

## **2. PARTNERS FOR JOBS PROGRESS REPORT**

### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council receive the Partners for Jobs Progress Report for information.**

### DOCUMENTATION

1. Social Services Commissioner report dated 25 April 00.
2. The *Partners for Jobs Progress Report* and the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, *Survival-of-the-Fittest Employment Policy*, has been distributed to all members of Council and is on file with the Regional Clerk's office.
3. Extract of Minute, Community Services Committee, 18 May 00 immediately follows the report and includes a record of all votes.

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT  
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.  
 Your File/V/Réf.

DATE 25 April 2000

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator  
 Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Social Services Commissioner

SUBJECT/OBJET **PARTNERS FOR JOBS: PROGRESS REPORT**

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**DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the Community Services Committee and Council receive the Partners for Jobs Progress Report for information.**

**BACKGROUND**

In January 1999 the Task Force on Employment was established by Regional Chair Chiarelli. The Task Force was co-chaired by John Kelly and Andrée Lortie, community leaders representing the business sector and the educational/training sector. The Task Force, and the Working Group supporting the Task Force, had broad representation from all sectors of the community including: employers, boards of trade, education/training, community agencies, labour, economic development agencies, francophone community, three levels of government and advocacy groups.

The mandate of the Task Force was to develop an Employment Strategy within a six month timeframe. The strategy included both short term projects and longer term initiatives targeted to unemployed and under-employed persons, with a primary focus on social assistance clients.

The Task Force and Working Group members developed nine pilot initiatives, nine strategic directions and thirty-four priority actions intended to address various barriers and issues related to employment and workforce development. The Final Report was released to the public in September, 1999.

## PARTNERS FOR JOBS ACTION PHASE

In October 1999 the Partners for Jobs Action Phase was established with a mandate to implement the Strategic Directions and Priority Actions as identified in the Final Report. In addition, the mandate included the preparation of a Progress Report.

The Action Phase included representation from: employers, community agencies, labour, advocacy groups, education/training, economic development agencies, boards of trade, francophone community, advocacy groups and three levels of government. In addition, the Action Phase included representation from the cooperative sector, the aboriginal community, and the disabled community.

Overall, this working group has been very successful in developing effective linkages across sectors, and sharing information and expertise in the area of workforce development. The Progress Report attached summarises the status of each Strategic Direction and Priority Action.

The Action Phase has made **significant progress** in the following areas:

- identifying policy and program rules that need to be changed
- development of an Emergency Assistance and Employment Transition Fund
- technology efficiencies related to labour force information
- marketing and communication related to workforce development
- outcome data related to training and customized training requirements
- quality assurance standards for training
- implementation of the 9 pilots
- development of job retention strategies
- initiation of new partnerships
- coordination of alternative funding : micro loan funds and individualized development funds

The Action Phase has made **moderate progress** in the following areas:

- information exchange with l'Outaouais and local politicians on workforce development
- review of Regional services to reduce barriers
- a local labour force information system which includes core competency information
- strengthening the links with the educational sector
- advocating for adequate funding of local adult education programs
- promoting broader access to training and employment services
- developing more work experience/placement opportunities
- ensuring that training is tailored to meet the changing needs of the labour market
- integrating labour force development and economic development

## SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

A wide variety of employment development initiatives have been implemented during the past year to support people to be employed. The Progress Report highlights 28 different initiatives.

It is estimated that 350 + unemployed people receiving Ontario Works and under-employed persons have secured employment as a result of these partnerships. In addition, more than 200 people have increased their skills through customized training as a result of Partners for Jobs.

It is estimated that savings of \$1.6 million + (gross to the Region) have been achieved as a result of 200 Ontario Works participants securing employment.

## NEXT STEPS

The Action Phase members and various partners have made significant contributions in developing local, practical, solutions to unemployment and under-employment in this community. The Action Phase members will meet in September and December 2000 to identify actions related to the workforce development recommendations contained in the Economic Generators Report which is being prepared by ICF Consultants on behalf of the Region. In addition, members will continue to build on the essential momentum of workforce development in this community.

## CONCLUSION

The Partners for Jobs Progress Report summarises the status of the Strategic Directions and Priority Actions that were contained in the Final Report of the Task Force on Employment. In addition, the Progress Report highlights new partnerships that have been formed and the impact of the various employment supports that have been developed during the past year.

*Approved by  
Dick Stewart*

DS/CH

Attach. (1)

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3. PARTNERS FOR JOBS: PROGRESS REPORT  
- Social Services Commissioner report dated 25 April 00

Mr. Dick Stewart, Commissioner of Social Services, summarized the Partners for Jobs Progress Report for members of Committee. He outlined the progress made to date, mandate and action phase of the project, accomplishments and next steps. Commissioner Stewart summarized the following key points including: an employment strategy targeted to unemployed and under-employed residents; an action phase with a mandate to implement strategic directions, priority actions and to develop new partnerships.

Commissioner Stewart noted that there were some significant accomplishments including approximately 34 new partnerships initiated and underway, the implementation of the pilot programs outlined in the original report, policy and program changes that reflect changes to service delivery, emergency assistance and employment transition fund in the 2000 budget, and creative job retention strategies. He added that the Department has increased market communication about its programs and is advertising and looking for new partners. There have also been gross savings in terms of social assistance not paid as a result of participation in the programs.

*The full text of the presentation is available on file with the Committee Co-ordinator.*

Commissioner Stewart introduced Ms. Sherri Torjman, author of the Caledon Institute of Social Policy *Survival of the Fittest Employment Policy*. Ms. Torjman summarized the highlights of the study, noting that the partners for jobs program is a wonderful initiative, and a way to address issues of unemployment and under-employment, with community based problem solving. Policy barriers that keep people out of employment system and labor market, and components and a description of the employment system are analyzed in the report.

Ms. Torjman noted that there have been substantial modifications to existing programs in the last few years, and a common weakness has been identified for all of the programs. All programs have a “creaming” effect, wherein the people targeted are those who need the least help possible, and program funding is based on the numbers of people who obtain employment. There are very few transition supports for people moving away from these programs, and training and apprenticeship supports are lacking.

Ms. Torjman suggested that the first step for the Region would be to examine the Ontario Works program and the barriers in place, as well as child care and transportation issues. She suggested that

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the Region could play a leadership role in 4 areas: customized training; transition supports; job retention; and access to capital.

Chair Munter commended Ms. Torjman and Commissioner Stewart on the reports.

Councillor C. Doucet noted that many people have expressed great difficulty in making the transition off of programs, with a loss in subsidized daycare, housing and transportation. Councillor Doucet suggested the issue may be one of inadequate wage levels, rather than high taxes. He noted that this issue is difficult to address at the local level. Ms. Torjman noted that the job retention issue is one that includes both wages and services, and the Institute is working on a report to examine this issue.

In response to a comment from Councillor Doucet, Ms. Torjman advised that every effort is made to write both the long and short version of reports in order to communicate effectively, and spread the information.

Councillor W. Byrne complimented Ms. Torjman on the comprehensive report. She noted that many areas were addressed that impact on poverty. She inquired whether the findings of the report will also be presented to provincial and federal level standing committees or the Transition Board. Ms. Torjman noted that this information has been widely distributed, and may be presented to the Transition Board if requested.

Councillor Byrne suggested that a copy of the report be forwarded to the Minister of Finance, to reinforce the importance of these programs.

Councillor A. Loney inquired whether there is a follow-up on individuals who take jobs and then return as clients of social services within one year. Commissioner Stewart commented that these situations are somewhat wage driven, but are complex. He added that the Department has just taken 2 staff and reassigned them as Workforce retention workers, who will build a caseload from people who are leaving programs and in order to assist them to sustain work activity, and provide information on supports and services available.

Commissioner Stewart commented that there is a misconception that the as the economy is booming, there is not an unemployment problem. He noted that there is a mismatch between skill levels and available employment, with 22,800 on the caseload in the area.

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In response to a question from Councillor Loney, Commissioner Stewart expressed confidence that the Partners for Jobs program has enough vitality and flexibility in strategies that it can have an impact. He added that the issue of education is fundamental to the success of the program.

Councillor Loney suggested that an apprenticeship program to attract mechanics to an organization like OC Transpo would be a positive initiative for the corporation and workers. Commissioner Stewart noted that OC Transpo has been very cooperative in partnering on the job issue.

**That the Community Services Committee and Council receive the Partners for Jobs Progress Report for information.**

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