as well as that of the Social Services Commissioner, Dick Stewart and Réjean Chartrand, Executive Director, Economic Affairs Division

D. Stewart introduced Ms. Linda Capperault, Director, Community Relations and Employment Development Division, Social Services Department, Ms. Colleen Hendrick, Social Services Manager, and Chris Michaud, Project Manager who were present to answer questions of the Committee. Commissioner Stewart presented highlights of "Partners for Jobs", the Final Report of the Task Force on Employment. He spoke about the nine Strategic Directions identified therein, some of which include:

- the Region providing overall leadership;
- implementation of pilot projects and identifying new initiatives;
- identifying public policies and program rules;
- working with the federal and provincial governments;
- seeking alternate funding for supports.

Mr. Stewart said there are three fundamental principles underlying the report:

- economic growth depends on a skilled workforce;
- people want to work;
- investing in people pays off.

Commissioner Stewart spoke about key opportunities afforded by the Task Force on Employment. These include:

- integrating economic development and workforce development;
- supporting people to obtain and retain employment;
- customizing training to meet labour market needs.

Extract of Draft Minute
Community Services Committee
21 October 1999

He described the next steps in the process:

- a six-month action plan ending in March 2000;
- reinvestment of National Child Benefit Program funds to support employment and to mobilize the community;
- development of an ongoing structure to integrate economic and workforce development.

Mr. Stewart concluded his presentation by noting there needs to be continued government and community involvement to sustain those initiatives currently underway and the ones that are forthcoming. Replying to a question from Councillor L. Davis, Commissioner Stewart explained that efforts in the United States are focused on workforce retention. This is done through measures such as providing affordable child care and customized training; as well, the tax structures are different. Councillor Davis wanted to know whether there was interaction with the federal government on workforce development. Mr. Stewart indicated some work has been undertaken in partnership with local Members of Parliament.

Councillor A. Loney asked for additional details about the partnership with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) at the employment facility in the Lincoln Heights Shopping Centre. Commissioner Stewart described the extant arrangements, noting that another joint centre may open in the east end in one and one-half to two years. When asked to comment on the Province's reaction to this arrangement, Mr. Stewart pointed out this is an emerging service model everywhere in the Province, in the absence of a federal/provincial strategy on employment.

Committee Chair A. Munter asked whether the Region is being penalized for the 25 people currently working at a local high tech company. Commissioner Stewart indicated there have been verbal admonishments, but as yet, no funds have been taken away. He noted that the target for community placement remains 3500 people, and likely there will be 300 to 400 in the next 12-month period. He indicated there is no information available on how the Province intends to penalize municipalities that don't meet their targets.

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve this report and the Region's role to provide overall leadership for the Strategic Directions contained in the Final Report of the Task Force on Employment.

CARRIED