

Clause No. 19 in Report No. 9 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on May 15, 2014.

19
2010-2014 COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS
COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendation contained in the report dated April 16, 2014 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report highlights Council's major accomplishments achieved between 2010 and 2014 through the Community and Health Services Department.

3. BACKGROUND

Council, through the Community and Health Services portion of Committee of the Whole, has provided York Region residents with increased supports and services

During the 2010 – 2014 term of Council, more than 150 actions and initiatives were implemented to support the health and wellbeing of York Region residents and communities, enhancing the mandated programs and services delivered through the Community and Health Services Department. These initiatives were planned, funded or approved through *Investing in our Communities: A Multi-Year Plan for the Community and Health Services Department, 2010-2015*.

Council approved the Community and Health Services Multi-Year Plan to guide investment and provide additional supports for York Region residents

The Community and Health Services Multi-Year Plan (MYP) was developed in response to two requests from Council:

1. A strategic framework to guide the delivery of the programs and services of the newly amalgamated Community and Health Services Department (2008)
2. A plan to set priorities and guide the re-investment of Regional funds

The MYP was drafted with input from Council and almost 900 stakeholders. It highlighted key human service issues and challenges facing York Region; identified strategic directions, broad goals and actions to respond to these issues; informed where new investments were needed most; and provided a framework for prioritizing those initiatives.

Council approved the final MYP in September 2010, with the following goals:

1. Contribute to Regional economic vitality by helping low income residents with access to basic needs, and with finding and keeping jobs.
2. Support healthy communities through a broad range of housing choices and supports to meet the diverse needs of residents.
3. Optimize the health of the community for all ages and stages through health protection, prevention and promotion initiatives.
4. Strengthen our neighbourhoods now and in the future by supporting children, families and youth to fulfill their potential.
5. Foster social inclusion and economic opportunities by addressing the needs of a growing and diverse community.
6. Deliver a more integrated human service system that supports effective community planning and quality services.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Council met the needs of many York Region residents by approving or funding more than 150 initiatives in support of the MYP goals

The MYP became a tool for guiding and informing Community and Health Services business and service planning and aligning the department's activities to other Regional strategies. Initiatives were added each year to address the six MYP goals. Through Council's approval and provision of funding, more than 150 initiatives have been undertaken.

Council directed funds and approved initiatives to help low income residents access basic needs, and to find and keep jobs (Goal 1)

- From 2010 to 2013, 1,425 clients were provided with vocational testing, job-related skills training and life skills programming in preparation for entering the workforce. In 2013 new employment initiatives included helping clients with self-employment and access to green sector employment and the hidden job market. Other actions were taken to support mature Ontario Works (OW) participants (aged 45 plus) and internationally trained individuals to find and maintain employment.
- The Region used increased provincial funding provided in 2013 to help 974 children from families living on low income with child care fee subsidies, enabling their parents to find or maintain employment.
- In 2013, Council approved a permanent transit fare subsidy program to help eligible OW and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) clients with transit costs related to employment. By the end of December 2013, over 600 OW and ODSP clients had purchased discounted YRT/Viva passes through this program. In 2014, usage of this program is expected to increase as the subsidy for OW clients was increased from 50 to 75 percent effective January 1, 2014.
- From October 2010 to December 2013, 3,169 York Region children enrolled in the Healthy Smiles Ontario program. This program provides access to regular dental care and oral health promotion for children under 18 who are not covered by insurance and have a family income under \$20,000.

Council directed funding to increase the Region's supply of affordable housing and provide needed retrofits and repairs (Goal 2)

- Council leveraged federal-provincial Affordable Housing Program funding and provincial Investing in Ontario funding to increase the Region's supply of affordable rental housing with:

- Four new Housing York buildings with a total of 360 units
 - Kingview Court – 39 units in 2010
 - Mapleglen – 84 units in 2012
 - Mackenzie Green – 140 units in 2013
 - Lakeside Residences – 97 units to be completed in 2014
- Seven new non-profit housing communities with a total of 303 units
- From 2009 to 2013, 22 housing providers received funding from the Social Housing Innovation Fund to make retrofits required under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* standards, to implement green initiatives and to replace playgrounds. Council has allocated \$2 million in funding to this program. To date it has enabled housing providers to undertake 47 retrofit projects, meeting needs that would have been unaffordable otherwise.
- Council has allocated \$750,000 to date in funding for the Home Repairs for Independent Living Pilot Program, which was launched in 2013. This program provides grants of up to \$5,000 to low and moderate income seniors and people with disabilities, for minor home repairs/modifications that enable them to continue to live independently in their homes. In 2013, grants were awarded to 63 homeowners.

Council helped York Region residents to find and keep housing (Goal 2)

- Council approved reforms to the Region's homelessness programs to help people find or maintain housing and provide needed supports. The Housing Stability Pilot Program was launched in 2013 to provide financial and wraparound housing retention supports to OW and ODSP recipients. In 2013, 1,715 households (1,168 OW clients and 547 ODSP clients) were served through this program, and 80 percent of clients remained housed after six months. It is projected that that another 1,700 households will be served in 2014.
- Council allocated \$4.75 million in funding for the Regional Rent Assistance Program, which provides subsidies for lower income tenants in new housing buildings constructed under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. In 2013, funding for the Regional Rent Assistance Program was enhanced to maintain service levels as rents increase and to expand the number of units funded. From 2010 to 2013, 219 tenants received rent assistance. Of these 219 tenants, 18 households received rent subsidies through the Shelter Rent Assistance Pilot, which provides assistance for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Since 2010, Council has increased the annualized budget for the Homelessness Prevention Program from \$500,000 to \$800,000 to provide housing stability for those at risk of homelessness or facing financial crisis. From 2010 to 2013, approximately \$2,075,000 in assistance has been provided through this program to 943 low and

moderate income households to help residents remain in their current housing or obtain new housing. It is projected that another 284 households will be helped in 2014.

- Council approved the use of provincial funding to develop Belinda's Place Women's Shelter (28 emergency beds and 9 transitional housing units – to be completed in 2015).
- Council approved the development of the Richmond Hill Housing and Community Hub (202 social housing units, 14 emergency beds and 11 transitional beds – to be completed in 2016).

Council is planning for the Region's future housing needs (Goal 2)

- In October 2013, Council endorsed the *DRAFT 10-Year Housing Plan*, which is a strategy to increase the Region's supply of rental housing, sustain the existing rental housing portfolio, support affordable home ownership and strengthen the homelessness and housing stability system. A number of activities are currently in progress. The final Plan will be presented to Council in June 2014.
- In November 2013, Council endorsed the collaborative advocacy plan *Make Rental Happen: Creating the Conditions to Build Private Market Rental*. This plan was developed by the Human Services Planning Board of York Region and has three objectives:
 - 1) highlight the need for more private market rental housing in York Region
 - 2) work with local municipalities and private sector partners to increase the stock of rental housing
 - 3) determine processes to sustain the development of private market rental housing

Council has approved a variety of actions to optimize the health of the community for all ages and stages (Goal 3)

- Work is underway to implement the Council-approved 10-year Master Plan for York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS). This plan outlines capital and resource needs to achieve and maintain targeted response times in compliance with provincial requirements. Resources are being expanded to meet local needs, alternate health care delivery models are being considered, and operational efficiencies are being addressed in collaboration with dispatch services. Region-wide paramedic response times were favourably reduced by over 30 seconds across the service, meeting or exceeding all Response Time Performance Plan targets.

- Council approved the Expanded Paramedicine in the Community pilot program to reduce EMS calls and non-acute patient transports to emergency departments through patient home visits, treatment and physician consultations. As of February 2014, 226 patients had enrolled in the program, and 258 patient visits were made with significant success in patient condition and outcomes.
- York Safe, the web-based Inspection Disclosure system, was enhanced in 2013 to provide inspection results for wading pools, splash pads, small drinking water systems and personal service settings, as well as food establishments. This website has received over 27,000 visits since its launch in September 2011. More than 5,500 food establishments, 1,300 personal service settings and 279 recreational water settings have posted a Proof of Public Health Inspection sign in their establishments across the Region.
- The Infectious Diseases Control Division has increased its strength and controls to achieve the following: provided more than 50,000 immunizations in 2013 by increasing the number of immunization clinics offered at elementary and secondary schools to provide mandatory and voluntary vaccines; reviewed the immunization records for 100 percent of students enrolled in public, separate and private schools (an increase from 80 percent), drafted a mass immunization plan (to be completed in 2014); and initiated work with local school boards to identify mass immunization sites.

Council has enabled enhanced services for children and families (Goal 4)

- In 2013, Council approved initiatives and leveraged new provincial funding to enhance child care and early intervention services for families, thereby increasing fee subsidies, services, staffing and health and safety training. In 2014, for the first time in over five years, the number of children receiving fee assistance is higher than the number of children waiting for subsidy. More families with primarily low to moderate incomes are able to continue to work or go to school because they have child care supports that meet their needs; more families are able to access child care that is of higher quality; and more children are in safe nurturing environments that comply with the *Day Nurseries Act*.
- In 2013, 202 children were served through the Summer Child Care Only Program. This program provides children from low income families with child care subsidies or access to recreation programs in July and August, while their parents continue to work or attend school.
- In 2013, funding was allocated to reduce waitlists for recreational programs for low income families, enabling more than 300 children and youth and 130 sole support

parents receiving OW financial supports to access these programs and develop skills, improve self-confidence, and build connections to their community.

- Funding was also provided for the All Our Kids (AOK) Parenting Programs. In 2013, 321 children from 265 families accessed these programs and benefitted from social inclusion and referrals to community resources.
- Babies born prematurely and those with significant risk factors for developmental and health implications were helped through a new neonatal clinic and development of a Neonatal Network between Early Intervention Services and local hospitals.
- The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program was strengthened to identify and support vulnerable children and families with new screening tools, processes and training.

Council's actions are fostering social inclusion for our growing and diverse population (Goal 5)

- In 2013, Council approved the Community Investment Strategy, which replaced the previous Community Development Investment Fund and the New Agency Development Fund. Through this strategy, funds are directed to eligible community agencies to provide programs for low and moderate income residents in areas of community health, economic independence, social inclusion and housing stability. The number of people served by these investments in community agencies continues to grow each year, with 92,000 residents benefitting in 2013.
- In 2011, Council endorsed the *York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy* and its three-year Action Plan, developed with the Community Partnership Council, to integrate newcomers and build welcoming and inclusive communities in York Region. In 2012, the Region held its first Internationally Educated Professionals Conference to provide internationally educated professionals, newcomer entrepreneurs, employers, professional associations and government representatives with an opportunity to make new connections and learn from each other. Planning is underway for the 2015 Internationally Educated Professionals Conference.
- In 2013, Council approved the Region's *Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2013 – 2021*, outlining how the Region continues to create an inclusive and welcoming community where all can benefit from the same services and opportunities.
- Council funds the Region's Quality of Life Program for domiciliary hostel residents, to help enhance their social engagement by providing recreation, social and community activities. In 2013, 4,995 Quality of Life programs and events were delivered to 20,038 participants.

- In March 2014, a Social Worker was hired to do case management for at-risk and multi-barrier families and individuals, to link clients to wrap-around supports and services.

Council is encouraging sector collaboration for more integrated service delivery (Goal 6)

- In 2013, the Human Services Planning Board of York Region, in collaboration with local municipalities and school boards, launched the *Fair Access* pilot partnership to increase access to recreation programs for low and moderate income families.
- The Age Friendly Communities initiative was a partnership developed in 2013 between Public Health, Housing York Inc., and the community to promote safe, healthy aging in York Region. The pilot project engaged older adults from four Housing York Inc. seniors' buildings in Richmond Hill to assess their community and identify areas for action. Progress on priorities is underway with expected completion in 2014, including: access to on-site health services; building, sidewalk and crossing signal enhancements; and installation of a community garden.

Improved data-sharing and technology advances are supporting effective community planning and quality services (Goal 6)

- Steps have been taken to improve community access to Census data for community planning, program planning and policy development:
 - *What if York Region were a Village of just 100 people?* has been published on York.ca and shared with the York Region Data Consortium, the Human Services Planning Board of York Region and the Community Partnership Council.
 - Census Data from 2001, 2005, and 2011 have been uploaded to the York Region Open Data website for access by community partners, agencies and the public.
- Community and Health Services is committed to leveraging technological solutions to enhance service delivery. In 2013, 29 automation solutions were initiated to improve customer service and case work and introduce citizen friendly options to access information.
- The Community and Health Services Contact Centre responded to over 160,000 calls in 2013, helping people to access social assistance, housing, child care fee assistance, early intervention and public health.

Council's accomplishments under the MYP have been recognized with several awards

Achievements under the MYP have been recognized with several awards, such as:

- The Ontario Accessibility Award from Excellence Canada for the Region in meeting obligations under the AODA and for going above and beyond compliance to demonstrate leadership in organizational accessibility (2011).
- The International Association of Business Communicators Virtuoso Excellence Award for the York Region Immigration Portal (2011).
- A Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities citation to York Region Early Intervention Services for demonstrating organizational leadership and innovation (2012).
- A Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification from the Green Building Council for both the EMS headquarters and Mapleglen Residences (2013).
- Three Local Municipal Champion awards from the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association: an award for the Community Paramedicine Program for a partnership between Social Services and EMS that provides essential primary care assessments to those living in emergency shelters, leading to decreased 911 calls and improved client health so they can begin the process of finding and keeping housing; an award for the HSPB for helping York Region residents make ends meet; and an award for the Community Partnership Council for developing the *York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy* and Action Plan to make York Region welcoming and inclusive (2013).

Link to key Council-approved plans

The goals and accomplishments of the MYP support the *2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan* priority to “Improve social and health supports”, the Regional *Official Plan* objectives for Healthy Communities, Economic Vitality and Servicing Our Population, and the Vision 2051 goals for York Region to be “A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive” and to have “Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages”.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The decisions to fund and implement specific initiatives arising from the MYP goals and actions were made annually through the Community and Health Services budget and business plan process.

In 2014, approximately \$8 million was approved for the following MYP initiatives:

- Regional Rent Supplement program
- Community Development funding envelope
- Homelessness Prevention Program
- Integrated Social Worker initiative

This brings the total gross amount budgeted for MYP initiatives from 2011 through 2014 to \$26.8 million, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Multi-Year Plan Investments from 2011 to 2014

Annual Approved Budgets (millions)					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total 2011-2014
Gross Budget	\$4.4	\$7.0	\$7.4	\$8.0	\$26.8
Funding Sources:					
Provincial/Federal Funding	\$0.6	\$0.6	\$1.0	\$1.0	\$3.2
Social Assistance Reserve	\$0.6	\$1.8	\$1.4	\$1.3	\$5.1
Regional Tax Levy	\$3.2	\$4.6	\$5.0	\$5.7	\$18.5

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The strategic priorities and key human services needs identified in the MYP reflect the needs of residents in all nine of York Region's local municipalities. In implementing the MYP, Council provided funding, endorsed actions and encouraged stronger partnerships to address the needs of residents, resulting in substantial positive outcomes. Significant numbers of residents from all local municipalities have benefited from improved access to basic needs; a strengthened system of employment supports; assistance with finding and keeping jobs; an increased supply of affordable housing; supports for finding and maintaining housing; actions to optimize public health; enriched services for children and families; strategies to increase social inclusion; and enhancements to the delivery of Community and Health Services programs and services.

7. CONCLUSION

Through the MYP, Council has taken significant steps to address the growing human services issues that our communities and residents face. The MYP goals provided a forum and built momentum for integrated planning and delivery of health, housing and social supports beyond the scope of mandated programs and services. They enabled Council to provide much needed additional services for residents. The MYP actions are resulting in significant improvement in client outcomes through enhanced service levels and more integrated service delivery. Many of these actions will continue into 2015 and beyond to support progress towards York Region's long-term human service goals.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships Branch at Ext. 72090.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.