



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Office of the Medical Officer of Health

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	March 22, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	2021 Annual Service Plan and Budget (BOH21004) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Chelsea Kirkby (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3539
SUBMITTED BY:	Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health direct the Medical Officer of Health to submit the 2021 Annual Service Plan and Budget to the Ministry of Health in keeping with what is outlined in this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year Public Health Services (PHS) develops the Annual Service Plan and Budget (ASPB) that outlines the planned service delivery for the coming year. It is based on regular assessment of Hamilton's health status as well as evidence as to what public health interventions can make a difference. Typically, it contains detailed program plans to implement each of the Ontario Public Health Standards (Standards) as well as associated expenditures. Due to the increased demands related to COVID-19, the Ministry of Health has scaled back their submission form for the 2021 ASPB to include the financial sections only.

Overall, it is anticipated that service levels and staffing capacity through the majority of 2021 will be similar to 2020 due to the ongoing COVID-19 response. Pandemic Response is clearly a priority for this year and includes the balancing of the scope of public health programs under the Standards with the COVID-19 response. At the same time, Health Equity, Climate Change, and Mental Health & Addictions, with aspects of the 2020 Healthy Weights priority folded into the latter, continue to be key priorities and are taken into account in both the pandemic response and those programs and services

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.

that are open. The COVID-19 response and essential services are regularly reviewed by the Public Health Leadership Team using the program prioritization and risk framework in order to maximize the impact and effectiveness of PHS programs and services for our community.

While the overall PHS budget is presented within the Healthy and Safe Communities report and budget presentation to the General Issues Committee, specific highlights are made in the financial section of this report related to the ASPB. In the related presentation at the Board of Health meeting on March 22, 2021, staff will share highlights from 2020 and provide an overview of the 2021 program plans and budget.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

Approval of the 2021 ASPB and submission to the Ministry is required to receive provincial funding to support the delivery of public health programs and services under the Standards. If any further adjustments are made to programs covered by the ASPB through the ongoing City budget process, these can be submitted through the regular quarterly reports to the Ministry.

PHS incurred more costs than usual in 2020 due to the significant costs related to the COVID-19 response, however, the Ministry has reimbursed all costs related to the pandemic response above the ASPB subsidized expenditures. PHS incurred incremental costs of \$4.8M due to COVID-19 and received one-time 100% provincial funding to offset the increased costs. Further, with reduced ASPB programming due to the pandemic response the resultant approximately \$1M in savings went to fund COVID-19 related services.

As a reminder, notable changes for 2020 had included the Province's direction to shift from a mixed 75/25% and 100% funding model to a 70/30% Provincial/Municipal funding formula for all programs except the new Seniors Dental Program and Healthy Babies Healthy Children which remained 100% provincially funded. For Hamilton this shift would have resulted in \$2.3M in lost subsidy for 2020 compared to 2019 if the Ministry had not provided \$1.4M in one-time transitional funding to keep levy increases below 10% of existing costs. Ultimately the Province provided further transitional funding because of the financial pressures on municipalities due to the pandemic, and PHS received \$26,725,400 in 2020 ASPB Base funding (\$26,600,000 budgeted) and \$2,215,800 in 2020 ASPB Mitigation funding (\$1,400,000 budgeted). The impact of this was an additional savings of \$941,200.

The 2021 ASPB includes an increase to base expenditures of \$884,000, or 2.25% increase from 2019. This is offset by the anticipated additional Ministry funding of \$941,200, resulting in a net levy decrease of \$57,140.

It is anticipated that the same level of service related to the COVID-19 response will continue through the majority of this year and begin to transition back to regular programming near the end of 2021. To accommodate the continued extraordinary costs associated with COVID-19, this area of work has been included under the Foundational Standards (Emergency Response) in the ASPB with those amounts that exceed the funding allocation included as one-time costs. The 2021 COVID-19 estimated cost is currently \$49,127,880 which includes the COVID-19 Vaccine program, Case and Contact Management and the COVID-19 School Nurses.

The Province will also consider requests for additional one-time funding for extraordinary costs. For 2021 PHS will request one-time funding for:

- 1. Purpose-Built Vaccine Refrigerators:** Request for \$225,350 to replace 9 vaccine refrigerators. These refrigerators are outdated (originally purchased over 10 years ago) resulting in several recent maintenance issues and a high risk of imminent failure. The acquisition of new vaccine refrigerators will significantly reduce this risk and ensure PHS continues to meet Ministry and industry requirements for delivering vaccine service to the general public, preventing vaccine wastage and remaining in compliance with the Ministry's Storage and Handling Protocol;
- 2. Public Health Inspector Practicum Program:** Request for \$10,000 to hire 0.16 FTE Public Health Inspector Trainees for program support and to provide future Public Health Inspectors with training and hands-on field experience. This funding has been in place for many years and has to be requested annually;
- 3. Rabies:** Request for \$216,830 to continue to fund two full-time temporary positions to continue to respond to the raccoon rabies outbreak in the community. Raccoon rabies response is expected to continue for three or more years before Ontario may be free of raccoon rabies. The staff would continue to investigate all positive raccoon rabies results to rule out human exposure, refer domestic exposures to appropriate agencies, educate pet owners and the public about the risk of rabies from wild animals, remind pet owners to vaccinate their cats and dogs. The positions also help respond to the increased routine animal bite reports and post exposure prophylaxis requests, both of which are related to the increased risk of rabies locally. All of these efforts are aimed at preventing a fatal human case of rabies in Hamilton;

4. Extraordinary COVID-19 (Non-Vaccine): \$12,066,390; and,

5. Extraordinary COVID-19 Vaccine: \$ 34,461,200

The Province does not give local public health agencies specific targets for developing their ASPB but has given some guidance as to expected subsidy for this year, which has been incorporated into the ASPB. Final subsidy grants will not be known until funding letters are received later this year.

Staffing:

Overall staffing levels for PHS including the ASPB program are addressed in the Healthy and Safe Communities budget report and presentation. In the 2021 ASPB there are no FTE changes in base ASPB mandatory programs, and it remains at 302.39. However, COVID-19 is adding 110.24 FTE (inclusive of 23 FTE COVID-19 School Nurses) and staffing to plan and deliver the COVID-19 Vaccine FTE is estimated at 287.60 FTE. Total staffing under the ASPB submission is 677.23 FTE. The 23 FTE COVID-19 School Nurses is expected to be funded provincially under a different funding envelope.

Legal:

The Ministry expects boards of health to be accountable for meeting all requirements included in legislation and the documents that operationalize them. The Province has directed Boards of Health to continue to do what is necessary to respond to COVID-19 cases and outbreaks, as well as plan and deliver the COVID-19 vaccination program.

It is a requirement within the Standards that boards of health submit an ASPB each year. Approval and submission of the 2021 ASPB for submission to the Ministry fulfils this requirement.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As outlined in the Standards, all boards of health approve and submit an ASPB to the Ministry each year. Typically, the ASPB lays out an assessment of the population health needs in Hamilton, priority areas for action, detailed program plans, budgeted expenditures, and requests for additional base and one-time funding. Given the increased demands for Ontario public health units related to COVID-19, the Ministry of Health has scaled back the ASPB requirements for 2021. Public health units are only required to complete the financial sections, not the population health assessment or detailed program plans.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The Standards outline requirements that direct the delivery of mandatory public health programs and services by public health units pursuant to the Health Protection and

Promotion Act. It is a requirement within the Standards that boards of health submit an ASPB each year to the Ministry.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Not Applicable.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The 2021 ASPB is due to the Ministry on April 1, 2021. To support development of the 2021 ASPB, staff reviewed program objectives and interventions within the current context of COVID-19. A flexible and responsive approach will be required throughout the year to continue to adapt the rapidly evolving pandemic.

It is anticipated that service levels and staffing capacity through the majority of 2021 will be similar to that of 2020. PHS will continue providing essential / critical programs and services; however, non-essential services will remain on-hold in order to carry out critical functions related to the COVID-19 response, including the vaccine rollout. Staff will continue to regularly reassess and prioritize programs and services for reopening throughout the year based on COVID-19 case activity in the community and staff capacity.

In addition, the following priorities have been identified for 2021: Health Equity, Climate Change, and Mental Health & Addictions, with aspects of the 2020 Healthy Weights priority folded into the latter. Due to the ongoing pandemic, a fourth priority was added, Balancing Business Continuity & COVID-19 Response. This priority will help ensure that the COVID-19 response and essential/critical services are adequately resourced through continuous review of the program prioritization and risk framework.

During the Board of Health meeting on March 22, 2021, staff will share highlights from 2020 and provide an overview of the 2021 program plans and budget.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Our People and Performance

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not applicable.