



Our Social Capital

Magazine of the Social Planning Council of Ottawa Vol. III, No.2 November 2003

Social Planning: Then and Now



75 Years of the Social Planning Council



The Municipal Accessibility Plan

SPC's Annual Consultation

Diversity in Ottawa



The Social Planning Council of Ottawa

Bridging the Information Gap
with Quality Research, Analysis and Dialogue

In 1928, on the eve of the Great Depression, the Social Planning Council of Ottawa (SPC) was created to coordinate efforts and build new services to meet the needs of the city's residents. Over the years, the SPC was the place where many ideas took root, and where new services and programs became a reality. . . . the United Way (Community Chest), ParaTranspo, the Volunteer Centre, the Council on Aging, Line 1000 and the Community Information Centre, to name a few.

Today, the SPC uses modern research and communication methods and works with Ottawa's social agencies, concerned residents and decision-makers to understand and advocate the social needs of our new city. The SPC is a non-partisan, not-for-profit, charitable organization. The Board of Directors of the SPC is elected by and from the community. There are also hundreds of volunteers who have given their time and talent to the SPC.

We invite you to join the Social Planning Council of Ottawa, to volunteer your time and talent and/or make a generous charitable contribution to help us bridge the Information Gap.

Social Planning Council of Ottawa

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We would like to thank the United Way of Ottawa for its' generous support of our community building and research.

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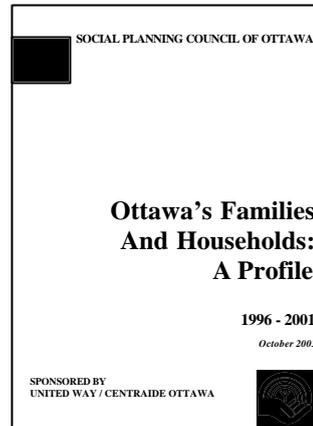
Patrick Ballay, Pierrette Lemieux, Marie-Josée Legault,
Hindia Mohamoud and Dianne Urquhart

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Ottawa's Families and Households A Profile 1996 - 2001



The 2001 census shows:

- Household growth outpaced population growth from 1996 to 2001
- Most households are family households
- The structure, composition, and living arrangements of Ottawa families have changed significantly
- The proportion of couples without children at home has increased
- More young adults are staying at their parents' households
- More people are living alone
- A very significant portion of tenants live in unaffordable housing

These are just a few of the findings in the SPC's latest demographic report, **Ottawa's Families and Households A Profile 1996 - 2001**. This report outlines how the types, composition, structure, and residential conditions of Ottawa's households and families have changed since 1996.

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Seventy-five Years of the Social Planning Council 1928 to 2003

By Allan Moscovitch

Origins

On Monday September 12th, 1927, a group of Ottawa citizens met for a lunch at the Chateau Laurier hosted by the Rotary Club. They were there to hear J.H.T. Falk, executive director of the Montreal Council of Social Agencies and to discuss establishing a similar organization in Ottawa. After Falk's presentation the meeting approved the formation of an Ottawa council of social agencies and a committee was appointed to prepare a constitution and by-laws.¹ The first meeting of the Ottawa Council of Social Agencies took place on the 1st of February 1928.

A report prepared in 1932 by Charlotte Whitton outlined a plan for the Council. The officers of the new organization would include four vice-presidents chosen to represent the Protestant, English Catholic, French Catholic, and Jewish population of Ottawa.² While Whitton's recommendation was for three community chests, the final result in 1933 was two chests: a Protestant and General, and a Catholic. The campaign would operate by direct appeal.³

The Council hired Marjorie Stinson Thomson as executive secretary in 1933. Thomson, a graduate of the Toronto School of Social Work, had worked with the Family Bureau of Hamilton and the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare.⁴

The Council decided to share accommodations with the newly founded Ottawa Federated Charities. The Social Service Exchange, its sister agency, the Christmas Exchange, and its two employees now came under the control of the Council of Social Agencies.

The Council Responds to the Depression

Ottawa was somewhat insulated from the effects of the Depression. A government building program in the early years of the slump helped to sustain economic activity in the region for several years but, by 1933 the value of building permits had fallen to just 14.7 per cent of what it was in 1930.

At the beginning of 1933, the city formed the Ottawa Public Welfare Board to administer "direct Relief chargeable to public funds and relief services,"⁵ as private agencies could no longer provide relief to the increasing numbers in need.

¹ Minutes of the Meeting, prepared by R. Hopper, Secretary, Ottawa Council of Social Agencies, Minutes, Papers of the Social Planning Council, City of Ottawa Archives, 39 D 90, Box 3.

² Constitution of the Ottawa Council of Social Agencies, Adopted January 20, 1933.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid, 6.

⁵ Annual Departmental Reports of the City of Ottawa, 1934, 204-05.

In December 1935 the executive of the Council received a report from the Family Division on the need for supplementary relief.⁶ The Council agreed to undertake a public collection of second-hand bedding, furniture, and other household items.⁷

In 1936, the city discharged 42 workers, mostly women, from its relief department and hired untrained male replacements. As a consequence the Council moved that:

...certain aspects of the reorganization of the city Welfare Department are not in the best interests of the citizens, since it seems evident that there will be impaired efficiency in service to those on relief and an impossible burden placed on private philanthropy.

Commenting on the role of the Council of Social Agencies during the Depression and after, the executive secretary argued that its members had an obligation to document and expose the social conditions that they observed:

The social obligation to “bear witness” to the effects of inadequate Housing and Supplementary Relief, to the gaps in our social legislation which permit non-resident families to be treated as outcasts, and to the need for leisure-time activities which will give constructive leadership to our deprived citizens, demands that we voice our convictions articulately and fearlessly.⁸

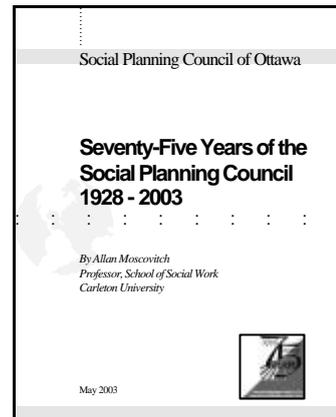
The Ottawa Council of Social Agencies in War and Reconstruction, 1940 - 1951

The Council was concerned that the diffusion of effort for the war would result in less funds

⁶ Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Council of Social Agencies of Ottawa, December 20, 1935, 2.

⁷ Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Ottawa Council of Social Agencies, January 31, 1936, 2.

⁸ Report of the Executive Secretary, Council of Social Agencies of Ottawa, February 14, 1936, 20.



Through 75 years of planning, co-ordinating, and supporting the development of new services, the SPC has made a rich contribution to our city. Many of the organizations which make this City a good place to live began through the initiative and support of the SPC:

- United Way / Centraide
- Youth Services Bureau
- Para-Transpo
- Volunteer Centre
- Council on Aging
- Community Information Centre
- Somerset West Community Health Centre
- And many more

After 75 years, the SPC continues to be respected as a unique research and community development resource for the community.

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being raised. By January 1941, the Co-ordinating Council of Civilian War Services was established with support services provided by the Council of Social Agencies.

In early 1942, a survey by the Catholic Family Service, revealed 88 cases where there were more than two people living in one room. The Council sent a letter to Ottawa Board of Control about the situation, resulting in considerable publicity for the issue.⁹

After a survey at the request of the Department of National War Services, the Council agreed in June 1942 to set up a volunteer bureau.¹⁰ The Women's Voluntary Services Centre was organized in 1943 under the Council's auspices. In its first year of operation a total of 750 volunteers were placed at 51 organizations.

At the 1945 annual meeting it was announced that Joy Maines, the Council's executive secretary was resigning her post after nine years. In her report she eloquently expressed the approach that was to become the credo of the Council in the post war years.

“Social planning” is a phrase that is sometimes avoided because it has been seized upon for political purposes. Social agencies, however, see the results of lack of planning. Planning becomes offensive only when there is lack of participation on the part of those for whom the planning is done. One group of agencies cannot plan what another group should do without conferring with each other and developing the plan together. Neither can one group in society plan for another and expect them to accept the plan gracefully, unless they have helped to formulate it.¹¹

The Welfare Council of Ottawa, 1952–1968

In the postwar years the Council began a period of slow growth. In 1952 the Ottawa Council of Social Agencies became the Welfare Council of Ottawa. By then the Council, located at 74 Sparks Street, had a total of 56 members and five staff, two of whom were employed on the Social Service Index.

The Social Planning Council of Ottawa in collaboration with
The Canadian Council on Social Development & the Ontario Social Development Council
Present a panel discussion and educational workshops

Poverty in Ottawa: What Can Be Done About the Growing Economic Gap?

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Member of the SPC : \$ 20.00 Non-member : \$25.00 Subsidies available

Lunch provided. The venue is wheelchair accessible.

To register or for further accommodation please call Pierrette at 236-9300 ext. 300.

⁹ Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Council of Social Agencies, October 31st, 1941, 3; November 28th, 1941, 1.

¹⁰ Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Council of Social Agencies of Ottawa, June 26th, 1942, 2.

¹¹ Annual Report of the Executive Secretary, 1945, 7.

In May 1953 the Council established a Housing Committee representing over 40 local organizations. A March 1954 Committee report, noted a significant the gap between housing need and housing stock and a large number of houses in need of repair. A delegation met with the city Board of Control on October 12, 1954 to press for reform.

The work of the housing committee revealed the character of the people and the activities of the postwar Council. It showed that the Council relied on social survey data in order to establish need and wanted to ensure that services were available to respond to this need. It is also clear that the Council was concerned for the poor, understood the lack of community services available and had the idealism to respond and the pragmatism to accept a variety of solutions.

Here are some of the many activities of the Council in the 1950s:

- At the beginning of 1956 the Visiting Homemakers Association was established and became an independent agency providing homemaker services as well as a member of the Council.¹²
- In October 1957 the Central Volunteer Bureau was established and in its first year of operations made 570 placements at 54 agencies.¹³
- Founded in the fall of 1955, the Rehabilitation Coordinating Committee became the Rehabilitation Institute of Ottawa on September 30th, 1957.
- In 1957 the Council brought together representatives from five senior citizens' clubs to form the Ottawa Senior Citizens' Association.¹⁴
- In 1958 the Social Service Index closed after more than 44 years of operation.¹⁵
- In 1958 a Special Committee on Youth Services was organized. The Committee's report recommended a Youth Services Bureau for Ottawa.¹⁶ By June 1965, the Youth Services Bureau had become an independent agency.¹⁷
- On April 25, 1962 Council incorporated under the name of the Welfare Council of Ottawa.¹⁸

The Social Planning Council of Ottawa and District, 1968-1989

In 1968 the Council changed its name to the Social Planning Council of Ottawa and District. During 1967-68, the Council moved to new offices at 85 Plymouth Avenue where it remained co-located with the United Appeal and the Red Cross. Here are some of the Council's activities in the 1970s:

- In 1969, the mayor and city council accepted the Council's proposal for a mayor's Committee on Youth. The Committee's work resulted in a drop-in centre run by the YMCA, a hostel, and an employment agency for youth.¹⁹
- In early 1970, participants in a forum on information services decided to set up a Central Information Centre. The Council provided the secretariat.

¹² Welfare Council of Ottawa, Annual Report, 1955-56, 1-2

¹³ Welfare Council of Ottawa, Annual Reports, 1956-57; 1957-58, 13; 1958-59, 8.

¹⁴ Welfare Council of Ottawa, Annual Report, 1957-58, 11.

¹⁵ Welfare Council of Ottawa, Annual Report, 1958-59, 10-11.

¹⁶ Welfare Council of Ottawa, Annual Report, 1958-59, 5.

¹⁷ Ottawa Welfare Council, Annual Report, 1965-66, 8.

¹⁸ Municipal Archives of Ottawa, 39D90 Box 3, Historical Files.

¹⁹ Social Planning Council of Ottawa and District, Annual Report, 1968-69, 27-28.

- The Neighbourhood Services Committee was established to develop a model for neighbourhood services. Two coordinated services were in operation in the spring of 1970, one in Lower Town East and the other in Dalhousie Ward.
- The Committee for Dental Services for People on Low Incomes continued its work completing a brief to regional government in December 1969. A recommendation by the committee was finally realized in May 1973 with the transfer of the dental clinics to the Regional Area Health Unit.²⁰
- In 1972-74, the Council received a grant from the Local Initiatives Program for Tasks Odd And Diverse, or TOAD, a project to provide transportation for disabled persons. The service paved the way for a disability transportation system by 1977.
- The Street Clinic, started in 1969, and with the assistance of the Council became the Centretown Health Care Incorporated in 1973.²¹
- Following the recommendations of the Adolescent Resource Committee, regional government approved the funds for a Youth Coordinating Committee in 1973.
- The Council on Aging was begun in 1973, hiring its first staff member, on April 1, 1975. Its mandate was to provide “information and coordination for the improvement of the delivery of services to older citizens.”²²
- A steering committee for a citizen advocacy program in Ottawa was established in September 1974. In March 1975, the committee was brought under the temporary auspices of the Council.
- The Community Information Centre, begun in 1965 as a Council project was incorporated in July 1974 and became fully independent by November.
- The Christmas exchange, a project since the 1930s when it came to the Council with the Social Service Index was made into a separate agency in the summer of 1974.²³
- The Council’s Job Placement and Personnel Committee, formed in June 1976, developed Line 1000, a cooperative job finding and placement service available to clients of the member agencies of the project.²⁴
- At the request of Regional Social Services a joint SPC/District Health Council Committee prepared a proposal in the fall of 1977 on the most effective rehabilitation program for psychiatrically disabled. The result was the Causeway program, opened in 1979.²⁵
- In the fall of 1974 the Council’s involvement in bilingual services was strengthened by the founding of the Comité Consultatif sur le Bilinguisme with a mandate to set up a central translation service and language training for unilingual staff.²⁶
- The Council’s Housing Committee continued its promotion of housing for people with low income. In 1976, the committee produced a major policy document, *Housing: A Public Perspective*. Staff also provided support to the Ottawa Tenants Council and the Federation of Citizens Associations and the Senior Citizens’ Council.²⁷ **Cont’d Page 10**

²⁰ Social Planning Council of Ottawa and District, Annual Report, 1973-74.

²¹ Social Planning Council of Ottawa and District, Annual Report, 1973-74, 30.

²² Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1974-75, 29; 1975-76, 32.

²³ Ibid, 41-42.

²⁴ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1979-80, 31.

²⁵ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1978-79, 26-27.

²⁶ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1974-75, 15-16

²⁷ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1975-76, 41-47.

"A PLACE TO CALL HOME" IS BORN
United Way Dollars at Work
by Helen Saravanamuttoo

"All of a sudden you wake up and realize that you will not always be there," said Betty Harris, former chairperson of a group of parents and relatives of disabled adults. "As you get older, you find that you can no longer take care of them."

The group was formed in September 2002, following some initial information gathering. The task was to provide "suitable and happy homes" for their disabled dependents (sometimes these are adult children, sometimes a brother or sister, even other relatives). Betty reported that, although the group had a great deal of enthusiasm and was very motivated, they were busy with their own employment and found they did not have the expertise to take the next step. "We needed to establish ourselves as a sustainable organization that will serve the needs of disabled family members and were at a loss to know what to do next," Betty said.

"We were very fortunate that Social Planning Council's (SPC) staff person was able to step in. She helped us with strategic planning, kept us focussed on the goal and made sure we recognized the boundaries and limits of our work. With her help, we were able to determine the direction of the new organization, the path to our goal. Once our course was clear, we held a General Meeting, where we agreed on the organization's structure (including committees and subcommittees) and the process of incorporation. We elected a Board of Directors and chose the new name of the organization, *A Place to Call Home*.

"SPC staff guided us through the process very well and gave us a great deal of extremely useful assistance. I know the other members of the group feel exactly the same way about her work. We were all very happy to have her help."

United Way Centraid provides funding for Social Planning Council (SPC) to do such networking. One of the new requirements for UW funding is that there be funding diversification or additional funding from other sources. *A Place to Call Home* was able to cover part of SPC's work from grants they had received. Without UW's initial contribution, however, SPC would not have been in a position to help them. In this way, UW funds allow SPC to be responsive to community need, to help make Ottawa a strong and vibrant and cohesive community.

Betty wanted to remind me that the work was about special people. "There are many, many rewards to having disabled children and relatives, but it is a worry. We must also remember that as we get older and no longer able to cope, our disabled loved ones worry too. They need to know that they will be happy and secure somewhere and can contribute to the community in their own way". SPC in partnership with UW helps people like Betty's "loved ones" to be part of our community.

Continued from Page 8

A re-evaluation process begun in 1979 resulted in some significant changes in the Council's objectives and membership. A Program Planning Committee was put in place to establish yearly Council priorities.²⁸ Membership would be extended to everyone volunteering to participate in the Council's Standing Committees.²⁹ The Council would facilitate citizen involvement and would advocate social policies and services for disadvantaged people.³⁰

By 1980, the SPC's budget was \$528,570 for the calendar year. In the 1980s the Council would experience almost a tripling of its budget by the early 1990s.³¹ The expansion of activities and staff forced the Council to move to larger premises at 256 King Edward Avenue.³²

Research at the Council continued to grow in importance with the publication of the *Trends 1985* report on social needs in the region. The Income and Employment Program published a report on child poverty and organized a symposium and a book on policies for full employment. The community monitoring committee published a report on women's issues.³³ During 1987 staff completed a study of emergency services for the regional social services department. A study undertaken by the Council and by the Inter-agency ACCESS Committee "focused on the access which members of minority ethnic groups have to health and social services in the region."³⁴

Advocacy was also of importance. The SPC reacted strongly to the recommendation by regional council's executive to cut the Special Assistance/Supplementary Aid portions of the social services budget.³⁵ Still closely engaged with the United Way, the two organizations continued to work together, with the Council filling the United Way's need for social planning.³⁶

Despite the range of activities the regional government was dissatisfied with the Council's output in return for the funds that were being provided. In 1989 the Council began a restructuring when the four program committees were replaced by seven forums: income and employment; shelter; special needs; French language services; social assistance reform; health policy; and social services to ethnic and visible minorities.³⁷

The Social Planning Council: Research and Social Planning for Ottawa, 1990 – 2003

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Council was reaching what would prove to be the peak of activity over its 75-year history. In 1990, the Council received a total of almost \$1.3 million in revenues of which 43.2 per cent was provided by the United Way, 23.3 per cent by the regional municipality, 10.4 per cent by the province of Ontario and 9.3 per cent by translation fees.³⁸

²⁸ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton Annual Report, 1980-81, 1.

²⁹ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton Annual Report, 1981-82, 1.

³⁰ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Revised Bylaws, 1982.

³¹ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1980-81, 20, 25.

³² Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1981-82, 2, 14.

³³ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1985-86, 9-16.

³⁴ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1987-88, 2.

³⁵ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1986-87, 8-15, 17.

³⁶ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1987-88, 20.

³⁷ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1989-90, 2

³⁸ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1990-91/37.

With a recession deepening in the country, the number of people on unemployment insurance and social assistance began to grow rapidly with the size of the deficit. The resultant pressure led to a change in government federally in 1993 and in Ontario in 1995. Reducing taxes, the deficit, and government social welfare expenditures were common themes. Expenditure reductions had finally come to the sector by the middle of the 1990s.

In the 1995-96 annual report, Council president, Ron Caza noted that “a new era is upon us that has dramatically changed the social fabric of our community.”³⁹ When both the province and the region withdrew funding, the Council’s budget fell from \$1.021 million to \$450,661.⁴⁰

A report published in the spring of 1998 captured the new mood. Titled *Doing Less with Less*, it reported on a survey of 300 social and community agencies in the region identifying changes to programs and services that affected the sector since 1996. In order to reduce costs, the Council moved to a new location on 280 Metcalfe Street.⁴¹

The Council continued its rebuilding program over the next few years. Despite a further decline in its United Way allocation the Council’s revenues stayed above \$400,000 through additional project funding received from the city of Ottawa and from private funders. A decision by the United Way to terminate the special relationship, which the two organizations had enjoyed since its inception, led to a further funding reduction.

The Council has begun the process of adapting. Through proposals for research, community consultation, and social planning to public and private funding organizations it has begun to rebuild its activities and revenues. It has also begun to rebuild membership from both individuals and organizations in the community. It is now on a path to recreating itself as a community-based organization with the capacity for high quality research. Its research uses data drawn from its own consultations with local service providers and community groups, surveys of local citizens, and external bodies such as Statistics Canada.

Nonetheless, the Council remains true to its roots with its many engagements in the life of the community, involving many volunteers in the quest to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Ottawa, in particular for those citizens who have been marginalized by their income, gender, language, ability, age, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation. The new direction for the Council in the 21st century was summed up this way in the 2002 annual report:

Our mandate is to provide residents of Ottawa with the means to exercise informed leadership on issues affecting their social and economic well-being. We believe that the exercise of informed leadership is based upon access to high-quality research and greater opportunities for people to share ideas and work together for improvements in their quality of life.⁴²

It is a mandate for the future that will continue the Council’s long tradition of commitment to community social planning.

³⁹ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1995-96, 1.

⁴⁰ Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton, Annual Report, 1996-97, 8

⁴¹ Ibid, 5.

⁴² Social Planning Council of Ottawa, Annual Report, June 2002, 3.

Diversity in Ottawa: Immigration, Ethnicities and Languages⁴³

By Hindia Mohamoud

Diversity⁴⁴ is an emerging value for the City of Ottawa. The City and its people have identified an opportunity to build on the City's diversity by welcoming difference in the City's citizens, communities and neighbourhoods and by making changes to allow difference to flourish.

“With solid projections of historically low birth rates and fierce global and internal competition for talent ahead, our City's future growth is premised on making Ottawa the kind of place where people from many backgrounds want to come and where they can expect to enjoy their lives”

“Growing diversity is the foundation of Ottawa's current economic growth. In recent years, more people and cultures than ever have made Ottawa their home, bringing the knowledge and talent to drive economic prosperity along with cultural riches from around the world”

City of Ottawa: The Human Services Plan

The 2001 census reported that 166,750 (more than one-in-five) Ottawa residents are born outside of Canada, making Ottawa the Canadian city with the sixth highest number of foreign-born residents. Almost 40 percent of the city's foreign-born residents are recent immigrants, who came to Canada between 1991-2001 (see Chart 1).

Table 1

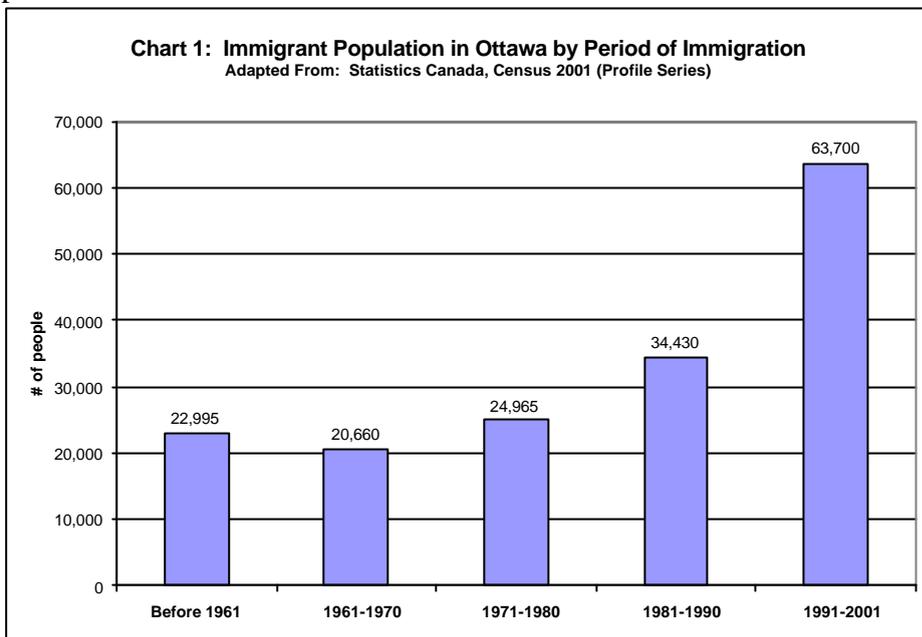
City	Total Population	Canadian-born Population	Foreign-born Population	Proportion of Foreign-born in Total Population
Toronto	2,456,805	1,198,815	1,214,625	49.4
Mississauga	610,815	319,865	285,650	46.8
Montreal	1,019,735	714,870	281,380	27.6
Vancouver	539,630	279,510	247,635	45.9
Calgary	871,140	673,705	190,145	21.8
Ottawa	763,790	589,010	166,750	21.8
Edmonton	657,355	508,825	143,335	21.8
Brampton	324,390	193,220	129,280	39.9
Hamilton	484,385	359,625	119,810	24.7
Surrey	345,780	228,040	114,725	33.2

⁴³ Unless otherwise stated, all data used in this article originate from or are adapted from Statistics Canada, 2001 Census, specifically, Statistics Canada, Profile of Language, Mobility and Migration, for the Census Subdivision (CSD) of Ottawa, 95F0488XCB2001001, and

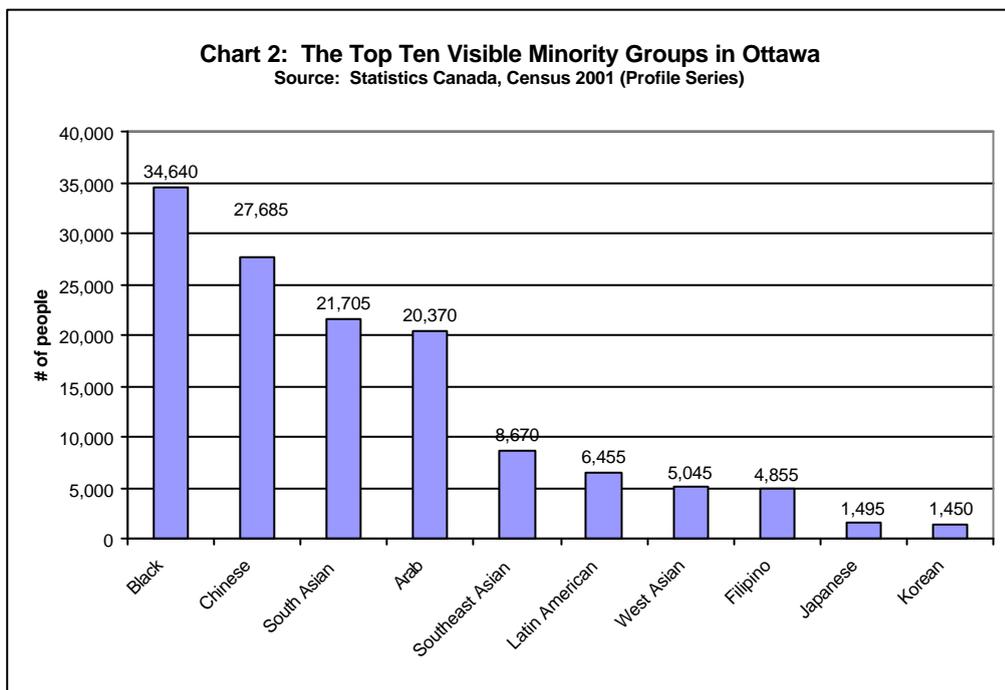
Statistics Canada, Profile of Citizenship, Immigration, Birthplace, Generation Status, Ethnic Origin, Visible Minorities and Aboriginal Peoples, for the Census Subdivision of Ottawa, 95F0489XCB2001001..

⁴⁴ In the Human Services Plan, the word “diversity” includes not only differences in ethnic, racial and cultural origin, but also differences in ability and sexual orientation.

There has been a shift in the ethnicity of recent immigrants, from mainly European to mainly Asian, African, and South American. Thus the high proportion of recent immigrants among the city's foreign-born population comes with an increasing ethnic and racial diversity among the city's population.



Since 1996, the visible minority population⁴⁵ has grown at almost four times the pace of the city's overall population growth: 27.9 percent compared to 7.3 percent. Currently, visible minority residents account for 18 percent of Ottawa's population, up from 15 percent in 1996. In addition, more than half (57 percent) of Ottawa's population growth stems from an increase in the number of visible minority residents.



The increasing diversity of Ottawa's population, and the recent-immigrant status of a large proportion of the city's foreign-born population highlights the importance of investing in the

⁴⁵ According to Statistics Canada, the "visible minority" population includes "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples" who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in color".

settlement and integration process of recent immigrants. New immigrants face a range of formidable challenges as they endeavor to first settle then integrate, and contribute to their new country. Such challenges range from finding appropriate and affordable housing for the family, schooling for children, and suitable employment, while, at the same time, trying to master the official language(s) of their choice, and understanding local practices and systems.

Research has shown that, despite an increasing human capital endowment, the economic outcome of the immigrants from the 1990's is below that of immigrants of previous decades (HRDC, 2001; CIC, 1999) . Various factors contribute to the slow settlement and integration process of new immigrants, including greater challenges due to deeper cultural and linguistic differences. As well, profound institutional restructuring in the 1990s affected vulnerable groups the most, including recent immigrants.

Facilitating the settlement and integration process of immigrants can be considered both an important social investment and a sound economic strategy since the future growth of the city's labour force will mainly rely on immigration. The 2001 Census data show that recent immigrants represented 70 percent of Canada's labour force growth (Statistics Canada, 2003). Moreover, an increasing inflow of immigrants to the city of Ottawa is expected to delay the aging of the Ottawa population (SPC, 2002a) and labour force because a large proportion (almost 40 percent) of immigrants come to Canada at an age below 20 years (SPC, 2003). Given our City's demographic context, and the high levels of human capital brought to the City by newcomers, concerted strategies that facilitate new immigrants' access to trades, and to the labour market in general, are necessary.

It is important to emphasize that the settlement and integration process of new immigrants is as diverse as the historical, educational, financial, and cultural backgrounds of newcomers. Moreover, the circumstances behind the arrival of new comers are also very different and range from the economic and business motivations of immigrants coming under Canada's economic and business class of immigration to the survival instincts urging new comers fleeing from situations of war or political/religious persecution. Moreover, the type of local institutions and the existing social infrastructure make a difference in the rapidity and success of newcomers' settlement and integration process. It is only for the sake of brevity and for ease of analysis in this brief article that immigrants on the one hand, and visible minorities on the other, are grouped together into seemingly homogeneous groups.

It must also be said that the census data would generally not capture the intricacies of the social, cultural, and economic adaptation of new immigrants. We need to understand and learn from the particular experience of each immigrant community. To this end, further local, ethnographic, and community-based research, involving members of large immigrant-communities is necessary. The understanding brought forth by such research is pivotal to the adoption of a multicultural perspective in all aspects of our society.

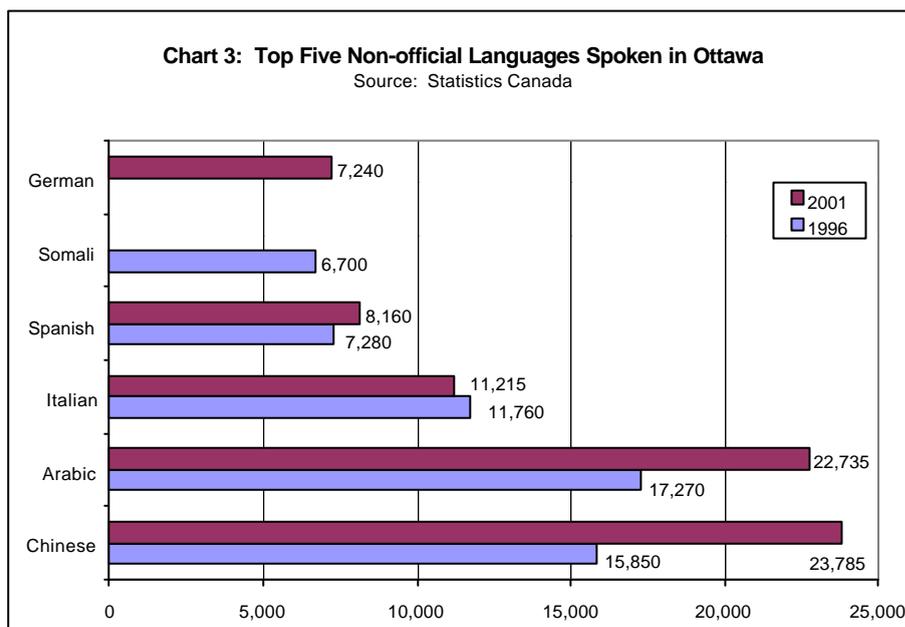
All levels of government need to collaborate in order to make the settlement and integration process of recent immigrants as easy and as rapid as possible. In its recent Throne Speech, the Government of Canada committed to foster **“Competitive Cities and Healthy Communities”** by working with Canada's large cities to:

“...develop targeted strategies to reduce the barriers faced by new immigrants in settling into the social and economic life of their new communities”

As things stand now, municipalities do not have a say in the federal and provincial policies in the areas of immigration, labour, immigrant settlement, second language training, recognition of foreign credentials, and human rights enforcement (Federation of Canadian Municipalities - FCM -, 2003). Yet, they are the ones that have to deal with “the new realities of diversity and attend to the rapid changes in communities (FCM, 2003). As Canada’s fourth most populated city, with a high proportion of foreign-born residents, Ottawa is one of the Canadian cities that needs to find a workable solution with senior levels of government. The Throne Speech commitment seems to indicate a recognition from the part of the Federal Government of the current mismatch between municipalities’ responsibilities and their financial and jurisdictional power in the area of immigration and settlement.

Residents’ Languages in a Multicultural City

Ottawa residents speak more than 70 languages. After the two official languages, Chinese is the language that is most spoken in Ottawa, followed by Arabic, Italian, Spanish and German. In 1996, the top five non-official languages in Ottawa were Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Spanish, and Somali⁴⁶.



In addition to a necessary commitment to the promotion of Canada’s official languages, strategies should also be developed by all levels of government to strengthen our diverse communities’ heritage languages. Residents’ proficiency in over 70 international languages confers the City of Ottawa an immense competitive advantage that cannot be wasted. An appropriate investment in the strengthening of the city’s current linguistic resources would deliver high returns in both the economic and social realms through:

⁴⁶ The latter statement refers to the Ontario part of Ottawa-Gatineau.

- Better connections with the global economy;
- Improved intercultural communication among residents;
- Improved communication between generations, particularly between the foreign-born residents and their Canadian-born off-springs;
- Improved service provision through an increased knowledge of the heritage language of all residents; and
- Improved access to a vast amount of knowledge, history, and literature written in the languages we speak, resulting in an enriched Canadian culture.

The increasing number of immigrants coming to live in Ottawa, and the consequent increasing cultural diversity does not diminish the bilingual character of the City. The proportion of residents who reported to have competence in both official languages remained stable since 1996, at 37 percent. This is only an apparent contradiction since immigrants with proficiency in either, or both, of the official languages are attracted to Ottawa because of the city's reputation to be one of Canada's most bilingual cities.

Finally, there are a small, but significant, number of residents that speak neither of the official languages. The 2001 census reported that 10,625 Ottawa residents have no knowledge of either English or French. It is necessary that human service providers across the city plan for making their services accessible to these residents.

Mother Tongues and Home Languages

Despite a great diversity in residents' mother tongues⁴⁷, more than eight in ten (84 percent) reported speaking English at home⁴⁸. Conversely, residents who reported English as their mother tongue accounted for 65 percent of the population. This high level snapshot of residents' first-learned languages and the languages they most often speak at home, conceals the complexity of the linguistic situation of the Ottawa households. While most Ottawa residents (98 percent) learned only one language as their mother tongue, more than one in five (22 percent) reported to speak more than one language at home⁴⁹.

The high proportion of multilingual households may be indicative of a high number of inter-ethnic families (marriages and unions) and households, and suggests that multiculturalism and multilingualism is a lived reality in the households of a significant proportion of the Ottawa population.

Conclusion: Towards a Cosmopolitan City

Ottawa's diverse population, bilingual character, and international linguistic resources give the city a potential to become a truly cosmopolitan city, rich in diverse cultures and human creativity. Such potential may, however, prove to be unattainable if the current conditions of socio-economic inequalities persist.

⁴⁷ Statistics Canada defines mother tongue as: "The first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the time of the census." A person can report more than one mother tongue.

⁴⁸ Home languages is defined by Statistics Canada as "...the language spoken most often at home by the individual at the time of the census."

⁴⁹ The 2001 census reports more than one home language for residents only in the case where these languages are spoken with the same frequency at home.

Over the decades Canada has equipped its people with a progressively improving legislative base to ensure social and economic equality, from the advent of Canada's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, Multiculturalism Policy, and Official Languages Act. Moreover, in its recent Human Services Plan, our local municipal government has committed to value diversity and to foster equality.

Despite such local and national commitments, recent data indicate that a long way separates us from our potential. The national data show that the gap between the rich and the poor widens and that recent immigrants, the Aboriginal population, and minorities in general are concentrated in the lower economic strata of the society.

Conscious efforts are necessary by all levels of government, the voluntary sector, the business sector, and citizens in order to translate our legislative and policy commitment to equality and social justice into reality.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF OTTAWA'S 2003 MUNICIPAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

By Linda Giroux

Background

Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Province has mandated that Ontario municipalities must ensure that residents with disabilities have equal opportunities and can participate fully in community life. To this end, the Act requires that municipalities develop an annual Municipal Accessibility Plan. It further requires that municipalities establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee to advise City Councils on their Plans as well as on other issues pertaining to by-laws, policies, practices, programs, services and facilities as they affect persons with disabilities.

The City of Ottawa has expressed commitment towards promoting a barrier-free environment for its employees and citizens. Moreover, it has shown leadership and initiative. Before amalgamation, initiatives had been taken by various municipalities, that now make-up the City of Ottawa, to render facilities accessible and services open to persons with disabilities. Shortly after, and prior to the enactment of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the City established an Accessibility Advisory Committee. Subsequently, in 2002, the City of Ottawa Accessibility Task Force was created to develop the City's 2003 Municipal Accessibility Plan.

The City of Ottawa 2003 Municipal Accessibility Plan is a document that embraces accessibility issues and concepts, and illustrates the breadth of barriers that

persons with disabilities encounter. Complying with the edicts of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, it sets forth strategies to identify, remove and prevent barriers. To ensure that implementation occurs in a timely manner and accounts for changes, a monitoring process was written into the Municipal Accessibility Plan.

The Development Processes

Two processes were employed to achieve the goals and objectives of the Municipal Accessibility Plan: an extensive consultation process and an operational review of past and current barriers.

The Consultation Process

The consultation process, a process of reaching out not only to those most knowledgeable of the issues and possible solutions but to those upon whom impact is the greatest, in effect began with the Task Force itself. First, while the Task Force was an interdepartmental working group of senior officials, its membership included representation of the Community Coalition for People with Disabilities. Second, the Task Force worked closely with the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee. Since the Coalition and the Advisory Committee were the embodiment of community organizations that serve persons with all types of disabilities as well as individuals with disabilities, involvement of both these groups provided a source of direct input from relevant target groups.

The Task Force also extended the consultation process into the community. Such local institutions as the hospitals and universities were consulted for their knowledge and expertise in the area of accessibility. Other Ontario municipalities were contacted to learn of their experiences. In addition, the services of an independent consultant were enlisted to develop Accessibility Guidelines and Educational Services, and prepare a report on Former Municipal Accessibility Guidelines/Standards.

The Operational Review of Past and Current Barriers

Past barriers were reviewed, and current barriers were identified to address accessibility issues in the best possible manner with progressive innovative strategies that would rectify existing barriers and prevent further barriers from re-occurring. The examination of past barriers highlighted what had been accomplished and provided a benchmark for further progress. Identifying existing barriers presented opportunities for improvement, for past experiences to be built upon, and for barrier-free principles to be incorporated into the City's by-laws, policies, practices, programs and services. In this same light, international and former local accessibility practices and standards and legislative and regulatory amendments were also examined.

Results

Initiatives are emerging from the Accessibility Task Force's efforts to assess the limitations of practices, standards and requirements upon persons with disabilities. The general classifications, for example, of physical, attitudinal and systemic barriers have been broken down into more definitive categories. Architectural, informative, environmental, policy/practice and participatory are some of the barrier types

which the City now uses in its review process. The new Accessibility Technical Guidelines, although not yet finalized, is another example of an instrument that has been designed to determine how accessible City's facilities are to persons with disabilities, and to indicate what actions should be taken if accommodations are required. Departments, as well, are assuming responsibility for specific policies and procedures.

All initiatives, measures and actions are to be monitored on an annual basis as will the Municipal Accessibility Plan. Although monitoring will be the responsibility of the Auditing & Consulting Branch of the Corporate Services Department, a committee not yet formed but similar to the Accessibility Task Force, will oversee the monitoring and evaluation process.

Conclusion

The 2003 Municipal Accessibility Plan will be submitted to City Council through the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee. The final draft discusses barriers, accommodations, roles and responsibilities, methodologies and actions, timeframes, and costs and funding sources in detail. Sections of the Plan also make note of what has been accomplished.

Information regarding the Municipal Accessibility Plan, and resulting initiatives, will be furnished to staff through MOE and made known to the public and media on the City's website, through its Communications and Marketing Branch and in libraries. Comments, suggestions and concerns about either the Municipal Accessibility Plan or City facilities and services are welcome from all residents, especially those with disabilities, and can be made by calling 580-2400, TTY 580-2401 or by e-mail at BarrierFree@Ottawa.ca.

Update

The Accessibility Plan has not yet been presented to Council for approval.

For more information on the status of the Accessibility Plan, please contact:

- the Mayor's office (580-2496)
- your municipal councillor (contact 580-2424 to find the name and number)
- and "People with DisABILITIES: A Community Coalition (at 236-9300 ext. 303) .

Everything You Wanted to Know About Funding Diversification and Program Evaluation But Were Afraid To Ask *The SPC's 2003 Annual Consultation*

On June 12, 2003, the Social Planning Council of Ottawa (SPC) held its Annual Consultation on issues affecting the non-profit sector in Ottawa. Entitled "**Everything You Wanted to Know About Funding Diversification and Program Evaluation But Were Afraid To Ask**", the event focussed on the impact of current funding and evaluation trends. The event brought together roughly 100 people from government, the not-for-profit sector, and funding agencies to hear about national trends, discuss the experience in Ottawa, and explore strategies to enhance the stability and capacity of Ottawa's non-profit sector. The purpose of the day was to identify the main challenges and potential strategies for improvement in Ottawa, to reach consensus on a strategy for moving forward collectively to strengthen the voluntary sector as a whole (especially health, social and community services), and to provide a series of skill building workshops related to the issues.

The consultation flowed from earlier work of the SPC which had identified significant stresses on the non-profit (or voluntary) sector which were negatively affecting the sector's ability to meet growing demands in the community.⁵⁰ New funding frameworks, particularly the loss of core funding, and more complex evaluation requirements were having substantial negative impacts on the stability and capacity of community organizations. At the same time, funders and governments were facing financial constraints and increasing pressure to explain the so-called "business case" for investment in services to people and the community. There was a sense that they must be successful in demonstrating improved quality of life, if they were to be successful in garnering resources for the sector as a whole.

⁵⁰ See the following SPC reports: [Community Inventory and Gap Analysis Study](#) (2000); [Community Agencies at a Crossroads: A Portrait of Competing Demands](#) (2001); [Advancing the Community by Strengthening the Voluntary Sector](#) (2001); [Keeping the Priority on People: A Special Consultation of the Development of Ottawa's Human Services Plan](#) (July 2002); [Consultations on Ottawa's Draft Human Services Plan](#) (2003). Also the report by the Community Based Research Network of Ottawa, [Research and Evaluation in a Learning Community: Report of the Symposium held April 18, 2002](#) (2002).

We were privileged to begin the event with presentations by three keynote speakers who explained national trends which set the context for the experience in Ottawa:

- **Katherine Scott**, Canadian Council on Social Development;
- **John Shields**, Dept. of Politics and School of Public Administration, Ryerson University;
- **Sheherazade Hirji**, Royal LePage Shelter Foundation.

(A copy of these presentations is available at www.spcottawa.on.ca)

The group then broke into four workshops focussing on a different aspect of evaluation or funding structures. Each workshop group identified challenges and possible solutions, and prioritized the issues in order to make one recommendation for action which would have the greatest beneficial impact. In the afternoon, participants attended skill building workshops on specific issues related to funding, evaluation and managing organizational change.

The recommendations from the four workshops were brought back to the whole group for discussion. The final recommendation from the day was for the SPC to establish a joint funder / government / agency working group which would seek to put in place strategies to address the primary challenges identified in the workshops.

Get your free copy of the report by downloading it from www.spcottawa.on.ca or picking it up from the office. For a mailed copy (\$8,00) call Pierrette at 236-9300 ext. 300.

Ottawa –Gatineau Social Data Consortium

The Social Planning Council has organized a local consortium of organisations that would jointly purchase data through a Community Social Data Strategy initiative brought forward by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD).

Consortium members will be able to access a variety of data at a much lower cost. This economical access to data will enable all of us to understand better the social and economic conditions of Ottawa residents.

For more information on becoming a member of the consortium, please contact Hindia Mohamoud at 236-9300, extension 307 or email: hindiam@spcottawa.on.ca.

Civic Leadership For Changing Populations: Addressing Ottawa's Demographic Shifts *A fundraising dinner for the SPC*

Speakers:

Clive Doucet

City of Ottawa Councillor and writer

Dianne Urquhart

Social Planning Council of Ottawa

M.C. Peter Levesque

Social Planning Council, President

27 November 2003

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