



# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	March 22, 2017
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Ontario Works Program Review (CES15011(b)) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Linda Button 905-546-2424 ext. 3104
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Joe-Anne Priel General Manager Community & Emergency Services Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## **Council Direction:**

General Issues Committee at its meeting of February 3, 2017 directed the General Manager of Community and Emergency Services to report back to the General Issues Committee, during the 2017 Operating Budget process, with a more comprehensive overview of the Ontario Works Program Review.

## **Information:**

### Ontario Works Program Review Context

On February 23, 2015, the General Manager of the Community and Emergency Services Department submitted Information Report CES15011 outlining a plan to conduct an organizational and process review of the Hamilton Ontario Works Program.

The review was, in part, a response to the changes announced by the Province in 2013 to reform Ontario's social assistance programs and move toward a system of a simplified benefit structure and integrated local services. The implementation of the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) in 2014 and 2015 was a step toward achieving this new system.

As well, thirty temporary (contingency) staff were hired to manage the increased caseload as a result of the recession in 2009 (Report CS09021(g)). These FTEs were extended to help with the major issues faced by staff and clients during the implementation of SAMS (Report CES15020(b)) and manage caseloads that had not returned to prerecession levels. The Ontario Works Stabilization Reserve, from which 50% of the funds were drawn to fund the temporary staff, is not sustainable.

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*OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.*

*OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.*

*OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.*

In addition, the caseload to case manager ratio increased to a level that is higher than a target ratio of 110:1 for a stable caseload. In more complex cases, an even lower target ratio is preferred such as 50:1 as seen in the Addiction Services Initiative in Hamilton's Ontario Works Program. Ratios higher than these adversely affect the outcome of clients as case managers do not have the time required to adequately meet their clients' needs.

It is within this context, of Provincial reform and local funding pressures, that a review of Hamilton's Ontario Works Program was initiated.

Therefore the purpose of the review was to recommend:

- An optimal sustainable organizational structure that will provide cost effective and efficient quality services, while being responsive to the needs of residents;
- How to streamline business processes so that they deliver cost effective and efficient quality services, while being responsive to the needs of residents; and,
- The best alignment of resources that will help the Hamilton Ontario Works Program achieve a sustainable organizational structure and streamlined business processes.

#### Ontario Works Program Review Recommendations

In April 2015, following a competitive bid process, SHS Consulting was selected to conduct a review of the Ontario Works Program with the goal of finding funding to sustain the temporary staff added under the Contingency Plan while taking into consideration the Province's social assistance transformation agenda.

In March 2016, the consultants submitted their final report to the General Manager making a number of recommendations largely focused on restructuring the leadership team who would then lead a series of business process reviews. The following recommendations were made:

##### Organizational Structure

- One division, one Director
- Develop a vision and strategic plan supported by a Senior Project Manager
- Redefine management team – fewer Managers, more Supervisors, eliminate Team Leads
- Redefine case management – create interdisciplinary teams
- Update approach to Intake Verification
- Create interdisciplinary case management teams - add Case Aides
- Streamline administrative/clerical (subject to a business process review)
- Phase in changes over time

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Business Process Reviews

- Technology
- Records management and complement of clerks
- Client path / client experience
- Career Development Centre - reduce number of Employment Development Counsellors
- Service delivery locations
- Special Supports Unit
- Needs Assessments
- Internal partner collaborations

The consultants (see table below as provided by the consultants) estimated that the business process reviews would result in a reduction of positions equalling 44.5 FTEs which would offset the cost of the 30 temporary staff hired under the Contingency Plan. As a result, the remaining gross cost saving of \$818,287 / \$409,140 net would be available for levy savings.

TOTALS	FTE'S	SALARY	ESTIMATED MERC'S (22%)	TOTAL COST
Estimated Totals	303.42	\$20,449,585	\$4,498,909	\$24,948,494
Previous Totals	347.92	\$23,137,253	\$5,090,196	\$28,227,449
Change	-44.5	\$2,687,668	\$591,287	\$3,278,955
Cost of Temporary Staff	30	\$2,016,941	\$443,727	\$2,460,668
+/- Target Cost Savings		-\$670,727	-\$147,560	-\$818,287

Ontario Works Program Review Implementation

The recommended changes to the leadership structure were reviewed by Human Resources and presented to the City Manager for approval in accordance with the Organization Restructuring policy. The approved leadership structure was then presented to the Emergency and Community Services Committee in camera on June 6, 2016.

The recommendations resulting from the review have been underway since the report's results were shared with the Emergency and Community Services Committee and Ontario Works staff in June 2016.

To date the following recommendations have been implemented or are currently underway:

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Phase 1 (completed December 2016)

- One division, one Director
- Redefined management team by reducing the number of Managers and increasing the number Supervisors
- Eliminated Team Lead role

Phase 2 (underway)

- Develop division vision, strategic plan
- Business Process Reviews:
  - Caseload / client profile analysis
  - Employment Services
  - Family Support Unit

Phase 3 (commencing March 2017)

- Implement Phase 2 Process Review recommendations
- Business Process Reviews:
  - Administrative
  - Needs Assessment
  - Technology
  - Intake Unit
  - Records management / clerical staff
- Redefine case management teams

Ontario Works Program Review Timeline

DATE	ITEM
November 2014	Plans made to undertake a review of the Ontario Works Program
February 23, 2015	Information Report (CES15011) to ECS Committee
March 2015	RFP posted
March 31, 2015	RFP closed
April 7, 2015	SHS Consulting notified as the successful vendor
May 8, 2015	Purchasing letter to SHS Consulting to request documentation
June 2015	Project Team established and meets
November 2015	Interim report submitted by SHS Consulting Report returned for correction of errors (i.e., counting staff positions twice)
December 2015	Revised report submitted to GM by SHS Consulting
January – March 2016	SHS Consulting works with Project Team to finalize report
March 22, 2016	Final report submitted by SHS Consulting
April – June 2016	Steering Committee established (members include C&ES Directors, various staff from Human Resources,

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DATE	ITEM
	Communications, Project Manager) Steering Committee prepares to share report findings and implement first steps (consults leaders, communications officers, Human Resources, Labour Relations, Unions, etc.)
May 25, 2016	GM meeting with City Manager and Executive Director of Human Resources to seek approval of the proposed changes
June 6, 2016	In-camera update (verbal) to ECS Committee from City Manager, GM and Executive Director of HR Meeting with OW Managers and Supervisors
June 7, 2016	Meeting with Team Leads (morning) OW Town Hall to discuss report and organizational structure changes (afternoon)
June 2016	GM visits OW sites to discuss changes with staff
July 2016	Steering Committee prepares for changes in leadership structure
August 24, 2016	New OW Director announcement
September 2016	New OW Leadership Structure recruitment announcement
September 26, 2016	Recommendation Report (CES16049) to ECS Committee for appointment of Administrator of Ontario Works and provided an update on the review.
October 2016	Business Process Reviews begin (Team Lead role, client profile analysis, employment services)
December 12, 2016	Recommendation Report (CS09021(g)) to ECS Committee for final extension of funding of temporary staff under Contingency Plan while OW restructuring continues throughout 2017 and provided an update on the review.
February 3, 2017	Recommendation Report (CES15011(a)) to General Issues Committee to provide update on OW review