



**Public Consultations**



***Keeping the Priority on People***

**A SPECIAL CONSULTATION  
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
OTTAWA'S HUMAN SERVICES PLAN**

**Held June 12, 2002**

**Report on Recommendations  
From the Community**

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**Social Planning Council of Ottawa**

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## INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday June 12<sup>th</sup>, 150 people attended the Special Consultation on the Development of the Human Services Plan, "**Keeping the Priority on People in the City of Ottawa**". This Special Consultation was organized by the Social Planning Council with the assistance and direction of the City of Ottawa. The event brought together a representative body of community leaders and City officials to participate in presentations and discussions concerning health, social services, recreation, housing, workforce development, long term care, child care, libraries, emergency services, and arts and culture. The purpose of the consultation was to make recommendations for the City to include in the Human Services Plan, which will be the City's strategy for responding to the human service concerns of Ottawa's residents for the next 20 years.

The special consultation began with presentations by the three keynote speakers:

- **Ned Lathrop**, General Manager, Development Services, City of Ottawa;
- **Dick Stewart**, General Manager, People Services, City of Ottawa;
- **Sherri Torjman**, Vice-President, Caledon Institute

The morning plenary session, which featured the keynote speakers, was followed by workshops on the following issues:

- Urban and Rural Dynamic
- Financial Sustainability for the City
- Creating Partnerships
- Planning for Our Housing Needs
- Building Diversity
- Promoting Active and Healthy Living (in French)
- Responding to the Growing Economic Gap
- Ensuring Quality of Life
- Ensuring Quality of Life (in French)

### **Authority and Scope of the Human Services Plan**

The Human Services Plan is one of five plans being developed within the Ottawa 20/20 planning process. The Plan will establish a twenty year plan with respect to the social infrastructure of the City, including five year targets. The Human Services Plan is to be approved by Council in March 2003.

The Human Services Plan will be a new creation within the City, unlike the Official Plan. Furthermore, it does not derive its' authority from legislation, as does the Official Plan. The City has made a commitment to the development and implementation of a growth strategy, managed through this and other plans. As part of the development of the Human Services Plan, Council will have to establish the authority, accountability and resourcing for implementing this plan.

The Human Services Plan is a strategic plan which will identify key interventions and strategies which would be most beneficial in enhancing the social infrastructure of the City over the next 20 years. The City is responsible to deliver a broad range of “human services”. The majority of resources for “human services” are consumed by mandated programs (i.e. programs which the City is legally obligated to deliver). The City has discretion over a small percentage of the total “human services” budget. The Human Services Plan will set out the most strategic directions for the discretionary “human services” budget, in order to have the greatest impact on the quality of life for Ottawa residents.

As Sherri Torjman, one of the keynote speakers explained:

*World class cities need “magnets” and “glue”. “Magnets” are what draw people (culture, diversity, jobs, excitement). “Glue” is what holds the city together (housing, services, safety). This is the heart of human services planning.*

Complete summary notes from the special consultation were provided to City officials involved in the development of the Human Services Plan. This report synthesizes the ideas and principles presented and discussed by participants and speakers at the event. It sets out ten strategic directions for the Human Services Plan flowing from key themes in all the workshops. We present all the specific recommendations made by participants, which have been re-grouped under the ten strategic directions. Participants are hopeful the City will seriously consider these directions suggested by the community in their preparation of the first draft of the Human Services Plan.

We would like to thank the participants who attended the day and shared their expertise.

The Social Planning is grateful to  
**The City of Ottawa and to  
United Way/Centraide Ottawa**  
for the resources to hold the special  
consultation and to  
produce this report

## **Strategic Direction #1**

### **Implement structures which enable participation and meaningful contribution to the governance process**

Throughout the Ottawa 20/20 process, the City has stated a strong commitment to resident participation in planning and decision making processes. However, amalgamation has led to significantly fewer elected representatives and City staff which in turn, makes it even harder than before for people to access and influence the political process. While many participants in the community consultation commended the City on its commitment to consultation, they highlighted many populations who currently experience disenfranchisement within the governance process:

- rural residents (because of the loss of easily accessible rural councils, the loss of rural representation in the new City wards, and the dilution of the rural voice in relation to the urban majority)
- Francophone residents (who have difficulty accessing basic information and documents in French)
- low income and homeless individuals (who, as the gap between their reality and the general population grows, become more invisible and even more marginalized from effective participation)
- immigrant and refugee communities (where a range of factors combine to mitigate against participation, incl. language, precarious economic circumstances, previous negative political experiences, discrimination, etc.)
- people with disabilities
- seniors
- youth, including young parents.

If the Ottawa 20/20 vision is to be realized, it is essential that means be found to support a variety of strategies to enable meaningful participation. This requires an investment of resources and an enhancement of partnerships in relation to three areas of activity:

- Opportunities for public participation in decision-making;
- Proactive strategies to involve marginalized groups in these opportunities; and
- Accountability with respect to resident participation esp. of marginalized groups.

#### **Strategy #1 Enhance Structures and Processes for Resident Participation in Planning and Decision Making Processes**

Recommended Actions:

- The City, through the Corporate Strategic Plan, establish a strong direction to provide opportunities for public participation in community consultations on municipal policy issues, and specifically, establish a better infrastructure (with associated funding) to enable *effective* participation, specifically, adequate time for residents to participate in a thoughtful way, adequate time for resident input to be incorporated into final documents; adequate staff resources to enable the process.
- The City, through the Corporate Strategic Plan, establish a clear direction to provide all documents which form part of the public discussion on issues in English and French at the same time. (e.g. “Charting a Course” and the draft Official Plan were

not initially available in French, which seriously disadvantaged Francophone residents, as the initial consultation periods were extremely short).

- The City, as a direction in the Corporate Strategic Plan (linked to dedicated resources), enhance the authority and power of the Advisory Committees to enable them to play a more effective role as advisors to the City.
- The City add a representative from each Advisory Committee onto the Think Group.
- The City, as part of the Corporate Strategic Plan, adopt incentive measures to ensure a bilingual City workforce. The Human Service Plan set out specific strategies which will be enacted within each department to achieve a bilingual workforce and a strategy for French services across the City.
- The City establish a task force on diversity to develop an approach to diversity within the Human Services Plan.

## **Strategy #2 Be Proactive in Providing the Means for Effective Participation of Marginalized Groups in Planning and Decision Making Processes**

### Recommended Actions

- The Human Service Plan include a policy of non-exclusion with respect to resident participation in planning and decision-making within the City. This sets the context for the specific actions which follow and represents a commitment of resources.
- Enhance the ability of communities (geographic and demographic) to participate in municipal issues and politics by provide funding and other resources for community development and the building of community organizations, especially in rural areas to strengthen the rural voice, and with respect to equity seeking groups.
- In partnership with community organizations, develop ways of soliciting participation of minority groups (incl. Francophones) and populations with special needs in the planning of and for services which affect them. This is to include the people most affected, and not just the agencies who serve them. When establishing consultation timelines, plan for adequate time for this proactive solicitation of input to occur.
- Encourage and accommodate advocacy within and from the community on issues of diversity.
- Recognize the potential of artistic and cultural work as one means to help marginalized people express their views and participate in public discussion, by providing funding and other resources to artistic and cultural initiatives that support disenfranchised groups in this way. (Examples shared in the consultation included theatre work with people with disabilities to help them express their views, Blues in the Schools, and group creative writing with youth to help them explore serious health issues.)
- Recognize a history of constructive advocacy as an important part of the heritage of Ottawa, and provide funding and other resources to support the continued involvement of marginalized groups in constructive advocacy and policy discussions.
- Work with community groups to develop a plan to encourage a higher voter turn-out for municipal elections, particularly with respect to those individuals facing barriers to participation (i.e. marginalized or isolated populations).
- Expand access to French language services, for services provided directly by the City and purchased by the City.

### Strategy #3 Ensure Accountability and Responsiveness

#### Recommended Actions:

- Given that Ottawa is the bilingual capital of Canada, the City will commit to the generous availability of services in French, and monitor progress in this regard.
- Implement employment equity as an employer.
- Establish a diversity branch within Corporate Services.
- Implement recommendations on equity and diversity that have already been made, (i.e. Transition Board documents, Building the Ottawa Mosaic).
- In the monitoring of the Ottawa 20/20 process include means to monitor the City's accountability for enabling resident participation in the decision-making process, the level and effectiveness of participation of marginalized groups, the responsiveness of the City to residents' input
- Establish an Ombudsman office with the mandate of receiving and resolving complaints with respect to all municipal government departments.

This strategic direction fits within the theme of "Identity / Inclusion" as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services Plan. As well, it relates to the following "Ottawa 20/20" principles:

#### **1. Ottawa in 2020 is a responsible and responsive City**

- **Accountability:** The City demonstrates leadership by following through and sticking to its decisions and by conducting on-going strategic monitoring and making appropriate adjustments.
- **Conduct and Open and Participatory Process:** The City conducts business in a broad and open way that makes it easy for everyone to participate and collaborate.
- **Partnerships:** The City works with other levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations to achieve objectives.
- **Public Education:** The City educates the public about important issues in order to raise awareness and understanding to enable the public to make knowledgeable choices.

#### **2. Ottawa in 2020 is a caring community that ensures support, inclusiveness and learning for all residents**

- **Citizen Engagement** – Everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in the life of his or her community.
- **Diversity** – The people of Ottawa respect and celebrate cultural and social diversity, and have access to services that are responsive to special and differing needs

#### **3. Ottawa in 2020 is a creative city, rich in heritage, unique in identity**

- **A Capital City** – We cherish the city's amenities, recognizing that as Canada's capital city, we have a rich variety of things to do. Being the nation's capital brings us tourists, gives us the national cultural perspective and a window to the world
- **Vibrant Local Arts and Heritage** – Local arts and heritage give us community vitality; a path to creativity and innovation; and a sense of who we are.
- **Culture in Every Community** – Culture is present in every community through libraries, local museums and archives, the preservation of our heritage buildings, opportunities for artistic expression, and places that present and connect local arts to people.
- **Distinct Rural Countryside** – Ottawa's rural areas are distinct from the urban areas – its rural landscapes, villages and heritage are valued by all.

#### **5. Ottawa in 2020 is a collection of distinct, liveable rural and urban communities**

- **A Sense of Community** – All communities look right and feel right. They have an identity that defines them and fosters pride and belonging among residents.

## **Strategic Direction #2**

### **Maintain the Central Focus of Access to Basics: All people have access to adequate income, food, clothing, housing, transportation, health services and recreation**

The Human Services Plan focusses on people and is to establish a plan for the City's social infrastructure. This direction is founded on the growing body of research with respect to the value of "social capital". Even the business pages talk about the need for social cohesion and quality of life. Through the Ottawa 20/20 process, the City and its' residents have established a vision of "Complete Communities – Ottawa's communities have a variety of housing choices, employment, parks and a wide range of services and facilities accessible by walking, cycling and transit." The central focus of the Human Services Plan, therefore, must be to set a framework for addressing the basic needs of the entire population of the City within our respective neighbourhoods.

"Access to basics" has been defined through the Ottawa 20/20 process, specifically, that all people have access to adequate income, food, clothing, housing, transportation, health services, and recreation. Participants in the special consultation were extremely supportive of this direction. It was noted that there is an urgency to the development of a social infrastructure plan, as the level of ambient stress in Ottawa is rapidly increasing. Furthermore, people needing assistance may become more vulnerable or marginalized if they do not have access to the basics. Participants highlighted several serious concerns with the current situation, specifically

- there are substantial gaps in basic supports for income, food and housing;
- there is also a deficit in access to other services such as transportation, phone or information, which results in increasing social isolation;
- in many cases, services which do exist are not accessible to particular groups because of finances, inadequate accessibility, isolation, cultural considerations;
- budget cuts have led to the loss of some services and to missing links in the "chain of supports" (e.g. laundry facilities, home care, etc.)
- many do not have adequate "down time" and are caught between the demands of home and work, or of caring for children and aging relatives;
- many residents face discrimination in housing, employment, and education.

Adequate housing and income are the foundational pieces of a quality of life and are pivotal with respect to accessing basics. Participants emphasized the qualitative benefits for the whole community of adequate, affordable housing. It was also noted that a shortage of appropriate housing has a serious negative impact on the economy, including Ottawa's ability to attract and maintain the necessary workforce.

If we are to achieve the vision of a high quality of life described in the Ottawa 20/20 process, we must have a plan to address the substantial stressors affecting the well being of the population and the social cohesion of our community. Participants discussed 7 key strategies which would lead to improved "access to the basics".

## **Strategy #1 Establish an Integrated Plan to Address the Need for Adequate Incomes**

### Recommended Actions:

- Ensure that the Talent Plan and the Human Services Plan are linked and set a strong strategic direction (with dedicated resources) aimed at reducing the growing economic gap and addressing the challenge of a job market which does not always provide “living wages”. Include in the Talent Plan strategies with respect to the government and non-profit sectors.
- The City, through the Human Services Plan, provide an equal emphasis on the needs of the workforce for adequate income, as the Economic Plan and Talent Plan are placing on the needs of the employers for a skilled workforce. (For example, resources for ensuring quality work for marginalized groups should compare favourably to resources for strategies such as broadband connectivity).
- Create an action plan to address the inadequacy of many incomes in relation to actual living costs in the City (See Strategic Direction #5 for more details.)

## **Strategy #2 Feature Proactive Intervention with Respect to Quality, Affordable Housing As A Pivotal Strategic Direction**

### Recommended Actions:

- Ensure that the Economic Plan and the Human Services Plan together establish a strong strategic direction, with dedicated resources, which will lead to improved availability of quality affordable housing for the current and projected population (see Strategic Direction #4 for more details).
- Engage in increased public education to help people understand the value of investing in affordable housing, which is integral to a healthy, diverse city. Use Ottawa's newly emerging status as a "world-class" city to point out what is needed to maintain this position, to expand the economy, and to build community vitality, particularly a full range of housing. Use resources and infrastructure within the Economic Plan to engage the private sector in understanding and advancing the role of housing as a central element in strong economic growth and advancing corporate social responsibility with respect to housing (from diverse corporate sectors).
- Commit increased resources to the City of Ottawa Housing Department, to enhance implementation of its' current initiatives, particularly the Affordable Housing Strategy, the Community Action Plan on Homelessness, and the Mayor's Task Force on Public/ Private Partnerships for Affordable Housing.

## **Strategy #3 Prioritize Strategies Directed Toward Prevention To Reduce Costs of Remedial Intervention**

### Recommended Actions:

- Prioritize intervention strategies by municipal departments and community organizations which have an emphasis on prevention, risk-reduction, reducing isolation and enhancing resiliency and community / individual strengths.

- In particular, increase resources to Emergency Services which are targetted toward enhancing the prevention and education focus of their work.
- Work with community partners to better understand and communicate the cost effectiveness of preventive and risk-reducing interventions in health, social services, housing, and social inclusion. Support community education programs which demonstrate how a poor quality of life leads to increases in illness, disability, and remedial costs while quantifying the positive benefits from investing in recreation (e.g. as shown through research such as the Early Years Study, the recent survey by the Popcorn Group on youth, etc.)

**Strategy #4 Implement Strategies To Increase Access to Recreation, As A Key Element in Active and Healthy Living and Quality of Life within Communities**

**a) Expand the availability of recreational and leisure opportunities across the City**

Recommended Actions:

- Develop reserve funds to take care of the physical assets we have, including recreational facilities, parks, libraries and cultural facilities.
- Identify through the facilities review where recreation and leisure opportunities could be offered in each community, including libraries and book / toy mobiles. Include facilities not owned by the municipality in the facilities review.
- Through the Recreation Plan, use a variety of means to increase access to recreation in communities for all ages including, negotiating reciprocal use agreements (e.g. with schools), enhancing supports to volunteers, working with the community to have them deliver services and manage the facilities, partnering with the non-profit sector, working with the community to identify the best uses for City assets.
- Enhance the role of libraries in the provision of recreational and leisure activities, by providing increased resources for non-traditional services such as the targetted reading programs and the free Museum Pass program.
- Permit more flexibility in the funding for non-profits delivering recreation, and in particular, eliminate strict program silos which fail to recognize the inter-relationship between recreation, health, educational achievement, etc.
- Build on the good work that is being accomplished already, for example, libraries bringing services to communities, artists bringing theatre into the schools, etc.
- Address the serious shortage of recreational facilities in the rural areas.
- Discuss with residents the implications of various sectors of the community covering more costs, e.g. corporate contributions, readjustment of development costs to include more money for recreation and culture, user fees, matching funds etc. Ensure new arrangements do not lead to further disadvantage of particular groups. (See (b) below.)

**b) Devote Resources to Increasing Access to Recreational Opportunities and Removing Barriers**

Recommended Actions:

- Include in the Recreation Plan strategies to meet the recreational needs of populations who face barriers in accessing existing recreational and leisure opportunities, including low income individuals, female heads of families, seniors, rural residents, diversity groups, people with disabilities, homeless people.
- Establish a policy in which any increase in user pay contributions for recreation will only be implemented along with a plan to increased subsidies or undertake other remedial actions to balance out the disadvantage created by the fee increase.
- Increase the availability of subsidies and other supports (transportation, equipment costs, free neighbourhood programs, etc.) for low income individuals.
- Permit more flexibility in the subsidy programs for recreation.
- Develop culturally appropriate recreational opportunities for diversity groups.
- Include transportation strategies as a key component of access to recreation and leisure, particularly for people with disabilities, young families, children and youth, frail seniors, and in the rural areas. (Good examples include the library shuttle, the bookmobile, coordination of volunteers to transport participants, etc.)

**c) Highlight the Benefits (Cost Effectiveness) of Recreation**

Recommended Actions:

- Work with all sectors in the community to enhance understanding of the value of investing in recreation for the good of the whole community.

**Strategy #5 Support An Increased Sense of Community Safety**

Recommended Actions:

- Return to more visibility of policing on the streets
- Provide increased resources for enforcement of bylaws (including Building Code, Fire Code etc.) and of community standards.

**Strategy #6 Address The Core Needs of Local Artists**

Recommended Actions:

- Maintain support for the local artistic and cultural milieu, at least equal to the support for major artistic/cultural institutions.
- Link the Human Services Plan with the Talent Plan and the Arts and Heritage Plan to create an integrated strategy which addresses the marginal incomes of many local artists active in Ottawa, specifically by providing funding and other resources to address the core needs of artists (i.e. living expenses).
- Develop concrete supports which recognize the valuable contribution of local musicians and artists who are called upon to volunteer their talents at a level disproportionate to the general population, and who are disadvantaged in the long term due to this commitment.

**Strategy #7 Implement strategies to meet the needs of populations with distinct needs**

Recommended Actions:

- Develop specific strategies to address the systemic barriers which particular demographic groups face with respect to quality of life in our City. (See Strategic Direction #6 below)

This strategic direction fits within the central theme of “Quality of Life” and the related theme of “Supports” as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services Plan. As well, it relates to the following “Ottawa 20/20” principles:

**1. Ottawa in 2020 is a responsible and responsive City**

- Partnerships: The City works with other levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations to achieve objectives.
- Public Education: The City educates the public about important issues in order to raise awareness and understanding to enable the public to make knowledgeable choices.

**2. Ottawa in 2020 is a caring community that ensures support, inclusiveness and learning for all residents**

- Personal Safety and Security – All people feel safe in their homes and communities
- Access to the Basics – All people have access to adequate income, food, clothing, housing, transportation, health services and recreation.
- Citizen Engagement – Everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in the life of his or her community.
- Healthy Living – All people can participate in physical activity; preventive health care and risk reduction; and have access to a range of community programs and facilities.

**3. Ottawa in 2020 is a creative city, rich in heritage, unique in identity**

- Culture in Every Community – Culture is present in every community through libraries, local museums and archives, the preservation of our heritage buildings, opportunities for artistic expression, and places that present and connect local arts to people.
- Distinct Rural Countryside – Ottawa’s rural areas are distinct from the urban areas – its rural landscapes, villages and heritage are valued by all.

**5. Ottawa in 2020 is a collection of distinct, liveable rural and urban communities**

- Complete Communities – Ottawa’s communities have a variety of housing choices, employment, parks and a wide range of services and facilities accessible by walking, cycling and transit.
- Easy Mobility – Communities are easy to get around and barrier-free for the disabled. There are wide sidewalks and recreational pathways; there is frequent, accessible transit service.

**6. Ottawa in 2020 has a strong economy where prosperity is shared among all residents**

- Connecting People to Opportunities – All people have access to quality training, information, and education that creates opportunity
- Connecting Businesses to a Skilled Workforce – Ottawa’s skilled workforce attracts businesses to our city that in turn provide quality jobs.

## **Strategic Direction #3**

### **Plan for the Projected Changes in the Population**

The entire Ottawa 20/20 process is about managing the changes which we anticipate in Ottawa over the next 20 years. Participants in the special consultation highlighted several specific demographic and socio-economic changes which are anticipated to have a significant impact on Ottawa by the year 2020, including:

- An increase in our population by 400,000
- The main source of this population growth being through immigration
- A substantial increase in the number of seniors
- An anticipated increase in the number of people with disabilities, primarily related to the aging of the population
- A labour market that does not necessarily create living wages
- Increasing pressure on the “sandwich generation” (caring for children and aging relatives)
- A trend to longer work hours, with implications for caregiving and volunteering.

The Human Services Plan must anticipate and prepare for these changes to maintain and develop a strong social infrastructure of the City.

#### **Strategy #1 Provide Strong Support for the Inclusion of Diverse Ethno-cultural Communities**

Recommended Actions:

- Develop an action plan to eliminate barriers faced by immigrants and refugees settling in Ottawa. (See Strategic Directions # 6 and 7 for details.)

#### **Strategy #2 Create a Strong Social Infrastructure to Address Seniors’ Needs**

Recommended Actions:

- Work with the community to expand supports to seniors including community care, supports to reduce isolation, access to transportation, supportive housing appropriate to a range of incomes and abilities
- Increase the availability of long term care
- Expand the availability of French services for francophone seniors

#### **Strategy #3 Build Accessibility into Every Part of the City**

Recommended Actions:

- See Strategic Direction #7 for details.

This strategic direction fits within the themes of “Quality of Life”, “Identity / Inclusion” and “Supports” as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services Plan. As well, it relates to the following “Ottawa 20/20” principles:

**1. Ottawa in 2020 is a responsible and responsive City**

- Conduct and Open and Participatory Process: The City conducts business in a broad and open way that makes it easy for everyone to participate and collaborate.
- Partnerships: The City works with other levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations to achieve objectives.
- Public Education: The City educates the public about important issues in order to raise awareness and understanding to enable the public to make knowledgeable choices.

**2. Ottawa in 2020 is a caring community that ensures support, inclusiveness and learning for all residents**

- Access to the Basics – All people have access to adequate income, food, clothing, housing, transportation, health services and recreation.
- Citizen Engagement – Everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in the life of his or her community.
- Diversity – The people of Ottawa respect and celebrate cultural and social diversity, and have access to services that are responsive to special and differing needs

**5. Ottawa in 2020 is a collection of distinct, liveable rural and urban communities**

- A Sense of Community – All communities look right and feel right. They have an identity that defines them and fosters pride and belonging among residents.
- Easy Mobility – Communities are easy to get around and barrier-free for the disabled. There are wide sidewalks and recreational pathways; there is frequent, accessible transit service.

**6. Ottawa in 2020 has a strong economy where prosperity is shared among all residents**

- Strong Export-based Economic Generators – Ottawa develops and supports local innovators to create a critical mass of knowledge and experience that attracts venture capital, more talent, and spins off new companies.
- Connecting People to Opportunities – All people have access to quality training, information, and education that creates opportunity
- Connecting Businesses to a Skilled Workforce – Ottawa’s skilled workforce attracts businesses to our city that in turn provide quality jobs.

## **Strategic Direction #4**

### **Implement an Integrated Plan to Address the Housing Needs of the Current and Projected Population**

#### **Strategy #1 Preserve and Enhance What Already Exists**

##### Recommended Actions:

- Provide increased resources to the City Housing Department, which has shown excellent leadership on housing.
- Establish strategies to maintain and enhance the non-profit housing sector, which is well-established, experienced, cost-effective and continues to find ways to provide quality, affordable housing which remains as a community asset.
- Maintain and protect existing affordable housing and rental housing.
- Use equity from paid up mortgages in social housing to maintain existing stock.
- Prioritize increased preventative strategies to enable tenants to keep their housing.
- Enforce building code and by-law standards to preserve the quality/safety of housing.

#### **Strategy #2 Be Proactive to Intervene in the Creation of New Quality, Affordable Housing**

##### Recommended Actions:

- Increase funding and long term investment to create and maintain quality affordable housing, including grants, provision of land, waiving of development fees.
- Seek innovative ways to address the serious difficulty faced by the non-profit sector to get financing for new construction (e.g. leverage various sources of equity, municipal incentives, alternate financing mechanisms, municipal bonds, government guarantee of bank loans, etc.).
- Refine the role of the City in working with partners to create/maintain housing, consistent with principles established for effective partnerships. (See Strategic Direction # 9).
- Facilitate the creation of innovative partnerships which will lead to creation or preservation of quality, affordable housing (incl. leveraging capital loans)..
- Maintain a high level of flexibility in local housing delivery programs to permit innovative interventions and diverse solutions
- Monitor the impact of interventions to ensure that “affordable housing” is, and continues to be, affordable in relation to actual incomes in Ottawa.
- Create a regulatory framework which will support and advance the principles set out in the revised Official Plan and the integration of all the sub-plans: especially, building affordable housing around transit stations, providing a range of housing options in all communities (incl. social housing and supportive housing in all parts of the City), encouraging mixed developments.
- Continue to investigate best practices from other municipalities, other parts of the country; other countries.

### **Strategy #3 Establish a Plan to Address Housing for People with Distinct Needs**

#### Recommended Actions:

- Undertake a range of strategies to address the critical need for long term care
- Build a community strategy for increased home care services, in recognition of the impact of inadequate homecare on housing quality for seniors.
- Increase resources for supportive and transitional housing (and supports to people in housing), including better links between the housing sector and health/social services.
- Build a community strategy to increase the supply of housing for people with disabilities and integrate accessibility into community design in all neighbourhoods.
- Develop specific strategies to assist in the creation of a full range of housing choices in rural areas, including housing for seniors, in order that people are not forced to move from their community when their housing needs change.
- Ensure that there are housing options for members of Aboriginal origin, and immigrants and refugees, in recognition that some have distinct housing needs and many face discrimination in the housing market.
- Support the creation of a range of housing options in Francophone neighbourhoods in order that Francophones have an option to settle in areas where French services and cultural and communal organizations are centred.

### **Strategy #4 Provide Greater Supports for All Sectors of the Community to Participate in Meeting Housing Needs**

#### Recommended Actions:

- Find creative ways of involving those most affected in planning and decision making with respect to housing needs (homeless people including those at risk of homelessness, seniors with changing housing needs, people with disabilities who do not have appropriate housing, people facing discrimination in housing).
- Support community education initiatives with respect to housing and homelessness issues, including activities to build support for affordable housing in all neighbourhoods, the necessary role of the Federal and Provincial governments with respect to housing, the relationship between stability in the housing market as a significant factor in Ottawa's economic growth strategy, the inability of many wages and social assistance to keep up with housing costs, the impact of policy decisions in other areas on housing needs (e.g. the changes to community care access).

**This strategic direction fits within the themes of “Quality of Life”, “Supports”, and “Identity / Inclusion” as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services plan. As well, it relates to the following “Ottawa 20/20” principles:**

**1. Ottawa in 2020 is a responsible and responsive City**

- **Accountability:** The City demonstrates leadership by following through and sticking to its decisions and by conducting on-going strategic monitoring and making appropriate adjustments.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** The City does not spend more than it can afford. It looks for innovative ways to fund and deliver services and makes efficient use of its infrastructure and resources.
- **Partnerships:** The City works with other levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations to achieve objectives.
- **Public Education:** The City educates the public about important issues in order to raise awareness and understanding to enable the public to make knowledgeable choices.

**2. Ottawa in 2020 is a caring community that ensures support, inclusiveness and learning for all residents**

- **Personal Safety and Security** – All people feel safe in their homes and communities.
- **Access to the Basics** – All people have access to adequate income, food, clothing, housing, transportation, health services and recreation.

**5. Ottawa in 2020 is a collection of distinct, liveable rural and urban communities**

- **Complete Communities** – Ottawa’s communities have a variety of housing choices, employment, parks and a wide range of services and facilities accessible by walking, cycling and transit.
- **Easy Mobility** – Communities are easy to get around and barrier-free for the disabled. There are wide sidewalks and recreational pathways; there is frequent, accessible transit service.

## **Strategic Direction #5**

### **Intervene to Address the Growing Gap**

The economic gap is growing despite the City's relatively stable economic situation. Not all residents are sharing in the benefits from economic growth. Isolation and the struggle to meet basic needs means that most people with low incomes are living under constant stress, wondering where the next meal is coming from or how they will pay the rent.

There are many systemic issues which have resulted in this increasing schism in Ottawa. Many jobs do not provide a living wage and government income supports have not kept pace with increased costs. As well, the process and implications of downloading have substantially affected the rate and depth of poverty in our community.

**Strategy #1 Develop a policy of a “social minimum,” with an articulated standard of living, which extends beyond meeting the basic human needs to survive, but includes basic human needs to thrive.**

Recommended Actions:

- Help meet basic needs
- The Human Services Plan must be closely linked to the Talent Plan, to ensure access to training and good jobs in the private, public, and non-profit sectors.
- Work with the rural communities to identify and provide viable supports for rural economic sectors, including but not limited to agriculture.
- Create resources that are accessible and meet the needs of low-income families and individuals in their own neighbourhoods, including improved access to education, employment, housing, social assistance, transportation, food security, recreation, childcare, community programs, and opportunities for public participation.

**Strategy #2 Build on the Human Capital Which is Present in Every Community**

Recommended Actions:

- Include a variety of populations in the decision-making process and in particular, continue to work with and support groups such as Ottawa Action on Poverty.
- Work with the existing social service network and residents organisations to build on the strengths in low-income communities, such as a sense of identity and cohesion.
- Continue the work started under the Task Force on Poverty, to remove barriers, build skills and promote economic development.
- Implement strategies to support the recognition of foreign credentials and experience in order to better utilize the skills of immigrants.
- Work with the community to develop strategies to improve opportunities for population groups facing greater barriers in today's economy, including people with disabilities, female-headed single parent families, immigrants and refugees, members of visible and ethnic minority groups, members of Aboriginal origin, and young parents

### **Strategy #3 Monitor Progress Toward Reducing The Economic Gap**

#### Recommended Actions:

- Collect and share meaningful information with regard to the economic gap, including meaningful labour market information.
- Avoid single indicators as measures (e.g. food bank use) as they do not represent the full picture, particularly the cumulative effect of poverty.
- Identify and take action to remedy “Catch 22” situations which are created by government policies or practices and program silos which fail to address the cumulative impact of poverty
- Increased public awareness of issues surrounding the growing economic gap.

**This strategic direction fits within the themes of “Quality of Life”, “Supports”, “Learning” and “Identity / Inclusion” as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services plan. As well, it relates to the following “Ottawa 20/20” principles:**

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- **Partnerships:** The City works with other levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations to achieve objectives.
- **Public Education:** The City educates the public about important issues in order to raise awareness and understanding to enable the public to make knowledgeable choices.

#### **2. Ottawa in 2020 is a caring community that ensures support, inclusiveness and learning for all residents**

- **Access to the Basics** – All people have access to adequate income, food, clothing, housing, transportation, health services and recreation.
- **Citizen Engagement** – Everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in the life of his or her community.
- **Healthy Living** – All people can participate in physical activity; preventive health care and risk reduction; and have access to a range of community programs and facilities.

#### **5. Ottawa in 2020 is a collection of distinct, liveable rural and urban communities**

- **A Sense of Community** – All communities look right and feel right. They have an identity that defines them and fosters pride and belonging among residents.
- **Complete Communities** – Ottawa’s communities have a variety of housing choices, employment, parks and a wide range of services and facilities accessible by walking, cycling and transit.

#### **6. Ottawa in 2020 has a strong economy where prosperity is shared among all residents**

- **Strong Rural Economy** – All people recognize and support the special role of agriculture, rural businesses and tourism in our economy.
- **Connecting People to Opportunities** – All people have access to quality training, information, and education that creates opportunity
- **Connecting Businesses to a Skilled Workforce** – Ottawa’s skilled workforce attracts businesses to our city that in turn provide quality jobs.

## **Strategic Direction #6**

### **Respect The Distinctness of Local Communities and Groups By Using Different Strategies to Meet the Same Needs**

Although participants in the special consultation identified common themes and issues affecting significant portions of the population, they also stressed the need for well considered and differing strategies to meet these common concerns. A “one size fits all” approach to developing Ottawa’s social infrastructure will be less than effective.

Participants suggested creating an infrastructure to enable us to look at our communities individually and determine the nature of specific community issues. For example, even the urban /rural distinction does not permit an adequate understanding of the social needs and infrastructure, as rural areas include suburban enclaves, agricultural areas, and small villages – all with differing issues, strengths and weaknesses. It is more useful to look at community needs specific to the individual community. For example, is there a space for a doctor's office, can the youth get summer jobs, what is available to support seniors, is there quality childcare?

This flexibility to accommodate the differences between our communities is also necessary with respect to population groups within our City. For example, although services for seniors may be generally available in a community, there may be no French services which would be accessible to francophone seniors.

If the Ottawa 20/20 vision is to be realized, particularly if we are to create a network of liveable communities, it will be necessary to provide resources to enable neighbourhood based and population based planning.

#### **Strategy #1 Use a Neighbourhood Based Model to Develop the Social Infrastructure**

Recommended Actions:

- Create structures to help local communities identify what is available, what is missing, who are potential partners?
- Pay particular attention to the distinctness of the rural areas, where the issues often include transportation, lack of facilities, shortage of partners/volunteers, and isolation, as well as the need for long term care, childcare, youth employment, support for seniors services, etc.

#### **Strategy #2 Provide French services to Francophones Across the City**

Recommended Actions:

- Affirm French language services as part of the foundation of the City’s operations
- Support the development of equitable and accessible French services across the City with a strong infrastructure in the Francophone neighbourhoods in the east
- Ensure availability of French services particularly for vulnerable members of the Francophone community, including seniors and recent immigrants

### **Strategy #3 Work With Community Representatives to Develop Appropriate Delivery Models to Meet the Distinct Needs of Diverse Populations**

#### Recommended Actions:

- Develop delivery models which involve and meet the needs of the following groups with distinct needs:
  - Low income individuals, children and families
  - Youth
  - Newcomers
  - Visible and ethnic minority populations
  - People with disabilities, especially as they age
  - Seniors
  - Women with children
  - People with special needs e.g. HIV/Addictions
  - Homeless people.
- Enable greater spontaneity and flexibility for community groups addressing the needs of distinct populations.

**This strategic direction fits within the themes of “Quality of Life”, “Supports”, “Learning” and “Identity / Inclusion” as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services plan. As well, it relates to the following “Ottawa 20/20” principles:**

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- Citizen Engagement – Everyone has the opportunity to fully participate in the life of his or her community.
- Healthy Living – All people can participate in physical activity; preventive health care and risk reduction; and have access to a range of community programs and facilities.
- Diversity – The people of Ottawa respect and celebrate cultural and social diversity, and have access to services that are responsive to special and differing needs

#### **3. Ottawa in 2020 is a creative city, rich in heritage, unique in identity**

- Distinct Rural Countryside – Ottawa’s rural areas are distinct from the urban areas – its rural landscapes, villages and heritage are valued by all.

#### **5. Ottawa in 2020 is a collection of distinct, liveable rural and urban communities**

- A Sense of Community – All communities look right and feel right. They have an identity that defines them and fosters pride and belonging among residents.
- Complete Communities – Ottawa’s communities have a variety of housing choices, employment, parks and a wide range of services and facilities accessible by walking, cycling and transit.

## **Strategic Direction #7**

### **Implement an Action Plan for An Inclusive City**

Participants in the special consultation were pleased that the Ottawa 20/20 principles include support for inclusiveness and respect for diversity. There was concern that this vision can not be achieved unless the principles are converted into clear action plans which lead to concrete changes in the social and economic life of diverse populations.

Currently, housing, employment, education, and community services are all areas of unequal access and discrimination. Concerted action is necessary to eliminate barriers in order that the entire Ottawa community can benefit from the talents and full participation of all residents in the City.

The Strategic Directions in this document have already listed a range of recommended actions which would lead to improved access by Francophones, people with disabilities, and members of diverse ethno-cultural communities to the governance process, income, housing, services and amenities appropriate to their needs. In addition to integrating the concerns of these particular populations in these Strategic Directions, it is strongly recommended that the commitment to become an inclusive City be coordinated through the development and implementation of specific action plans (with dedicated resources).

#### **Strategy #1 Respect the Principle of A City with Two Official Languages and Cultures**

Recommended Actions:

- Develop a service delivery model which ensures services and amenities are available in French across the City
- Support and enhance Francophone neighbourhoods as essential to the preservation of French language, culture and community in Ottawa. Work with the community to strengthen Francophone community infrastructure (including schools and the availability of housing) in order to reduce the current population pressures which lead to the dispersion of the Francophone community.

#### **Strategy #2 Establish a Task Force on Diversity**

Recommended Actions:

- Establish a Task Force on diversity which will work with the City and the community (including the Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee) to ensure concrete actions are taken to remove barriers to full participation which are experienced by diverse ethno-cultural groups.
- Address concerns of the diversity community in all Plans related to the Official Plan, including the promotion of diversity and intercultural activities/initiatives within the Arts and Culture Plan.

- Work with the community to develop appropriate mechanisms for monitoring progress toward the vision set out in Ottawa 20/20 and the related infrastructure plans.

### **Strategy #3 Build Accessibility Into All Parts of the City**

#### Recommended Actions:

- Develop ways to engage/involve the broader community in accessibility issues.
- Broaden our view of accessibility to “universal design”.
- Integrate accessibility into new initiatives and enhance accessibility in existing neighbourhoods and activities (for example, have accessible washrooms in public areas, include universal design features and barrier free access when planning for housing, buildings, neighbourhoods, and community amenities/activities).
- Work with the community to provide increased supports for independent living.
- Advertise the extent to which services and facilities are accessible.

**This strategic direction fits within the themes of “Quality of Life”, “Supports” and “Identity / Inclusion” as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services plan. As well, it relates to the following “Ottawa 20/20” principles:**

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- Diversity – The people of Ottawa respect and celebrate cultural and social diversity, and have access to services that are responsive to special and differing needs

#### **3. Ottawa in 2020 is a creative city, rich in heritage, unique in identity**

- A Capital City – We cherish the city’s amenities, recognizing that as Canada’s capital city, we have a rich variety of things to do. Being the nation’s capital brings us tourists, gives us the national cultural perspective and a window to the world

#### **5. Ottawa in 2020 is a collection of distinct, liveable rural and urban communities**

- A Sense of Community – All communities look right and feel right. They have an identity that defines them and fosters pride and belonging among residents.
- Complete Communities – Ottawa’s communities have a variety of housing choices, employment, parks and a wide range of services and facilities accessible by walking, cycling and transit.
- Easy Mobility – Communities are easy to get around and barrier-free for the disabled. There are wide sidewalks and recreational pathways; there is frequent, accessible transit service.

## **Strategic Direction #8**

### **Enhance the Stability and Capacity of the Non-Profit Sector**

Over the past decade, the non-profit sector has been stressed by reductions in funding overall, the move to program rather than core funding, and increasing demands for service. Non-profit services are under pressure to pick up pieces of the social infrastructure which are falling between the cracks due to the impact of cutbacks and of the new economy (e.g. longer working hours so adults have less time for caregiving roles).

Despite these challenges, the non-profit sector has a proven record of effective delivery of service for the range of interventions which will be included in the Human Services Plan. The City currently has agreements with hundreds of community organizations, including financial and non-financial agreements. . By partnering with the non-profit sector the City gains a better understanding of trends in the community and gets access to a broad cross-section of the population.

The City is unlikely to have the resources to implement all the strategic directions under the Human Services Plan without substantial involvement from the community. Effective partnering with the non-profit sector is a central and necessary strategy for achieving the Ottawa 20/20 vision and the objectives of the Human Services Plan.

#### **Strategy #1 Work With the Non-Profit Sector to Identify and Implement Strategies to Enhance Stability in the Sector**

Recommended Actions:

- examine funding procedures and grant methods to enhance stability within the non-profit organizations, specifically work with the sector to develop a strategy for stable core funding
- identify and address funding, program and infrastructure “silos” which fetter effective delivery of services
- build on existing strengths, experience and quality programs/services
- engage the broader community in initiatives to increase overall resources to the non-profit sector

#### **Strategy #2 Work With the Non-Profit Sector to Refine the Integration of Volunteers**

Recommended Actions:

- Recognize that volunteers should properly be used as an enhancement to organizations / programs but not as a replacement for adequate resources.
- Work with the non-profit sector on strategies which assist in volunteer recruitment, management and recognition (promoting volunteerism, support for finding new sources of volunteers, support for accommodating volunteers through transportation, insurance, screening, supervisory costs, etc.)

### **Strategy #3 Create a Clearinghouse to Support the Creation of Partnerships in and with the Non-Profit Sector**

#### Recommended Actions:

- Assist in identifying commonalities cross sectorally, cross geographically, cross demographically and linking organizations which could benefit from partnering
- Support better use of existing facilities, including City facilities and community facilities (e.g. schools)
- Implement community development strategies to remedy the shortage of groups and organizations in rural communities
- Support small groups and disadvantaged populations (e.g. new immigrants) to establish and maintain effective partnerships
- As an alternative to reducing services or closing / selling facilities in local communities due to inadequate resources, work with the community through the non-profit sector to find strategies to keep the service or facility operational.

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- **Partnerships:** The City works with other levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations to achieve objectives.

## **Strategic Direction # 9**

### **Create an Infrastructure to Advance Effective Partnerships with Diverse Sectors**

The Ottawa 20/20 vision has been created within the context of the various serious financial constraints facing the City. Like all Canadian cities, the City of Ottawa delivers a very wide range of services, most of which are mandated programs required by senior levels of government. Cities are not permitted to run a deficit and are allowed to generate revenue only through very restricted means: property taxes, user fees, development charges, licensing, etc. Transfers from the provincial and federal government account for approximately 18% of City revenues. Even mandated programs are chronically under-funded by senior governments.

Cities need a new financial deal from the other levels of government, specifically,

- Authority for those services best designed and delivered locally;
- Adequate resources to do deliver programs within their responsibility;
- Legislation to permit additional strategies for generating revenue;
- Increased involvement of Federal and Provincial governments in meeting community social needs.

In the meantime, Ottawa must continue to deliver programs to its residents. Partnerships with all sectors of the community are seen as a means to enable the City to provide services now and under the framework of the Human Services Plan. Participants in the special consultation provided recommendations with respect to developing effective partnerships with other governments, with the private sector, or with the community at large.

**Strategy #1 Work with the community to establish a set of principles for creating partnerships to ensure the maximum benefit over the long term for the residents of Ottawa (particularly in relation to public / private partnerships).**

Recommended Actions:

- Involve members of the community more in partnership arrangements to deliver services and in decisions with respect to establishing other partnerships
- Before entering into partnership arrangements, assess the likely impact of the partnership in the long term in relation to the public good.
- Before entering into partnership arrangements ensure the partnership will not compromise quality and safety standards.
- Encourage beneficial corporate social responsibility
- Promote community education with respect to the impact of policy and funding decisions by the Federal and Provincial governments.

## **Strategy #2 Identify and Reduce Inter-Departmental Barriers and “Silos”**

Recommended Actions:

- Increase opportunities for communication in order to identify and reduce artificial or unnecessary inter-departmental barriers, “silos”, or red tape.

## **Strategy #3 Engage Other Governments in Discussions Of Activities Which Will Enhance Service Delivery and Effectiveness**

Recommended Actions:

- Seek opportunities for greater co-operation and co-ordination in the delivery of services with neighbouring municipalities (Gatineau, Arnprior and Renfrew County, Leeds/Grenville, Prescott-Russell, Dundas). For example, where Ottawa residents live in proximity to other counties/regions, it may be more practical to negotiate partnerships with those other jurisdictions.
- Continue exploring opportunities to co-ordinate with the NCC
- Look for opportunities to work with senior levels of government on improved opportunities for the municipality. These include but are not limited to:

### **In Relation To The Provincial Government:**

- Authority for the City to generate revenues through new means
- Increased transfer payments to the City
- Reciprocal use and other partnership agreements with respect to services under Provincial jurisdiction (Schools, hospitals, etc.)
- Greater financial involvement by the Province, particularly in housing, health, childcare and income supports

### **In Relation to the Federal Government**

- Authority for the City to generate revenues through new means
- Increased transfer payments to the City
- Greater co-operation with the City on immigration matters, particularly strategies to address job-readiness and other settlement issues
- Consideration of the needs of Ottawans in the disposition of Federal properties
- Greater financial involvement by the Federal government, particularly in housing, innovative financing for affordable housing (e.g. funds in which citizens could invest as part of their RRSP or as a contributory pension, to be used for affordable housing)
- Changes in the rules governing financial institutions to accommodate non-profit housing development and community economic development

**This strategic direction fits within the themes of “Quality of Life”, “Supports” and “Identity / Inclusion” as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services plan. As well, it relates to the following “Ottawa 20/20” principle:**

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## **Strategic Direction #10**

### **Support Economic Growth By Buffering Less Desirable Impacts Which Are a Side Effect of the Growth Strategy**

Some participants in the special consultation noted that it is inevitable that certain strategies which are of benefit to the community as a whole nonetheless can be expected to have some less than desirable impacts on other aspects of community life. For example, rapid growth in a sector of the economy, while creating needed jobs, also can fuel a shortage of housing.

The entire Ottawa 20/20 growth strategy is an initiative to avoid the negative consequences of major economic and population growth. Inevitably the City will experience challenges despite the extensive planning exercise. The Human Services Plan by virtue of its' mandate to provide the "glue" which will hold the City together and develop the human potential, provides an essential role in supporting economic growth by building on positive impacts and buffering less desirable impacts.

#### **Strategy #1 Establish Clear Authority and a Stable Financing Framework for the Human Services Plan**

Recommended Actions:

- Establish clear policies which establish the authority of the Human Services Plan in relation to program planning, annual City budgets, accountability etc.
- Establish a realistic level of resources for implementation of the Human Services Plan, and increase these resources as the population increases

#### **Strategy #2 Inform the Community of the Economic Value of A Strong Social Infrastructure**

Recommended Actions:

- Support initiatives which clarify and communicate the economic value of a strong social infrastructure
- Establish mechanisms to measure and report on the impact of growth on the residents of Ottawa

**This strategic direction fits within the themes of "Quality of Life" and "Supports" as set out in the conceptual framework for the Human Services plan. As well, it relates to the following "Ottawa 20/20" principles:**

##### **1. Ottawa in 2020 is a responsible and responsive City**

- Partnerships: The City works with other levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations to achieve objectives.

##### **6. Ottawa in 2020 has a strong economy where prosperity is shared among all residents**

- Strong Export-based Economic Generators – Ottawa develops and supports local innovators to create a critical mass of knowledge and experience that attracts venture capital, more talent, and spins off new companies.
- Connecting Businesses to a Skilled Workforce – Ottawa's skilled workforce attracts businesses to our city that in turn provide quality jobs