MEDIA RELEASE: Friday, December 7, 2012, 4:30 p.m.

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
AGENDA

Tuesday, December 11, 2012
9:00 a.m.
Regional Council Chamber
150 Frederick Street, Kitchener

1. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

2. PRESENTATIONS

3. REPORTS – Public Health
   a) PH-12-050, Compliance with the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards
   b) PH-12-051, Infection Prevention and Control Program Report
   c) PH-12-053, 2012-2013 Influenza Season Update
   d) CPC-12-004, Friends of Crime Prevention Launch (Staff Presentation)

4. REPORTS – Social Services
   e) SS-12-053, Centralized Child Care Registration & Waitlist Data Base
   f) SS-12-054, Children’s Services - Community Collaboration Grants
   g) SS-12-056, The Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction (Staff Presentation - Attachment distributed separately to Councillors and Senior Staff only)

5. REPORTS – Planning, Housing & Community Services
   h) P-12-132, Doors Open Waterloo Region 2012 –Tenth Anniversary

4. INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE
   a) Memo: Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit Study
   b) Memo: Region of Waterloo Library Service Review Research Results (Colour attachment distributed separately to Councillors and Senior Staff)

5. OTHER BUSINESS
   a) Council Enquiries and Requests for Information Tracking List
6. **NEXT MEETING – January 8, 2013**

7. **MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION**

   THAT a closed meeting of the Community Services and Planning and Works Committees be held on Tuesday, December 11, 2012 immediately following the Community Services Committee meeting in the Waterloo County Room, in accordance with Section 239 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, for the purposes of considering the following subject matters:

   a) labour relations
   b) litigation or potential litigation related to a matter before an administrative tribunal
   c) personal matters about identifiable individuals - committee appointments
   d) personal matters about identifiable individuals - committee appointments

8. **ADJOURN**
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: December 11, 2012

FILE CODE: A24-40

SUBJECT: COMPLIANCE WITH THE ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

RECOMMENDATION:

For information

SUMMARY:

The Organizational Standards were released by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in February 2011. They set expectations for local boards of health for both governance and administration practices. The Accountability Agreement between the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and the Province of Ontario includes a requirement for compliance with the Organizational Standards.

In the absence of specific reporting requirements from the Ministry, Public Health undertook a detailed self-assessment throughout 2011 and 2012. An internal review of the Organizational Standards indicates that Region of Waterloo Public Health is in compliance with the Organizational Standards. However, Public Health has identified the need for better processes for the purpose of documentation. It also identified areas that could benefit from additional improvements through the application of best practice.

Priorities for improvement have been bundled into distinct project areas related to:

- developing and updating policies and procedures;
- addressing strategic and operational planning requirements and;
- human resource planning.

This work is ongoing.

REPORT:

Report PH-11-010, dated March 8, 2011, introduced the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards (Organizational Standards) which were released by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care on February 18, 2011. The Organizational Standards set expectations for local boards of health at both the governance and administrative levels. The standards apply to all boards of health, regardless of governance model and are a key component of the government’s performance management framework for public health. The Organizational Standards became effective in 2011 as part of the Accountability Agreements with the Province of Ontario.

The Organizational Standards outline requirements according to principles grouped into the following six categories:

1. Board Structure
2. Board Operations
3. Leadership  
4. Trusteeship  
5. Community Engagement and Responsiveness  
6. Management Operations (financial, information management, communications, human resources, program management)

Pursuant to Report PH-11-041, dated September 27, 2011, Public Health Budget Approval & Accountability Agreement, the Regional Municipality of Waterloo entered into the Public Health Accountability Agreement with the Province of Ontario, effective January 1, 2011 for a term of three years. The Accountability Agreements identify the requirements for the accountability of the board of health and the management of the health unit, including compliance with the Organizational Standards.

When the Organizational Standards were released, Public Health staff undertook a self-assessment project to review and document compliance and look for opportunities for improvement. To date, here has been no specific evaluation or reporting framework developed by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for the purpose assessing compliance across the province. In the absence of Ministry guidance, the internal process that has been designed has been detailed in its review.

The self-assessment indicates that Region of Waterloo Public Health is in compliance with the Organizational Standards. Public Health has identified the need for better processes for the purpose of documentation. It also identified areas that could benefit from additional improvements through the application of best practice.

Collaboration with both internal Public Health stakeholders and contacts in Region of Waterloo Corporate Departments facilitated the documentation, particularly in areas of service and operations where Public Health does not have a lead (for example, Human Resources, Information Management, Finance, and Council & Administrative Services). Staff in all Public Health Divisions and contacts in other Corporate Departments/Divisions provided significant assistance with the assessment task and subsequently, with implementing improvements.

The assessment of compliance was conducted with the inventory of 51 Organizational Standard requirements and several sub-requirements. The assessment findings indicate that there is compliance with the Organizational Standards. Fourteen percent (7 out of 51) of requirement areas have been identified for implementing improvements. The opportunities for improvement include strengthening the documentation and applying best practices as part of a quality assurance approach.

Priorities for action have been bundled into distinct project areas related to:
- developing and updating policies and procedures;
- addressing strategic and operational planning requirements and;
- human resource planning.

It is Public Health’s intent to reassess and regularly monitor the activities related to the Organizational Standards as part of internal performance management, quality improvement and for meeting the Accountability Agreement with the Province. Public Health will also respond to any future evaluation framework that may be developed by the province to systematically assess compliance with the Organizational Standards.
ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS:

This report provides information related to the implementation and compliance with all requirements of the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

Public Health contributes to a number of Strategic Focus Areas including:
- Environmental Sustainability: Protect and enhance the environment.
- Growth Management and Prosperity: Manage growth to foster thriving and productive urban and rural communities.
- Healthy and Inclusive Communities: Foster healthy, safe, inclusive and caring communities.
- Service Excellence: Deliver excellent and responsive services that inspire public trust.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

One-time budget resources approved in the Region’s 2011 budget process allowed for enhanced staffing capacity to lead the assessment and development/implementation of an action plan related to the organizational standards. Effective 2012, ongoing activities related to documenting and ensuring compliance with organizational standards and accountability requirements will be accomplished with staff resources in the Strategic & Quality Initiatives unit which is funded within the Public Health Department’s base budget.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

The Organizational Standards impact Departments beyond Public Health, including Finance, Human Resources, the CAO’s Office and Corporate Resources. Staff from these areas were involved in the work related to the assessment of compliance will continue to be involved in taking action to address identified areas for quality improvement.

ATTACHMENTS:

NIL

PREPARED BY: Celina Sousa, Manager, Accreditation and Quality Initiatives
Anne Schlorff, Director, Central Resources

APPROVED BY: Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: December 11, 2012

FILE CODE: P15-80

SUBJECT: INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAM REPORT

RECOMMENDATION:

For information

SUMMARY:

This report highlights the program activities of the Infection Prevention and Control Program at the Region of Waterloo Public Health. This program specifically focuses on enteric illnesses caused by food, water-borne and parasitic diseases. The goal of the Infection Prevention and Control Program is to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases of an enteric nature, that is, gastro-intestinal illnesses which are typically characterized by diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, and abdominal cramps. This goal is achieved by completing activities mandated by the Ontario Public Health Standards, taking into account local needs.

REPORT:

The Infection Prevention and Control Program uses evidence-based best practices to respond to prescribed mandates and community need.

Ontario Public Health Standards

The Infectious Disease Program Standards and Protocols of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), published by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC), specifies health unit requirements. The Infectious Disease program standards and associated protocols mandate health units to engage in community partnerships, inspections, control of enteric outbreaks, and case and contact follow-up of reportable enteric illnesses.

To strengthen community infection prevention and control partnerships, Public Health is represented on all infection control committees in 26 local nursing homes and hospitals in the region. Public Health staff supports these institutions by increasing awareness of best practices in infection prevention and control, and participating on committees that review policies and procedures within these institutions.

Partnerships are further enhanced through routine inspections of facilities where infectious disease control is key to reducing the risk of infection. In compliance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, Public Health annually inspects over 1,000 premises, including nursing and retirement homes, residential facilities and beauty salons and spa’s in accordance with best practice guidance documents from the Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (PIDAC). Infection control inspections include a review of cleaning and disinfection procedures, hand hygiene, and personal protective equipment practices. Recommendations provided to facilities focus on evidence-based best practice solutions.
Public Health investigates enteric outbreaks -- a greater than normal number of cases of illness or infection - that occur in institutions (e.g. long-term care facilities and child care centers) as well as community outbreaks reported to Public Health. Enteric outbreaks such as those caused by the common agents of norovirus and rotavirus are typically characterized by diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal cramps and nausea. In some cases, enteric illness can lead to more severe conditions such as kidney damage.

Enteric outbreaks are typically seasonal in nature with most occurring in the colder months (October to April). In the 2011/2012 outbreak season, there were 29 institutional outbreaks and 20 in child care centers. The number of outbreaks last season is considered typical to those from previous years. The 2012/2013 outbreak season is just beginning with eight outbreaks noted in November.

All outbreaks of an enteric nature are assessed to identify their scope, either within a facility or in the community. In facility outbreaks, recommendations are made and implemented in consultation with the infection control staff at the facility with the objective of preventing further transmission of the illness between clients and staff. Public Health Inspectors oversee the management by the facilities of the outbreaks daily to ensure recommendations are being followed and that the measures implemented are effective in controlling and reducing the spread of illness. To support facility partners, Public Health provides education tools and a summary at the end of the outbreak with recommendations to prevent future outbreaks.

The prevention and management of infectious diseases is also mandated by the OPHS. In 2011, PHIs investigated 451 reported enteric illnesses, which is consistent with numbers seen in previous years. A similar trend continues this year with the investigation of 420 communicable disease cases from January to November. Every reported case is interviewed to identify potential sources, modes of disease transmission, risk setting, and occupational contacts. Cases are counseled on basic infection control practices, including hand hygiene, to further prevent the spread of the illness.

Highlights of disease rates in years past were previously presented to Community Services on October 16, 2012, in report PH-12-048, Infectious Diseases in Waterloo Region – Surveillance Report 2006-2011.

Public Health Inspectors and program staff deliver a full complement of program services within the community, including those related to infection prevention and control. Public Health Inspectors participate in regular and ongoing skills maintenance. Training for Inspectors focuses on emerging issues and new evidence, which allows them to provide continued support and best practice solutions to our partners and the community in infection prevention and control.

**Local Needs**
Partner and community infection prevention and control needs were identified though recent Board of Heath Outcome (BOHO) surveys, Salon/Spa and Residential Facility needs assessments, and by direct community feedback. These responses highlighted ways in which infection prevention and control information from Public Health could be enhanced or adapted as needed. The synthesis of this information has directly influenced what and how we communicate to our community and facility partners.

Through the surveys we learned that facility partners expressed an interest for as much tailored infection prevention and control information as possible, to reflect the nuances that can occur across facility types, and prefer communication through email and face to face interaction. In response, the 2012 Long Term Care Forum format was restructured offering dedicated sessions to Retirement Homes. These sessions focused on the enhanced infection prevention and control duties and responsibilities outlined in the newly released Retirement Homes Act. Public
Health in partnership with the Waterloo Wellington Infection Control Network (WWICN) provided guidance and support on how to incorporate infection prevention and control practices into facility policy and procedures, a need identified by Retirement Facilities.

In fall 2011, parents and schools in the community expressed concern regarding unsafe body piercing and tattooing amongst youth. In response to their concern, Public Health partnered with: senior elementary, composite, and high- schools; community partners working with youth; and personal service settings who deliver body piercing and tattooing services. The result was the initiation of a safe body piercing and tattooing awareness campaign that schools requested to have repeated.

In the summer of 2012, Public Health completed a salon and spa partner needs assessment. In response to the needs identified, Public Health will be working to create specifically tailored resources and pilot new communication initiatives with these premises. Salon and spa partners also identified the desire to have access to inspection results. An interest was also expressed by Community Services Committee for public disclosure of personal service setting inspection results. As a result, an expansion of the food premises disclosure website to include personal service setting inspections results is currently being explored. Public Health will provide an update to Community Services Committee on this initiative in the future.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

Focus Area #1: Environmental Sustainability: Protect and enhance the environment
Focus Area #4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities: Foster healthy, safe, inclusive and caring communities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:
This program is implemented within existing resources and is funded 75% by the Province of Ontario and 25% by the Regional Tax Levy.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:
NIL

ATTACHMENTS:
NIL

PREPARED BY:  Alana Bowering, Public Health Planner
Brenda Miller, Manager, Health Protection and Investigation

APPROVED BY:  Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/ Medical Officer of Health
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: December 11, 2012

FILE CODE: P14-20

SUBJECT: 2012-2013 INFLUENZA SEASON UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information

SUMMARY:

Waterloo Region has had an early start to the 2012-2013 influenza season compared to previous years, which typically occurs between November and April. The first cases of influenza A were reported the week of October 1, 2012 and the number of cases of influenza in the community, hospitals, long term care and retirement homes has steadily increased. Waterloo Region currently has the highest number of influenza cases in the Province, including four influenza-related deaths. Most cases of influenza in the Region have been sub typed as influenza A. A small number of cases (20%) are further strain-typed to determine compatibility with this season’s vaccine. Strain typing so far indicates a good match with the 2012-2013 influenza vaccine.

The majority (85-90%) of The Region’s influenza vaccine is distributed for use by community partners. The Region of Waterloo continues to distribute influenza vaccine to primary care providers, urgent care clinics, pharmacies, hospitals, long term care and retirement homes. The addition of the pharmacies was a new provincial direction implemented this flu season in efforts by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to expand access to the vaccine.

The Region of Waterloo Public Health has now completed community influenza clinics for 2012. 12 clinics were held in the month of November, throughout the region. Attendance was down significantly (38%) from last year. This is a trend identified province wide. There will be an additional 2 clinics to be held in 2013 in Waterloo and in Cambridge.

REPORT:

Cases

Yearly circulation of influenza viruses can account for significant illness within the community. The 2012-2013 influenza season to date is no exception. Waterloo Region currently has the highest number of reported influenza cases in the Province, likely attributable to the early start of the influenza season (see Figure 1 below). Provincial data indicates that influenza activity has been increasing in other areas of Ontario particularly in the Central West, Central East and Southwest Regions.

The first cases of influenza were reported the week of October 1, 2012. To date, there have been 70 confirmed influenza cases reported to the Region of Waterloo Public Health. There have been 26 reported facility outbreaks (hospitals, long term care and retirement homes) caused by respiratory illness. Twelve of these outbreaks were caused by influenza A.
Each season there are influenza-related deaths in Waterloo Region, across Ontario, nationally and globally. Region of Waterloo Public Health regrets to report four influenza-related deaths this season. Three deaths occurred in elderly adults with underlying health issues where influenza was a contributing factor. The fourth death occurred in a previously healthy unimmunized child under the age of 10. Region of Waterloo Public Health will not be releasing further information about this case to protect the child's identity.

The vast majority of influenza cases this season have been influenza A. This is consistent with provincial and national trends. A small number of cases (20%) are further strain-typed to determine compatibility with this season’s vaccine. Strain typing so far indicates a good match with the 2012-2013 influenza vaccine.

Figure 1: Number of laboratory confirmed cases of influenza by week, Waterloo Region, 2006-07 to 2012-13

Table 1: Influenza indicators, Waterloo Region and Ontario, August 26, 2012 – November 25, 2012*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Waterloo Region</th>
<th>Ontario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory confirmed influenza cases</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population-based rate per 100,000</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of influenza hospitalizations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population-based hospitalization rate per 100,000</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of deaths</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population-based mortality rate per 100,000</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local data represents the time period from August 26, 2012 to November 25, 2012 to be comparable to the latest provincial data. Local influenza deaths will appear in the updated Local Influenza Surveillance Bulletin the week of December 10, 2012.

Note: Unless explicitly stated, Region of Waterloo Public Health data is reported according to the week corresponding to the case’s episode date while provincial data is reported according to the week corresponding to the date the case was reported to the respective health unit. Often these dates are the same, but they can differ depending on a number of factors including, but not limited to, the timing of a specimen submission, the current volume of submissions, and the time when the health unit receives the lab result. This may result in a slight discrepancy in the total weekly case counts.

* Sources: iPHIS, Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care, extracted December 10, 2012; Ontario Respiratory Virus Bulletin: Week 47. Waterloo Region and Ontario data is current as of Sunday, November 25, 2012.
2012-2013 Influenza Season Response

Of the 137,490 doses of flu vaccine received from the Ontario Government Pharmacy, the Region of Waterloo Public Health has distributed 92% of this vaccine or 125,891 doses, starting the week of October 3\textsuperscript{rd}. Vaccine was delivered to primary care providers, urgent care clinics, pharmacies, hospitals, long term care and retirement homes.

14,120 doses of influenza vaccine were sent to nursing agencies (who administer influenza immunization at workplaces) starting the week of October 3\textsuperscript{rd}.

In response to the early arrival of flu to the Region, an appointment based pilot strategy was implemented at Public Health in both the Waterloo and Cambridge locations, 8 advance clinics were offered. In these clinics 657 clients were immunized during the month of October.

Yearly, Public Health offers a series of community influenza clinics that any member of the public can attend. So far, 12 clinics have been completed with an overall attendance that is 38% lower as compared to last influenza season. Reports from surrounding regions are documenting similar declining trends in their community clinics.

To expand access to influenza immunization, recent amendments were made to legislation (Bill 179 or the Regulated Health Professions Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009) giving pharmacists authority to administer influenza vaccine. In previous years pharmacies hired nursing agencies to immunize at their various sites. To date, 7,600 doses of vaccine have been delivered to 21 local pharmacies.

Next Steps

Region of Waterloo Public Health will continue to monitor influenza activity to determine the immunization needs of the community. Continued support with outbreak management will be provided to facilities experiencing respiratory outbreaks. Public Health will keep health care providers, facilities and the community informed about influenza activity with the weekly Local Influenza Surveillance Bulletins available on the Public Health website at:

\textbf{http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/researchResourcesPublications/reportsdata.asp#WLIAB}

Public Health will continue to distribute flu vaccine to primary care providers, urgent care clinics, pharmacies, hospitals, long term care and retirement homes.

Two additional community flu clinics run by the Health Unit will be held in January at the Public Health office locations in Waterloo and Cambridge.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

This report relates to Focus Area 4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities: Foster healthy, safe, inclusive and caring communities in the 2011-2014 Corporate Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Region of Waterloo Public Health is reimbursed $5.00 by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for every dose given. The per dose reimbursement has remained unchanged since the implementation of the influenza vaccination program in Public Health in 2000. It does not fully cover the costs (staffing, supplies, etc.) required to operate the program. While currently managed through existing resources in the program budget, the current delivery model is not sustainable in the long term.
During 2013, the influenza community clinic model will be modified as part of the Vaccine Preventable Diseases program re-design. Staff will continue to advocate to the province for an adjustment to the per dose reimbursement to reflect actual costs of delivering the influenza vaccination component of the VPD program.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:  
NIL

ATTACHMENTS  
NIL

PREPARED BY: Linda Black, Manager, Vaccine Preventable Diseases  
Kristy Wright, Manager, Infectious Disease and Tuberculosis Control

APPROVED BY: Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: December 11, 2012

FILE CODE: C06-60

SUBJECT: FRIENDS OF CRIME PREVENTION LAUNCH

RECOMMENDATION:

For information

SUMMARY:

The Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council (WRCPC) has launched a ‘Friends of Crime Prevention’ network in an effort to engage more members of our community and beyond in advancing the work of crime prevention through social and community development. This report briefly outlines the development of ‘Friends of Crime Prevention’ and identifies how Regional Council can support the initiative.

REPORT:

A community consultation in 2009 led to the development of the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council’s current community plan Smart on Crime in Waterloo Region 2010 – 2014. The consultation shaped each priority direction of the plan and many of the milestones and activities outlined within. Through analysis of the consultation data, volunteers and staff learned that there was a perception that WRCPC is the place to be in order to play a role in crime prevention. This presented pressure to make the Council even larger likely making participation difficult and not necessarily increasing effectiveness. At the same time many people in the community participate in activities and initiatives that contribute to crime prevention but do not necessarily make the connection between their actions and how these actions contribute to the larger picture of a safe & healthy community.

To deal with this challenge and opportunity, an ‘Organizational Design’ ad hoc Governance Working Group helped to restructure elements of the WRCPC policies in an effort to “establish [the] best foundation for social change oriented crime prevention”. The long-term objective is to move the focus from being a ‘Council’ or ‘Committee’ to growing a broad based community momentum that helps to advance Smart on Crime principles with a view to having as many people involved in crime prevention work as possible. WRCPC wants to move “crime prevention through social and community development” from being a challenging notion to being a household concept. In this scenario Council becomes a vital infra-structure and catalyst for change but is not perceived as the organization solely responsible for smart on crime approaches. Council’s mandate is to reach into the community rather than being the place where prevention happens. While this has always been the case and is reflected in the original mandate, launching “Friends of Crime Prevention” will advance broad based understanding of and participation in activities that prevent crime, fear and victimization.

Community interest and participation in crime prevention is something we all value. Research, when combined with community knowledge create a powerful tool for social and community
work that takes us beyond anything that any one person or organization can accomplish. Much as it is by now accepted that "it takes a village to raise a child", so too, it takes a community to create safer neighbourhoods and cities. When communities work together and focus on what is most effective - now and in the future – it has been shown to create lasting positive change.

By engaging community members, from the grassroots to the highest levels of decision making, as Friends of Crime Prevention, each person has the opportunity to determine their own extent of involvement. Anyone who has an interest in reducing and preventing crime or the fear of crime and victimization, who wants to help increase safety, and who wishes to foster the well being of everyone in our community is invited to join the network. Any individual or organization that supports the values and principles of crime prevention through social and community development can become a Friend of Crime Prevention. These values are:

- Prevention - preventing crime through dealing with the root causes
- Respect - just and humane approaches to crime and its consequences
- Collaboration - all sectors of our community working together
- Innovation - the community is part of the solution
- Knowledge - effective action that is based in knowledge, experience and wisdom

It is free of charge to become a Friend of Crime Prevention. Friends are not members of the Crime Prevention Council but rather comprise a growing number of people and organizations that can contribute to a larger Regional prevention agenda. Three meetings of the WRCPC each year will be dedicated to engaging Friends of Crime Prevention in broader crime prevention issues.

Members of Regional Council can lead the way by signing up to today at www.preventingcrime.ca/friends.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

Healthy and Inclusive Communities: Enhance community safety and crime prevention.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Friends of Crime Prevention Postcard (Distributed Separately)
2. Friends of Crime Prevention Background Document (Distributed separately to Council and Senior Staff - Document available at this link) http://www.preventingcrime.ca/documents/Friends%20of%20Crime%20Prevention_Background.pdf

PREPARED BY: Juanita Metzger, Community Engagement Coordinator, WRCPC

APPROVED BY: Christiane Sadeler, Executive Director, WRCPC
What is a Friend of Crime Prevention?

A Friend is someone who easily sees the connection between their daily lives, the work they do and the opportunities to work together for a safer community.

A Friend is someone who takes action, in small and big ways, to create change in their own neighbourhood, community, workplace or organization.

A Friend wants to become part of a larger web of building a community in which everyone can be and feel safe.

The Purpose

Crime prevention through social development is not something that can be accomplished by any one person or group alone. It takes a village to raise a child, so too, it takes a community to create safer neighbourhoods and cities.

You are part of this change when you are a Friend of Crime Prevention.

Community interest and participation in crime prevention is something we value. Research and community knowledge, when combined, create a powerful tool for preventing crime before it happens.

Getting involved as a Friend of Crime Prevention in your neighbourhood, your community, your places of faith and work, your school and your home helps to grow the Smart on Crime momentum in Waterloo Region. When we work together and keep our focus on what is most effective - now and in the future - we can create change that lasts.

Who can be a Friend?

Friends of Crime Prevention will become an important network of eyes & ears in our community, a web for exchanging and sharing knowledge, news and activities.

Anyone who has an interest in reducing and preventing crime or the fear of crime and victimization, who wants to help increase safety, and who wishes to foster the well being of everyone in our community is welcome to join.

Any individual or organization that supports the following values and principles of crime prevention through social development can be a Friend of Crime Prevention.

- Prevention - preventing crime through dealing with the root causes
- Respect - just and humane approaches to crime and its consequences
- Collaboration - all sectors of our community working together
- Innovation - the community is part of the solution
- Knowledge - effective action is based in knowledge, experience and wisdom
Become a Friend – it’s FREE to join!

• Use your best skills, passion and knowledge to promote a broader understanding of crime prevention
• Contribute your experience and expertise
• Learn from and network with other community leaders and practitioners
• Directly contribute to education and awareness activities that focus on innovation and collaboration
• Help build the crime prevention resources [social capital] that will continue the path of making our community one of the safest in Canada

Join today, sign up!

How to Get Involved
You may already contribute to crime prevention but haven’t made the connection between what you do and how it contributes to the larger picture. Becoming a Friend of Crime Prevention will make those connections clear for you.

Being a Friend does not require you to be a member of the WRCPC, serve on any of its committees or attend all events, but there are many ways, those included, in which you can contribute. Options for areas of involvement include:

• Attending WRCPC meetings and/or partner meetings
• Volunteering for a WRCPC committee
• Public Speaking / Presentations
• Writing a blog post or article
• Event volunteering (Say Hi, In The Mind’s Eye, Justice Dinner)
• Participating in community consultations, workshops, forums
• Following WRCPC on Twitter and Facebook, sharing these links with others, engaging in discussions via social media
• Organizing and planning a neighbourhood or community event
• Reporting on community challenges that may affect crime
• Creating or joining a neighbourhood mobilization team
• Promoting crime prevention efforts and events (e.g. distribute posters, share info with your organization, link to www.preventingcrime.ca)

• Advising our Council on topics and/or policy that have an impact on community safety

About the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council

The Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council brings a wide range of services and citizens together to build healthier and safer communities. Our multi-disciplinary, community-based council acts as a resource and an advisory body for local communities and the Region of Waterloo.

We have come to learn that the role of a crime prevention council is not to ‘do for’ the community, but to ‘do with’ the community. The role of a crime prevention council is to be a catalyst for action, an educator, a connector, a researcher, a resource and support.

Many people perceive the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council as the centre of crime prevention activity. This perception is evidenced by frequent inquiries received about joining WRCPC and constant pressure to accommodate more and more stakeholders at the table. Through consultations we learned that many people are already engaged in activities that address the root causes of crime, but don’t necessarily perceive themselves as ‘doing’ crime prevention work because they are not a member of WRCPC.

So in 2011, WRCPC began to take steps to create new and different opportunities for people to participate in the work of crime prevention according to their own interests and desire for involvement. Friends of Crime Prevention quickly evolved to engage a growing network of individuals and organizations committed to advancing the work of crime prevention through social development.

We would love to add you to our Friends network! Join today.
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: December 11, 2012

FILE CODE: S04-20

SUBJECT: CENTRALIZED CHILD CARE REGISTRATION & WAITLIST DATA BASE

RECOMMENDATION:

For Information

SUMMARY:

NIL

REPORT:

Since the announcement of the Early Learning Framework by the Province in 2009 which included the implementation of full day kindergarten and extended day programs for all four and five year old children, changes to licensed Early Learning and Child Care and transfer of Provincial responsibility to the Ministry of Education staff has been working with the licensed Early Learning and Child Care community to develop transitional plans and support strategies.

Over the past three years Children’s Services has solicited input from licensed Early Learning and Child Care operators on the primary challenges and opportunities they are faced with. The challenges and issues were identified in the Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan 2012-2015. During the consultations it became clear that as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager there were challenges in the ability to capture data and provide reports to the community on service demand. Further discussion with licensed Early Learning and Child Care Operators supported the need to develop a system wide approach which includes a centralized registration, wait list and marketing strategy for care options for families with children from birth to age twelve.

To date five other municipalities in Ontario have moved to a centralized wait list and registration system. Four of the municipalities are using the same service provider called RBB Innovations. The program called One Human Services Network (OneHSN) is an integrated childcare application and waitlist platform that has been designed specifically for use by municipalities as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager. OneHSN is now in place in three municipalities and is in the implementation stages at two more. Given that most municipalities are using a similar platform this allows some joint planning and makes sense to enter into an agreement with the same provider. In reviewing other available platforms none were comparable in cost or scope.

OneHSN Child Care will allow parents to access services through one centralized point. The application is web based and allows parents to search and select child care programs by multiple fields such as: age category and geographic location. Child care operators will be able to access their waiting lists by logging in to a secure site as frequently as they would like.
Parents often identify three barriers when seeking out care for their children:

- Finding/locating licensed early learning and child care
- Long waiting lists for licensed programs
- Choice in determining what constitutes the best fit and good quality child care

In order to support the transition to this centralized approach a staged plan has been implemented which will allow sufficient time and not over tax existing staff resources. The implementation will begin in January 2013 with entry of all elementary schools that will be offering full day kindergarten and extended day programs (before and after school care). This is geared to coincide with kindergarten registration in February, parents requiring extended day at their child’s school will be directed to OneHSN to register their child.

Figure One – Timelines for Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extended Day Elementary Schools (103 sites)</td>
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<td>Youth Development Programs Elementary Schools (103 sites)</td>
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<td>Licensed Early Learning &amp; Child Care Centres (122 sites)</td>
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<td>Licensed Home Child Care Agencies (4 sites/500 providers)</td>
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<td>Marketing Plan Created</td>
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CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

This initiative aligns with the Region’s Corporate Strategic Focus Area 4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities; Corporate Strategic Objective 4.5: To work collaboratively with the community to support the development of services for children.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The total one time costs for implementation of the centralized registration and waitlist platform of $24,750 as well as some additional data import/entry & configuration costs of $10,000 will be covered by 100% Provincial transition operating funding in 2012. In September, report SS-12-038, committee approved the use of $31,759 in transition operating funding to support the implementation of a centralized information and registration wait list management software. The remaining balance of $ 2,991 will be accommodated within the 2012 Provincial Transition Operating Funding. The ongoing annual fees for the platform totalling $48,000 will be accommodated within the 2013 100% Provincial transition operating funds and will not result in service reductions.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

The assistance of Finance, Procurement & Supply Services and Information Technology staff will be required.

ATTACHMENTS

NIL

PREPARED BY: Nancy Dickieson, Director, Children’s Services

APPROVED BY: Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Commissioner, Social Services
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: December 11, 2012

FILE CODE: S04-20

SUBJECT: CHILDREN’S SERVICES - COMMUNITY COLLABORATION GRANTS

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo enter into an agreement with the Province of Ontario for the purposes of implementing the Community Action Integration Leaders Project;

AND THAT the Regional Municipality enter into an agreement with the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation for the purposes of utilizing the Community Collaboration for Children funding as outlined in report SS-12-054, dated December 11, 2012.

SUMMARY:

This report provides an overview of two funding grants totalling $50,000 that have been received by Children’s Services to support the work of The Children’s Planning Table and development of an Early Years System Plan (Children’s Strategy) over the next two years.

REPORT:

Staff received notification that they were the successful recipients of two funding grants that will support the work of the Children’s Planning Table. Both funding grants are targeted to provide support to communities engaged in integrated and collaborative planning and service delivery.

1.0 Children’s Planning Table

The Children’s Planning Table is the planning body that supports integrated planning for services for children pre-birth to twelve years of age. The Children’s Planning Table is supported by staff in Children’s Services, Social Services and Child and Family Health, Public Health. The membership was expanded in 2011 to involve a broader membership base and mandate for service planning. The Children’s Planning Table is Co-Chaired by the Director, Children’s Services and a Community Chair, Debbie Hoekstra, Vice President of Community Services, YMCA, Cambridge & Kitchener Waterloo.

The Children’s Planning Table began meeting in 2012 with an endorsed mandate, vision, planning principles and Terms of Reference. Drawing from the experience of other system integration plans and initiatives the Children’s Planning Table dedicated all four meetings in 2012 to the development of common understanding and shared language and to build agreement on common outcomes as a result of coming together.

Funding applications were submitted to both organizations on behalf of the Children’s Planning Table. The funding will be used to cover meeting costs, staffing resources and speakers for six Children’s Planning Table meetings in 2013 as well as the various sub groups which will focus on implementation plans for key priorities that inform an Early Years System Plan.
2.0 Early Years System Plan

As a result of the foundational work in 2012, the Children’s Planning Table will be moving forward in 2013 with the development of an Early Years System Plan. The Early Years System Plan will be universal in nature and has the potential to impact all children pre-birth to twelve years of age. Given the size and scope of the Early Years System Plan, the Children’s Planning Table has supported taking a deliberate and staged approach to ensure that full engagement and collaboration exists. The development of a shared approach to service delivery and systems level planning takes time to develop and requires continual check in and evaluation. All participating organizations are committed to this approach and provide staffing resources as needed for various initiatives and provide in kind staffing resources to attend the meetings.

By developing a system of coordinated early years services that work together to provide seamless, responsive and quality services to children and families the Children’s Planning Table will ensure that all children in Waterloo Region live in a community that supports their developmental health and that families have timely access to services and supports.

3.0 Service System Integration

The following definition of Service System Integration has been endorsed by the Children’s Planning Table and will be used to support the development of an Early Years System Plan. Service Integration means focusing on client and community needs rather than on the mandate of a particular agency or organization. It means local programs and services are delivered according to a community plan that is based on information about the needs of local children and families. It may include the consolidation of resources, the co-location of different service functions and/or re-engineering of existing resources. An integrated service system means there is “No Wrong Door” – families can enter the system through any service provider and receive the supports they want and need. The Children’s Planning Table has endorsed a definition of integration that speaks to the importance of working together.

4.0 Community Action Research Project - Community Integration Leaders Project

In September an application was submitted on behalf of the Children’s Planning Table of Waterloo Region for the Community Action Research Project Innovation Fund. The Innovation Fund is provided by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the Ministry of Education and is awarded annually to organizations to support community groups working towards service integration. In October, staff received notice that the application had received approval for funding totalling $25,000. This funding grant will be used to support the work of the Children’s Planning Table and creation of an Early Years System Plan. The Early Years System plan is an identified activity in the Corporate Strategic Plan. This initiative is a joint effort between Children’s Services and Child and Family Health.

The proposal submitted to the Province was entitled; ‘Model and document an inclusive and transparent community planning approach’. The project will focus on the creation of a planning framework for development of an Early Years System plan that will effectively engage diverse community partners to work towards an integrated child and family services system approach. A mid-project report and a final project report as required will be submitted to the Province. The funding for this project ends March 29, 2013.
5.0 L.S. Hallman, Lynda Sylvester Award - Community Collaboration for Children

The Lyle S. Hallman Foundation is a granting foundation continuing a tradition of giving focused on supporting health, education and children’s initiatives that inspire and grow individual and community potential. The Lynda Silvester Award – “Community Collaboration for Children” is provided to organizations or groups who are working to develop community based collaborative planning in support of families with children aged 0-10 years across Waterloo Region. The funding grant can be used for activities to further this work and requires considerable in-kind support from members. The total allocation for this grant is $25,000 which must be fully expended by 2014. A service agreement, along with mid and final project reports and evaluation must be completed to sustain the funding.

The availability of this funding provides welcome support to the work of The Children’s Planning Table. Currently Provincial funding

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

This initiative aligns with the Region’s Corporate Strategic Focus Area 4: Healthy and Inclusive Communities; Corporate Strategic Objective 4.6.1 Develop and implement an Early Years System Plan (Children’s Strategy).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Community Action Research – Innovation Fund provides a one time grant of $25,000 in 100% Provincial funding to be expended by March 29, 2013. The Lynda Sylvester Award totals $25,000 in funding to be expended by December 2014. The total funding allocation of $50,000 will be used to support the cost of meetings, resources and consulting fees to further the work of The Children’s Planning Table. The in-kind contribution of staffing support is a requirement for both funding allocations and is managed within the current Provincial operating budget.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

The Children’s Planning Table and development of an Early Years System plan is a joint initiative between Social Services and Public Health. The continued support of Finance in the administration of the funding will be required.

ATTACHMENTS

A Letter: Ministry of Children and Youth Services, October 4, 2012

PREPARED BY: Nancy Dickieson, Director Children’s Services

APPROVED BY: Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Commissioner Social Services
October 4, 2012

Ms. Nancy Dickieson, Director
Children’s Services
Region of Waterloo
P.O. Box 1612
99 Regina Street South, 5th Floor
Waterloo, ON N2J 4G6

Dear Ms. Dickieson:

Thank you for your application for the Community Action Research Project Innovation Fund entitled “Model and document an inclusive and transparent community planning approach”.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved for funding in the amount of $25,000.

Karen Lipski will be in contact with you in the near future to provide further details regarding the allocation of your funding.

As you are aware, the Innovation Fund was created to support community groups to undertake specific, focused work in core areas related to integration. The results of these successful strategies will be documented to inform ministry’s continued work in his area and be useful for other communities to learn from and emulate. More information about the project evaluation process will be provided at a later date.

I thank you for your continuing good work and support on this important initiative and look forward to following the results of your project.

If you have any questions please contact Karen Lipski at Karen.lipski@ontario.ca

Sincerely,

Vince Tedesco
Regional Director

c. Karen Lipski, Program Supervisor
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: December 11, 2012

FILE CODE: S16-02

SUBJECT: THE REGION OF WATERLOO’S COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO POVERTY REDUCTION

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo endorse the Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction (Comprehensive Approach) outlined in report SS-12-056 and detailed in Appendix A;

AND THAT the Regional Municipality of Waterloo forward a copy to the Minister of Community and Social Services and local members of Provincial Parliament, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Ontario Municipal Social Service Association (OMSSA), and the participating community reference groups as outlined in report SS-12-056 dated December 11, 2012.

SUMMARY:

This report provides an overview of the Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction. In this time of fiscal restraint and uncertainty, funding cutbacks and an increasing Ontario Works caseload, the Comprehensive Approach is well timed. The Comprehensive Approach allows the Region to focus on aligning and coordinating its resources across all department and program areas in order to avoid duplication, find efficiencies and maximize its corporate-wide impact on poverty reduction. No new programs or services are being suggested as part of the Comprehensive Approach. Instead, the approach focuses on building on the work that the Region is already doing or planning to undertake and considers opportunities to align work and think innovatively.

REPORT:

1.0 The Region’s Role in Poverty Reduction

During the development of the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan, the Region heard from citizens that poverty is a priority area for improvement. In 2011, Council approved the Strategic Plan which included an action directing staff to develop and implement the Comprehensive Approach and to continue to collaborate with community partners in broad based efforts to reduce poverty. The process to develop the Comprehensive Approach began in the fall of 2011 and an update on the progress made to date was provided in a memo to the Community Services Committee on May 8, 2012.

Waterloo Region is considered a great place to work, play and raise a family; however poverty is an issue in this community as well as other communities across Canada. Our current understanding of poverty in Waterloo Region includes the following:

- The 2006 census indicates that approximately 10.2 per cent of individuals and 11 per cent of families live in low income in Waterloo Region.
- The income gap is continuing to widen. In 2006, the average income in Waterloo Region was nearly four times the income of those living in low income.
We have seen a 37 per cent increase in the Ontario Works caseload from September 2008 (Memo, October 2012) and the average length of time to employment is growing.

Poverty not only impacts individuals and families, but adds significant costs to the community. The financial costs of poverty, both direct and indirect, can impact areas such as health care, policing and corrections and lost potential.

The Region is just one of many players including all orders of government, citizens, community groups, businesses and not-for-profit organizations that has an important role to play in reducing poverty in Waterloo Region. The Region’s role in poverty reduction is significant as it has direct responsibility for a very large number of programs, services and strategic initiatives and it communicates and advocates regularly with other levels of government for effective social policies. In 2010, reports were shared with the Community Services Committee (SS-10-033 and SS-10-045) providing an overview of the Region’s role in poverty reduction. One of the reports included an inventory of programs, services and strategic initiatives delivered or funded by the Region that intentionally focus on supporting individuals living with low income. While it was recognized that the Region invests significantly in social infrastructure, it was identified that more could be done to maximize the Region’s corporate-wide impact on poverty by taking a coordinated and collaborative approach to poverty reduction.

2.0 Development of the Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction

Over 300 stakeholders provided their input to help shape the development of the Comprehensive Approach. From October 2011 to September 2012 a Regional Poverty Reduction Steering Committee (RPRSC) (Appendix B) provided leadership, direction and input into the development of the approach. The committee consisted of 12 Regional staff from across the corporation and four community representatives (representing different sectors). A Building Resilient Communities Working Group was also established to receive input from staff representing 17 Regional strategic initiatives. The working group identified opportunities and recommendations for how Regional strategic initiatives can better complement and align with one another and these recommendations were shared with the RPRSC. In addition, Regional staff from across the corporation, community members and community reference groups provided valuable input that was considered by the RPRSC to help shape the Comprehensive Approach. Consultations with reference groups, staff and community members included the following:

- Regional staff from across the corporation participated in brown bag lunch consultations offered at five Regional locations.
- Project staff met with Grand River Transit staff at transit terminals and stations to share information and receive input.
- Directors submitted reflections on how their corporate strategic actions are linked to poverty reduction.
- A Community Conversation on the Region’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction was hosted by Opportunities Waterloo Region in May, 2012.
- Four existing community groups were invited to act as Community Reference groups for the initiative (Appendix C).
- A large community forum took place in June 2012 with key Regional stakeholders and community representatives.

Importantly, people with lived experience of poverty had an opportunity to be involved and informed in the process. They participated in community reference groups, a Community Conversation and the June 1 Forum.

The Comprehensive Approach is designed to enhance the corporation’s impact on poverty reduction by addressing the issue in a coordinated and comprehensive way across all department and
program areas to find sensible, innovative and lasting solutions for poverty reduction. It focuses specifically on what the corporation (The Region) can do to make improvements within the Region’s direct control and sphere of influence. Specifically, the Comprehensive Approach will:

- Start “at home” by identifying actions the Corporation can undertake to effect change or make improvements within existing programs in our direct control or sphere of influence.
- Provide a shared corporate-wide vision, guiding principles, values, priority areas and actions to reduce poverty and build resilient communities.
- Maximize the Region of Waterloo’s collective impact on poverty reduction by enabling all departments to provide a coordinated response to poverty by working together to accomplish a shared goal and mutually beneficial outcomes.
- Provide an opportunity to avoid duplication and identify efficiencies to maximize the use of Regional resources allocated to poverty reduction activities.
- Lay the foundation for innovation to create the necessary conditions to maximize the Region’s impact on poverty.

The Comprehensive Approach includes a corporate-wide vision, values, guiding principles, six priority areas and twenty one actions (Appendix A). The vision and values for the Comprehensive Approach are aligned with the Region’s Vision:

*Waterloo Region will be an inclusive, thriving and sustainable community committed to maintaining harmony between rural and urban areas and fostering opportunities for current and future generations and values (Service, Integrity, Respect, Innovation, Collaboration).*

Reducing poverty contributes to achieving the Region’s vision.

Guiding Principles unique to the Comprehensive Approach have been developed to guide the implementation of the approach.

- We focus on wellbeing
- We work towards achieving a shared vision
- We collaborate to maximize collective impact
- We act flexibly and innovatively
- We invest strategically to build community resilience
- We respond to the unique needs of priority populations

The Comprehensive Approach includes the following six priority areas:

- **Ignite Passion for a Poverty Free Region**
- **Change Attitudes and Actions Together**
- **Build Bridges**
- **Make Big Ideas Happen**
- **Take a Person Centred Approach**
- **Level the Playing Field**

The priority areas *Changing Attitudes and Actions Together* and *Take a Person Centred Approach* strengthen the public sector value chain. Through actions to address these priority areas, the Region will focus on engaging and supporting employees to better understand poverty and enhance Regional programs and services leading to greater trust and confidence from the public in government.

Twenty one actions were selected by the RPRSC and project staff to meet the combined criteria of being desirable, technically and organizationally feasible and financially viable. Each action has
been placed under one of the six priority areas. The priority areas are not mutually exclusive and it is acknowledged that some of the actions will impact more than one area.

3.0 Accomplishments to Date
An early outcome of the development of the Comprehensive Approach has been the fact that staff from across the corporation has a heightened awareness about poverty in Waterloo Region. More specifically, the majority of RPRSC and staff involved in the working group have reflected that it is likely or very likely that their improved understanding of connections to poverty would directly impact their work.

In addition, a number of early accomplishments related to aligning the Comprehensive Approach with other Regional programs, services and initiatives have taken place to date including:

- A workshop was co-hosted by Public Health and Social Services on the topic of Engaging Priority Populations in January 2012.
- Information relating to better serving customers experiencing mental health issues and living with low income was incorporated into GRT training curriculum in June 2012.
- Information was submitted to Urban Strategies Inc. and Nelson/Nygaard in July 2012 which included a summary of input received through consultations for the Comprehensive Approach to poverty reduction that related to transit and planning for the Central Transit Corridor.
- A review and analysis of all of the corporate strategic action items and departmental action plans was completed and numerous linkages were identified.
- A workshop co-hosted by the Region and Tamarack on collaborative leadership with Margaret Wheatley was attended by over 265 people in October 2012. Leadership is one of the key actions under the Comprehensive Approach.
- Promising practices were shared at the October 2012 Public Participation Project Team meeting, including a resource guide that addresses considerations in the development of advisory groups for people with lived experience of homelessness and/or poverty.
- A Dialogue on Diversity on the topic of people living with low income has been tentatively scheduled for April 2013. Important linkages have been made through the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy through the development of diversity snap shots.

4.0 Next Steps
The Corporate Strategic Plan directed staff to develop and implement the Region of Waterloo's Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction. Should Council endorse the Region of Waterloo's Comprehensive Approach, the next steps to begin implementing the Comprehensive Approach include the following:

- Communicating the Region’s approach internally and externally;
- Developing detailed work plans for each action;
- Developing a planning table to monitor alignment between Regional strategic initiatives and identify emerging issues;
- Completing the evaluation plan; and
- Continuing to engage staff and community members, particularly as it relates to matters outside of the Region’s direct control.

A year one work plan (see Appendix D) has been developed to guide the first year activities planned for this initiative.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

This initiative aligns with the Region’s Corporate Strategic Focus Area 4: Healthy and Inclusive
Communities; Corporate Strategic Action 4.1.1 to “Develop and implement the Region of Waterloo’s comprehensive approach to poverty reduction”; and Corporate Strategic Action 4.1.2.: to continue to collaborate with community partners in broad based efforts to reduce poverty.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

A budget issue paper (page 62 in the budget issue package) requesting a onetime allocation of $63,000 in 2013 and a further $62,000 in 2014 to plan the implementation of the comprehensive approach has been recommended to Budget Committee.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

All departments of the Region of Waterloo, the Crime Prevention Council and Waterloo Regional Police Services have been involved in the development of the Region’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction 
*(Distributed separately to Councillors and Senior Staff only)*

Appendix B Members of the Regional Poverty Reduction Steering Committee

Appendix C Participating Community Reference Groups

Appendix D Year One Work Plan

PREPARED BY: Cheryl Grove, Social Planning Associate  
Heather Froome, Administrator, Social Development Programs  
Lynn Randall, Director, Social Planning, Policy & Program Administration

APPROVED BY: Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Commissioner, Social Services
### Appendix B: Membership
#### Regional Poverty Reduction Steering Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region of Waterloo Staff</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Division</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Schuster (Chair)</td>
<td>Commissioner</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lynn Randall (Alternate Chair)</td>
<td>Director Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucille Bish</td>
<td>Director Community Services</td>
<td>Planning, Housing &amp; Community Services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mark Bullock</td>
<td>Inspector Support Services</td>
<td>Waterloo Region Police Services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lorie Fioze</td>
<td>Manager Strategic Planning &amp; Strategic Initiatives</td>
<td>Chief Administration Office</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Graeme Fisken</td>
<td>Manager Employment Services</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neil Malcolm</td>
<td>Project Manager Transportation Planning</td>
<td>Planning, Housing &amp; Community Services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marie Morrison</td>
<td>Manager Social Planning, Social Planning, Policy &amp; Program Administration</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karen Quigley-Hobbs</td>
<td>Director Infectious Disease, Dental &amp; Sexual Health</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Christiane Sadeler</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharlene Sedgwick-Walsh</td>
<td>Director Healthy Living, Planning &amp; Promotion</td>
<td>Public Health</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deb Schlichter</td>
<td>Director Housing</td>
<td>Planning, Housing &amp; Community Services</td>
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<th>Community Stakeholders</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brice Balmer</td>
<td>Associate Professor Waterloo Lutheran Seminary</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carol Simpson</td>
<td>Executive Officer Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin</td>
<td>Employment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Linda Terry</td>
<td>Executive Officer Social Planning Council of Cambridge &amp; North Dumfries</td>
<td>Social Planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jan Varner</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer United Way of Kitchener-Waterloo and Area</td>
<td>Funding</td>
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<th>Project Staff</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cheryl Grove</td>
<td>Social Planning Associate, Social Planning, Policy &amp; Program Administration</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heather Froome</td>
<td>Administrator, Social Development Programs Social Planning, Policy &amp; Program Administration</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bethany Wagler-Mantle</td>
<td>Social Planning Associate, Social Planning, Policy &amp; Program Administration</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Community Reference Groups

- Community Outreach Program - Annual Community Partners’ Meeting
- Awareness of Low Income Voices (ALIVe)
- Poverty Free Waterloo Region (PFWR)
- Support to End Persistent Homelessness (STEP) Home Collaborative
### Appendix D: Phase 1 Implementation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Year 1 Deliverables/Activities (January 2013 – January 2014)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ignite Passion for a Poverty Free Region</strong></td>
<td>1.1 Utilize Regional communication channels to raise awareness about poverty in Waterloo Region.</td>
<td>• Compile 2011 urban poverty data and create an updated profile of poverty in Waterloo Region.</td>
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<td>• Identify existing and new communication channels that can be used to raise staff and community awareness about poverty in Waterloo Region.</td>
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<td>• Develop a communications strategy which includes key messages which are shared broadly with staff across the corporation.</td>
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<td>• Dedicate an issue (or feature a series of articles) in Employee Connections and Region News to share information and key messages about poverty.</td>
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<td>• Hold a dialogue on diversity on the topic of low income.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Identify and secure opportunities to engage diverse stakeholders in discussions about poverty and solutions for poverty reduction.</td>
<td>• Share messages about poverty reduction to a variety of diverse audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify diverse stakeholders to engage in discussions about poverty reduction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify existing/upcoming opportunities to engage diverse stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 Where appropriate, find ways to support Council’s efforts to advocate to other governments (Municipal, Federal and Provincial) for policy and program improvements.</td>
<td>• Create briefing notes to summarize the income gap and poverty profiles for Waterloo Region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Provide an annual update on opportunities to advocate to other governments and provide a list of key messages to Council.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The activities listed in the Year 1 deliverables/activities column have been assessed to identify alignment with other corporate and departmental Regional initiatives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Year 1 Deliverables/Activities (January 2013 – January 2014)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Change Attitudes and Actions Together** | 2.2 Collect and share with Regional staff the stories of people living with low income and promising practices for poverty reduction. | • Share the stories of people living in poverty through a campaign (e.g. Ally, Say Hi)  
• Establish a continuous method to collect and share the stories of people living in poverty.  
• Collaborate with external community groups and agencies working to reduce poverty to collect and share stories.  
• Establish guidelines for sharing stories and criteria for selecting stories.  
• Gather effective examples (promising practices) of sharing the stories of people living with low income) –e.g. STEP Home video, In Reach, United Way etc. |
|                                   | 2.3 Develop a positive and inclusive language tool kit that provides corporate-wide suggestions for communicating about poverty in a way that avoids stigma and stereotypes. | • Review promising practices from other language tool kits.  
• Collect and incorporate input on the language tool kit from people with lived experience of poverty.  
• Develop the inclusive language tool kit.  
• Share the tool kit with staff across the corporation. |
|                                   | 2.4 Exchange knowledge and expertise about poverty across the corporation. | • Hold a lunch and learn (or larger event) to exchange knowledge about poverty.  
• Incorporate information about poverty into the new employee orientation and supervisory training course.  
• Identify information sharing channels and share knowledge through these channels.  
• Review literature and resources and tap into Regional expertise to understand promising practices for changing attitudes.  
• Identify regional advocates/champions and have advocates deliver presentations to staff on poverty. |
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<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Year 1 Deliverables/Activities (January 2013 – January 2014)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Build Bridges</strong></td>
<td>3.1 Exchange knowledge with others working to reduce poverty.</td>
<td>• Identify and invite speakers to share promising poverty reduction practices with stakeholders working to reduce poverty in Waterloo Region.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Share the Region’s Comprehensive Approach to poverty reduction with others working to reduce poverty and assess alignment.</td>
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<td>• Exchange knowledge and work with existing groups to reduce poverty in Waterloo Region and beyond.</td>
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<td>3.2 Develop a corporate-wide planning table to provide the infrastructure for coordinated planning.</td>
<td>• Create a corporate-wide planning table to provide the infrastructure for coordinated planning.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Make Big Ideas Happen</strong></td>
<td>4.1 Create an Innovation Hub. The innovation hub would encourage innovative, collaborative and creative thinking and provide opportunities for testing (prototyping) ideas.</td>
<td>• Complete a feasibility study to identify the necessary conditions for setting up a successful innovation hub.</td>
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<td>• Identify other innovation hubs and promising practices related to establishing hubs.</td>
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<td>• Develop the innovation hub, communicate the purpose and benefits of the hub and invite key stakeholders to participate in the hub.</td>
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<td>4.2 Harness opportunities to make big changes.</td>
<td>• Identify opportunities to collectively remove barriers and challenges related to making big changes.</td>
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<td>• Provide opportunities for collaboration to take place.</td>
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<td>• Continue to identify emerging opportunities the corporate-wide planning table can address to make big changes.</td>
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<td>4.3 Participate in the Vibrant Communities Canada – Cities Reducing Poverty Learning Community.</td>
<td>• Commit to Vibrant Communities Canada (e.g. join forum, share knowledge).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Priority Area</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Year 1 Deliverables/Activities (January 2013 – January 2014)</td>
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<td>Take a Person Centred Approach</td>
<td>5.3 Explore flexible and accessible forms of service delivery.</td>
<td>• Collect and analyze information from 2-1-1 regarding the kinds of calls received in order to identify opportunities for providing enhanced flexible and accessible services.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Explore flexible and accessible forms of service delivery.</td>
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<td>• Share best practices and understand lessons learned from a Regional perspective and other regarding changes to service delivery.</td>
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<td>• Map out different entry points to programs where people have to establish eligibility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level the Playing Field</td>
<td>6.3 Identify ways to ensure that people living with low income have opportunities to be meaningfully engaged and involved in decision making related to reducing poverty.</td>
<td>• Study promising practices for engaging people living with low income and share this information with internal and external stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction

We are all part of the puzzle – we all have a piece to play.
The Current Context

What is happening across Canada to reduce poverty?

Governments and communities across Canada are working to reduce poverty to create more sustainable, healthy and resilient communities.

At the federal level, an All-Party Anti-Poverty Caucus was recently formed. This anti-poverty caucus includes a diverse group of parliamentarians, organizations and individuals working together to reduce poverty.

Many provinces across Canada have developed poverty reduction strategies. In 2008, the Government of Ontario released the province’s first poverty reduction strategy titled Breaking the Cycle: Ontario’s Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Municipalities and local communities are also engaged in poverty reduction activities and there are many place-based strategies being developed and implemented across the country.

During this period of significant change, financial restraints and a local increasing Ontario Works caseload, there may never be a better time for the Region to address the issue of poverty comprehensively across program and department areas with a focus on using existing resources to maximize its corporate-wide impact on poverty reduction.

“By looking at the issue comprehensively, by looking past our department and program area boundaries we can take a more integrated approach and I am sure that as we do that we will find more and better ways to reduce poverty.”

Mike Murray, Chief Administrative Officer, Region of Waterloo

Our Mandate

What are we doing?

Through an extensive public consultation process to develop the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan, citizen’s top priorities were identified. The first was transportation and transportation related issues. We know that transportation is one of the most significant barriers for people living in low income. The second priority was a group of three related themes that included poverty, homelessness and affordable housing. These priorities speak to a level of community awareness and wide-spread concern for issues of poverty.

In 2011, Council approved the Region’s 2011-2014 Strategic Plan which includes an action item directing staff to develop and implement a Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction. In addition, a second action identifies a commitment to continue to collaborate with community partners in broad based efforts to reduce poverty.

Vision

What kind of community are we striving for?

The 2011 - 2014 Region of Waterloo Strategic Plan outlines a vision that describes the ideal future and answers the question about what impact the Region wants to have on the community:

Waterloo Region will be an inclusive, thriving and sustainable community committed to maintaining harmony between rural and urban areas and fostering opportunities for current and future generations.
The Region’s Role
What is the Region’s role in poverty reduction?

The Region is just one of many players – including all orders of government, citizens, community groups, businesses, and not-for-profit groups – that has an important role to play in reducing poverty in Waterloo Region.

The Region plays a significant role in helping to reduce poverty. The corporation directly administers and/or funds a very large number of programs, services and strategic initiatives that contribute to poverty reduction and build resilient communities. The Region is also well positioned to communicate and advocate regularly for poverty reduction with other levels of government.

The Region clearly demonstrates a commitment to poverty reduction in terms of the depth and breadth of investment in social infrastructure and the level of advocacy for effective social policies. While there is significant investment, we believe that we can enhance our corporate-wide impact on poverty by addressing the issue comprehensively across department and program areas to find sensible, innovative and lasting solutions for poverty reduction.

Poverty
What is standing in the way of our vision?

We know that poverty is a factor that gets in the way of achieving the Region’s vision for our community. We understand that poverty limits the resources and choices available to individuals and families and can lead to loss of hope, loss of dignity and reduced well-being.

In fact, there is conclusive evidence that poverty is the primary cause of poor health among Canadians. The World Health Organization has declared poverty to be the single largest determinant of health.

We also know that while poverty always involves a lack of income it is related to much more than income. Poverty excludes community members from participating fully in community life.

In Waterloo Region, this can sometimes mean having to choose between paying the rent and buying food. It can sometimes mean not filling a prescription. For a child, poverty can sometimes mean missing a birthday party or not participating on a school trip.

Poverty not only impacts individuals and families, but adds significant costs to our community. The financial costs of poverty, both direct and indirect, can impact areas such as health care, policing and corrections and lost potential. The bottom line - we can’t afford poverty.
A Comprehensive Approach

Why do we need a Comprehensive Approach?

Poverty is a complex problem that involves an interlocking web of economic, social, psychological, health and political factors. To address the complexity of poverty, factors related to poverty cannot be addressed in isolation. Interlocking problems require interlocking solutions. To maximize the Region’s collective impact on poverty, a Comprehensive Approach has been developed. This Comprehensive Approach recognizes that each department of the Region has a unique role to play in reducing poverty. The Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction will:

• Start “at home” by identifying actions the Corporation can undertake to effect change or make improvements within existing programs in our direct control or sphere of influence.

• Provide a shared corporate-wide vision, guiding principles, values, priority areas and actions to reduce poverty and build resilient communities.

• Maximize the Region’s collective impact on poverty reduction by enabling all departments to provide a coordinated response to poverty by working together to accomplish a shared goal and mutually beneficial outcomes.

• Provide an opportunity to avoid duplication and identify efficiencies to maximize the use of Regional resources allocated to poverty reduction activities.

• Lay the foundation for innovation to create the necessary conditions to maximize the Region’s impact on poverty.

In addition to working across Regional departments, the Region is committed to continuing to work with community and government partners to align our efforts to reduce poverty.

Guiding Principles

What informs our work?

The following guiding principles are in place and will guide the implementation of the Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction:

1. We focus on wellbeing: Wellbeing involves an interlocking set of social, economic and environmental factors. The way these factors interact greatly affects wellbeing. When we focus on wellbeing we not only reduce poverty for individuals and families but we create a more prosperous and healthy community for everyone.

2. We work towards achieving a shared vision: We have a shared vision of our community and a shared understanding of the benefits of what we are trying to achieve. We are working to establish a common approach to measuring our achievements.

3. We collaborate to maximize collective impact: We continually work across department and organizational boundaries to identify impactful actions that respond to poverty. Collective impact allows for each department to undertake specific poverty reduction activities it is best suited to undertake in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of other departments. We also work closely with community members (including people with lived experience), community groups, partners, and other governments to undertake mutually reinforcing activities and to leverage our efforts.

4. We act flexibly and innovatively: We recognize the value in taking action quickly through prototyping innovative solutions, services and ways of working. We continuously evaluate our actions and assess community need using accurate data.

5. We invest strategically to build community resilience: We want our community to be able to cope with and thrive in the presence of obstacles, challenges and continual change. We strive to use the Region’s resources and influence strategically to balance supporting activities that get at the root causes of poverty with activities that meet people’s practical needs.

6. We respond to the unique needs of priority populations: While reducing poverty for the entire community we use an equity lens to identify priority populations and modify and tailor our efforts where appropriate to meet these unique needs.
We will work to accomplish the Region’s vision for our community through the following six priority areas and 21 actions.

The priority areas are all equally important. Each action has been placed under one of the following six priority areas. The priority areas are not mutually exclusive and it is acknowledged that some of the actions will impact more than one area.

1. Ignite Passion for a Poverty Free Region
The Region seeks widespread support and commitment to social change by highlighting the urgency of the issue of poverty and harnessing the wisdom and ideas of leaders, Regional staff and community stakeholders. We collaborate with community partners to engage the broader community in this process.

1.1 Utilize Regional communication channels to raise awareness about poverty in Waterloo Region. Communication channels can be used to share information and key messages about poverty. Examples include:
• Dedicate an issue (or feature a series of articles) in Employee Connections and the Region News to share information and key messages about poverty.
• Hold a dialogue on diversity on the topic of living with low income.

1.2 Identify and secure opportunities to engage diverse stakeholders in discussions about poverty and solutions for poverty reduction. Opportunities will allow diverse stakeholders to collaborate, share information and report on outcomes of the Comprehensive Approach. Example: Hold forums on topics relevant to implementing the Comprehensive Approach.

1.3 Where appropriate, find ways to support Council’s efforts to advocate to other governments (Municipal, Federal and Provincial) for policy and program improvements. Example: Develop annual key messages around issues related to poverty reduction that Council could share with other levels of government.
2. Change Attitudes and Actions Together

Everyone is connected to both the issues and the solutions and stories make these connections real. We can make a difference if we work together to share stories, build understanding and change attitudes.

2.1 Develop and implement a corporate-wide social marketing campaign to provide information and change attitudes about poverty in Waterloo Region. The social marketing campaign will identify key messages, communication channels and tools for sharing corporate-wide information about poverty.

2.2 Collect and share with Regional staff the stories of people living with low income and promising practices for poverty reduction. Stories help to make poverty understandable and personal. They can also be used to highlight promising practices taking place across the Region that contribute to poverty reduction.

2.3 Develop a positive and inclusive language tool kit that provides corporate-wide suggestions for communicating about poverty. Develop a tool kit of resources to share suggestions about how to talk about poverty in a way that avoids stigma and stereotypes and that is respectful and unbiased.

2.4 Exchange knowledge and expertise about poverty across the corporation. Identify and harness opportunities for staff who are knowledgeable about poverty to share and exchange what they know across the corporation. Example: Grand River Transit and Employment & Income Support Caseworkers work with people living with low income every day and could share and exchange what they know to enhance services and supports.

3. Build Bridges

The Region builds bridges and makes connections across departments, community partners and various levels of government to help people find pathways out of poverty and to enhance impact on poverty reduction.

3.1 Exchange knowledge with others working to reduce poverty. Share the Comprehensive Approach with others working to reduce poverty and keep informed about other promising practices.

3.2 Develop a corporate-wide planning table to provide the infrastructure for coordinated planning. Build on existing collaborative planning by creating a corporate-wide planning table of Regional staff to enhance the Region’s collective impact on poverty. The planning table will align Regional initiatives that contribute to building resilient communities and address opportunities to make big changes (see action item 4.2).

3.3 Increase staff awareness of the processes and venues available to advocate for policy and program improvements that promote well being. Processes (e.g., resolutions to Council) and venues (e.g., forums, meetings, etc.) could be regional, provincial, federal or community based.

3.4 Identify and build on existing lenses that promote corporate-wide common good decision making to improve people’s living conditions (e.g., social determinants of health). Example lenses:

- Diversity & Inclusion Lens
- Sustainability Lens

3.5 Identify opportunities to leverage impact and align the Region’s poverty reduction efforts with community efforts to reduce poverty.
4. Make Big Ideas Happen

The Region has big ideas to help reduce poverty. To make these big ideas happen, we need to create an enabling environment for innovation. Innovation requires leadership and creative thinking. We understand innovation involves taking programs, services and initiatives that currently exist and putting them together in new ways to have greater impact.

4.1 Create an Innovation Hub. The Innovation Hub will encourage innovative, collaborative and creative thinking and provide opportunities for testing (prototyping) ideas.

- Affordable transit
- Culture and recreation
- Affordable housing & homelessness prevention
- Problematic substance use
- Violence and crime prevention
- Food systems and access to healthy food

4.2 Harness opportunities to make big changes. Recent government policy and funding changes have created opportunities for the Region to re-think the way it structures systems and services. These opportunities could be addressed by the corporate-wide planning table and would enhance the Region’s ability to coordinate its response to poverty (see action item 3.2).

4.3 Participate in the Vibrant Communities Canada - Cities Reducing Poverty Learning Community. The learning community is a pan-Canadian network with a goal to include 100 cities networking and sharing information to reduce poverty for one million Canadians.

5. Take a Person Centred Approach

The Region values people at all stages of life and recognizes that everyone matters. We take a person centred approach and consider the needs of each individual, providing programs and services that are responsive to their needs.

5.1 Enhance information sharing about Regional programs and services for people living with low income. Information can be shared with a broad audience through a variety of channels (e.g., 211, Region’s website, commercials, service first call centre, open data, inventories, etc.).

5.2 Identify ways to streamline the intake processes for programs and services that pertain to people living with low income. Make it easier for people living with low income to access Regional programs and services.

5.3 Explore flexible and accessible forms of service delivery. Service delivery could be enhanced in a variety of ways including extended hours, online services, and co-located service hubs.
6. Level the Playing Field

The Region provides services that are accessible to everyone, regardless of income. The Region recognizes that everyone should have the opportunity to participate in community life in meaningful ways, allowing them to reach their full potential.

6.1 Enhance supports to help youth secure employment.
Help youth to connect to education, training and employment supports.

6.2 Create and share an inventory of Regional programs, services and strategic initiatives that focus on enhancing life skills and employment related skills. Enhancing life and employment skills helps to support people to fully participate in the community.

6.3 Identify ways to ensure that people living with low income have opportunities to be meaningfully engaged and involved in decision making related to reducing poverty. People living with low income should have opportunities to directly inform Regional decisions related to reducing poverty.

Implementing the Comprehensive Approach

What are the next steps?

Should Council approve the Comprehensive Approach, the following steps will guide the implementation process:

Communicating the Comprehensive Approach
The Comprehensive Approach will be shared with all departments at the Region, with community and government partners working to reduce poverty and with community members.

Developing plans for each action included in the Comprehensive Approach
To implement the Comprehensive Approach, detailed work plans will be developed for each action. The work plans will include detailed information regarding the timelines, deliverables, resources, stakeholders and leads for each action.

Developing the Infrastructure for Coordinated, Collaborative and Responsive Planning
The corporate-wide planning table will be established to ensure that the Comprehensive Approach is implemented in a coordinated, collaborative and responsive manner.

The corporate-wide planning table will monitor alignment between Regional initiatives that relate to building resilient communities and will identify emerging issues that could be addressed as part of the Comprehensive Approach.

Evaluating & Reporting
An evaluation plan will be developed which will include outcome measures for each action, evaluation timelines and identified reporting vehicles to ensure that staff and the community are aware of the outcome measures and informed of the progress related to implementing the actions included in the Comprehensive Approach.

Engaging Staff and Community
Continued engagement opportunities will be identified and implemented to provide staff and community members with opportunities to exchange knowledge, collaborate, and receive progress updates on the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach.

References
Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the more than 300 Regional staff, community partners and community members who generously took time to contribute to the development of the Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction by providing their insights, ideas and feedback.

We would also like to extend a sincere thank you to the Regional Poverty Reduction Steering Committee for their leadership, direction and input into the development of the approach.

Contacts

For additional information on the Region of Waterloo’s Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction please contact:

Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration
Phone: 519-883-2117
Fax: 519-883-2234
TTY: 519-575-4608

Or visit us on the web at www.regionofwaterloo.ca/socialservices and search “poverty”

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request
Docs # 1320556
TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee
DATE: December 11, 2012
FILE CODE: D25-40
SUBJECT: DOORS OPEN WATERLOO REGION 2012 –TENTH ANNIVERSARY

RECOMMENDATION:
For Information

SUMMARY:
The tenth annual Doors Open Waterloo Region (DOWR) was held on Saturday, September 15, 2012, at 37 locations throughout Waterloo Region. Buildings of architectural and/or historical significance – many of which are normally not open to the public – opened their doors, including commercial, public, and private buildings. The event attracted over 13,800 site visits. Since the first Doors Open Waterloo Region event in 2003, there has been an average of 9,581 site visits annually, which is indicative of the sustained popularity of the event. Of the 57 Doors Open events that take place in communities across Ontario, the Waterloo Region event has the fifth highest site visits and the seventh highest number of participating sites.

The theme for the 2012 Doors Open Waterloo Region event was Happy Anniversaries!, which was inspired by DOWR’s 10th anniversary, as well as the significant anniversaries of several other participating organizations or their buildings, including Sun Life Financial, the City of Kitchener, and the Waterloo Historical Society. Initiatives and activities for the event included a GRT Family Day Pass, concerts, exhibits, demonstrations, films and lectures, and special children’s activities at the sites. Volunteers contributed approximately 2,000 hours of their time. Their knowledge and enthusiasm helped to ensure that the visitor’s experience at the sites was informative and memorable. A full report from the event coordinators is provided in Attachment 1.

REPORT:
Doors Open Waterloo Region is a local event of Doors Open Ontario, a province-wide initiative of the Ontario Heritage Trust to celebrate community heritage. The aim of Doors Open Waterloo Region is to facilitate understanding and enjoyment of local architecture and built heritage; to celebrate the community’s history; and to encourage partnerships between building owners, the business community, the cities and townships, the heritage community, and community volunteers. This free event allows visitors access to properties that are either not usually open to the public, or would normally charge an entrance fee.

The 2012 event had over 13,800 site visits to the 37 participating sites, which makes it the second most successful event yet. It is also indicative of the sustained popularity of the event. The number of visits to each participating site is shown in Attachment 2. Site visit totals from past Doors Open Waterloo Region events are shown in the following table:

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<td>7,262</td>
<td>5,639</td>
<td>7,246</td>
<td>10,179</td>
<td>7,110</td>
<td>8,496</td>
<td>8,032</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>13,845</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Of the 57 Doors Open events that take place in communities across Ontario, the Waterloo Region event has the fifth highest number of site visits and the seventh highest of participating sites. The event received outstanding media attention, being featured in the local print media as well as on radio and television. Sites were staffed by knowledgeable volunteers with 409 volunteers contributing approximately 2,000 hours of their time. Local heritage organizations participated by setting up displays at various sites.

Following the event, 131 visitor experience surveys were collected. Approximately half of the respondents indicated that they had previously attended a Doors Open event while the other half was first time attendees. 17% of Doors Open visitors were from outside of the Region and of this number, 70% indicated that the Doors Open event was the purpose of their visit. The event received positive feedback. When asked how they would rate the event, 66% of respondents indicated excellent, 32% indicated good and 2% indicated fair/needs improvement. Participants voiced their appreciation of the event, saying “Great way to promote the area’s history”; “Locations were close together and walkable”; “An event I mark in my calendar every year”; “We had a wonderful afternoon together as a family and it was free!”; “Learned a lot about the area I have lived in my whole life”.

Planning is now underway for the 2013 Doors Open Waterloo Region.

Area Municipal Consultation/Coordination

Area Municipal staff is consulted each year concerning the selection of sites. Area Municipalities also promote the event through various channels.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

Doors Open Waterloo Region supports Strategic Objective 2.4, Promote and enhance arts, culture and heritage.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Doors Open is funded by the Region of Waterloo through the Planning, Housing and Community Services Operating Budget and coordinated by Photographic Memory, a Waterloo-based heritage event management company. Media sponsorships are an important contribution to publicizing the event and in-kind contributions by The Record, CTV, the City of Waterloo and the City of Cambridge are gratefully acknowledged. Total funding by the Region in 2012 was approximately $40,000 including $6,850 in paid advertising. Additional in-kind sponsorship by local businesses and media sponsors is estimated at a value of $25,500.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

NIL

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Doors Open Waterloo Region 2012 – Final Report
Attachment 2 – Doors Open Waterloo Region 2012 – Site Visits

PREPARED BY: Anne Fitzpatrick, Planner

APPROVED BY: Rob Horne, Commissioner of Planning, Housing and Community Services
ATTACHMENT 1

DOORS OPEN WATERLOO REGION (DOWR) 2012
Final Report, November 16, 2012
Submitted by: Jane Snyder and Karl Kessler, Photographic Memory

Introduction
The tenth annual Doors Open Waterloo Region (DOWR) was held on September 15 at thirty-seven locations throughout Waterloo Region. Buildings of architectural and/or historical significance – many of which are normally not open to the public – opened their doors, including commercial, public and private buildings. Admission to all sites was free.

The 2012 theme, Happy Anniversaries!, was inspired by DOWR’s 10th anniversary, as well as the significant anniversaries of several other participating organizations or their buildings, including Sun Life Financial, the City of Kitchener, the Waterloo Historical Society and others.

DOWR 2012 Site Locations (most sites were open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
Note: due to the large geographical area of Waterloo Region, each year DOWR includes sites in two townships. In 2012, participating sites were located in Woolwich and Wellesley Townships; sites in Wilmot and North Dumfries will be featured during Doors Open Waterloo Region 2013.

Cambridge: Gore Mutual Insurance Company, Cambridge Historic City Hall and Cambridge City Hall, Fire Hall Museum and Education Centre, Wesley United Church, University of Waterloo School of Architecture, Old Hespeler Town Hall/The Hespeler Heritage Centre, Hespeler Hotel, St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church

Kitchener: Rockway Gardens, Queen St. Conservatory (Former Economical Mutual Fire Insurance Co.), The Walper Hotel, St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Victoria School Village (Former Victoria Public School), Joseph Schneider Haus National Historic Site, WalterFedy, University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy, A Grander View (Enermodal Engineering), Waterloo County Gaol and Governor’s House

Waterloo: Sun Life Financial, The Waterloo Hotel, Bean-Wright House/Hillcrest House, The Button Factory, Environment 3 (University of Waterloo), CIGI Campus, Erb St. Mennonite Church, Waterloo Public Library John M. Harper Branch, 1820 Log Schoolhouse (in Waterloo Park), St. John’s Lutheran Church

Wellesley: Wellesley Mill - Millstream Market & Grill, St. Clement Roman Catholic Church, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wellesley Township Heritage and Historical Society Historical Room

Woolwich: Region of Waterloo International Airport/Waterloo Wellington Flight Centre, SOLRS/WCR Locomotive Restoration Shop, Edward Halter Home, St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church & Cemetery, St. Boniface School

Funding, Sponsorship and Partnerships
Presenting sponsor: The Region of Waterloo
Media sponsors: The Record, CTV, City of Waterloo, City of Cambridge
Program partners: City of Kitchener, Townships of Wellesley and Woolwich, Ontario Heritage Trust
Promotional partners included: Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and Region of Waterloo Public Libraries; Region of Waterloo Archives; Waterloo Historical Society

DOWR Volunteers
Sites are responsible for recruiting and training their own volunteers, with direction and guidance from DOWR. In 2012 409 volunteers contributed 1,989 hours to DOWR; volunteers who provided their
names-addresses received a thank-you letter and an invitation to a volunteer appreciation event.

DOWR Direction and Staffing
DOWR is guided by arts, architecture, municipal and heritage organizations in Waterloo Region; program coordination is provided by Jane Snyder and Karl Kessler, with support from Region of Waterloo staff.

New Initiatives for DOWR 2012
- Increased social media communications, e.g. DOWR Facebook page, Twitter feed, Flickr page.
- DOWR sites and promotional partners promoted DOWR through staff intranets, posters, displays and video monitors, websites, Twitter feeds, Facebook pages and blogs; DOWR volunteer bloggers/photographers/social media specialists promoted DOWR through social media platforms.
- DOWR partnered with heritage, arts and environmental organizations to provide concerts, exhibits, demonstrations, films, lectures and special children’s activities.
- For its 10th anniversary DOWR organized 5 lectures with a total attendance of 477. The free lectures were offered at the University of Waterloo School of Architecture in Cambridge, University of Waterloo Environment 3, Sun Life Financial, The Walper Hotel and Erb Street Mennonite Church.
- The Westmount Self-guided Heritage Walking Tour was developed especially for DOWR 2012 by Susan Mavor, University of Waterloo Library, to mark the 100th anniversary of the historic Westmount neighbourhood. Five hundred copies of the tour brochure were distributed in the lobby of Sun Life Financial during the DOWR 2012 event.

Communication between Site Operators/Owners and DOWR
Each site completed a DOWR application and provided a certificate of insurance ($1 million liability). Each received a Doors Open Ontario banner or sign, a “Don’t Miss This Site!” DOWR lawn sign, and these documents: Information Sheet for Property Owners/Operators, DOWR Emergency Procedures and Emergency Contact List, Volunteer Information Package, Visitor Tracking Sheet, Visitor Survey.

Twenty-eight representatives from twenty-four 2012 sites attended the DOWR information meeting on September 6, 2012. Topics included: welcoming and tracking visitors, emergency procedures, visitor surveys, coordinating volunteers and media/promotions for DOWR. DOWR coordinators contacted sites not represented at the meeting to discuss event details.

The following are a few post-event comments from sites and partners:

What a great event! We had such positive feedback…and activity from the public on Facebook and Twitter!
REEP Green Solutions (programming provider at Enermodal and WalterFedy)

It’s an amazing event…thanks for your partnership and for raising the profile of the importance of heritage buildings. City of Cambridge

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be part of this event in this our 80th year!
Waterloo Wellington Flight Centre

Publicity and Advertising
DOWR 2012 Publications and Distribution
80,000 copies of the four-page DOWR Map & Guide (created by DOWR and The Record) were distributed in the Saturday, September 8, 2012 Record (home delivery and single-copy sales); sales racks for single copies featured DOWR “rack talkers” advertisements. 10,000 copies of the Map & Guide were distributed along with the DOWR poster to libraries, recreation facilities, museums and tourism offices throughout Waterloo Region from July to September. City staff in Cambridge and Waterloo aided in distributing the Map & Guide to municipal facilities.
2012 sites that created DOWR promotional print materials included WalterFedy, The Button Factory, Sun Life Financial, Erb St. Mennonite Church and Joseph Schneider Haus National Historic Site. University of Waterloo’s Dana Porter Library created a printed Westmount Walking Tour, promoting DOWR.

**Paid and Sponsored Advertisements/Promotions**
- *Waterloo Region Record*: 1/4 pg. ad (Local section) Sat., Sept. 1; 1/8 pg. ad (Nightlife section) Thursdays, Aug. 16, 23, 30, Sept. 6, 13; banner ad (Local section) Sat. Sept. 8
- CTV: 30-second commercial spots running mid-Aug. to Sept. 15

**Paid and Sponsored Advertisements/Promotions, continued**
- Recreation guides: ads, City of Kitchener: spring 2012, fall 2012; City of Cambridge: fall 2012
- City/township promotions: Featured Web ads (Waterloo); digital sign listings (Waterloo, Cambridge); intranet distribution (Waterloo); DOWR CTV ad featured on City of Waterloo YouTube channel; website coverage (Cambridge, Waterloo, Kitchener, Wellesley, Woolwich); Facebook listings (Wellesley, Woolwich), Twitter support (Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge)
- Additional DOWR radio and print ads placed by CIGI

**DOWR Website and Social Media Content**
The Doors Open Waterloo Region page on the Region of Waterloo website featured 2012 theme information, site listings, a digital copy of the 2012 event map/guide, DOWR media articles and press releases, sponsors and partners, past DOWR sites, tourist information, frequently asked questions, volunteer opportunities, and links to the DOWR Facebook page, Flickr page and Twitter feed.

During the month of September 2012, the Doors Open Waterloo Region home page was the seventh most-visited page on the Region’s website, with a total of 4,361 visits and 5,351 page views. For the same time period, the Participating Sites sub-page had 472 recorded visits and 543 page views. On event day (Saturday, Sept. 15, 2012), 848 visits were made to the DOWR home page, making it the highest-ranking page on the Region’s website.

DOWR’s Facebook page has registered 345 “Likes” in total, and gained approximately 50 new Likes in the four weeks leading up to the 2012 event. The page received 834 direct visits from September 10-15.

DOWR is being followed by more than 355 people/organizations on Twitter as of Nov. 15, 2012. Twitter was a new DOWR initiative in 2012. Fourteen sites/partners, three of our guest bloggers and five other organizations re-tweeted DOWR tweets leading up to the 2012 event. Many of these Twitter users have over 3,000 followers, extending the reach of DOWR Twitter posts accordingly.

Fourteen individuals/organizations posted 198 DOWR 2012 event photographs on the DOWR Flickr photo-sharing page (new in 2012).

**Heritage, Arts, Community Group and Tourism Listings**
DOWR news releases, posters and event listings generated further listings in:
- E-newsletters, websites and e-mail blasts by CIGI, REEP House, Transition KW, Cambridge in Transition, Transition Mount Hope/Mary-Allen, University of Waterloo Library’s newsletter
- Kitchener Public Library *Kids’ News & KPL News* newsletters, KPL In Touch June-Aug & Sept.-Nov/12
- E-mail notices to all neighbourhood associations in the cities of Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge
- *Healthy Communities* e-newsletter; City of Waterloo *Arts & Culture* e-blasts, Sept. 2012
- Listings in 2011 and 2012 Waterloo Historical Society newsletters, pre- and post-event
Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation (2012-2013 Official Travel Guide), The Record
Community Partnerships program, Catch the Culture in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships
DOWR displays at Waterloo Public Library (main branch) and Kitchener City Hall

Public Relations Campaign
Targeted news releases, and 15- and 30-second public service announcements, were sent to
television, radio, online news, daily and specialty print media in Waterloo Region and in Southwestern
Ontario/GTA.

Twitter news releases were sent to our 2012 volunteer bloggers/photographers/social media experts.
CIGI, Sun Life Financial and WalterFedy issued DOWR news releases.

The campaign resulted in the following media coverage (links to online versions of these were posted
on the DOWR website following their publication):

Publicity and Advertising, continued

- Television and radio personal appearances/interviews/features: CTV News, Sept. 14; Rogers
  Daytime, Sept. 12; FM 98.5 CKWR interviews the week of Sept. 10; 570 News, Sept. 2
- Print: The Waterloo Region Record: July 17, Aug. 17, Sept. 8 (two articles), Sept. 14, multiple
  5, 12; The Elmira Independent: Aug. 16, 23, 30, Sept. 6, 13, 27; The Kitchener Post: Aug. 24, 31,
  Sept. 7, 14; Woolwich Observer: Sept. 8; Snap K-W: Sept. 15, Oct. 6; Canada’s Tech Triangle:
  Sept. 14; Guelph Mercury: Sept. 8; KW Review: Aug. 23, Sept. 1; Southwestern Ontario News:
  Sept. 19; University of Waterloo’s Daily Bulletin: July 12, Aug. 8

Web Postings, Facebook Tracking and Twitter Statistics
In addition to the Doors Open Ontario (www.doorsopenontario.on.ca) and Doors Open Waterloo
Region (www.regionofwaterloo.ca/doorsopen) websites, and DOWR social media, DOWR was
promoted on the Web by the following:

DOWR 2012 sites and programmers: The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI),
University of Waterloo, University of Waterloo Faculty of Environment, REEP Green Solutions,
WalterFedy, Enermodal Engineering, The Walper Hotel, Erb St. Mennonite Church, Region of
Waterloo International Airport/Waterloo Wellington Flight Centre, Sun Life Financial, Joseph
Schneider Haus National Historic Site, 1820 Log Schoolhouse blog
Travel: Explore Waterloo Region, Cambridge Tourism, St. Jacobs Tourism, Visitor Country,
 Attractions Ontario, Festivals & Events Ontario, Ontario Festivals Visited,
Direction Ontario (Francophone tourism)
Municipal and business: City of Cambridge, City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener, Townships of North
Dumfries and Wilmot, Tech Triangle, Cambridge Now, KW Now, Canada’s Technology Triangle
(CTT)
Arts, heritage, architecture: Global Art Exhibitions, Heritage Resource Centre, Ideas Transform,
Architectural Conservancy of Ontario North Waterloo Branch, Waterloo Regional Heritage
Foundation, Grand Valley Society of Architects, Ontario Association of Architects
Media: The Record, CTV, CHYM FM/570 News, 91.5 The Beat, KIX 106 FM
Miscellaneous: Cambridge, Waterloo and Kitchener Public Libraries, UW Heritage Resource Centre,
Tech Triangle, Found Locally

Visitor Statistics
Over 13,845 individual visits were recorded at Doors Open Waterloo Region sites on September 15.
Site visit totals for past DOWR events are 2003: 7,262; 2004: 5,639; 2005: 7,246; 2006: 10,179; 2007:
7,110; 2008: 8,496; 2009: 8,032; 2010: 10,000; 2011: 18,000.
Paper copies of the DOWR Visitor Survey were distributed to visitors during the event. Doors Open e-list, Facebook members and Twitter followers were sent a link to an online version of the survey. 131 surveys representing 282 people were collected by September 28, 2012. The following information and comments are extracted from those surveys:

Where do you live?
83% of respondents indicated Waterloo Region (Cambridge: 8%; Kitchener: 40%; Waterloo: 28%; North Dumfries: 1%; Wilmot: 0%; Wellesley: 2%; Woolwich: 7%). The remaining 17% came from communities distributed across Southwestern Ontario and the GTA.

If you traveled to Waterloo Region today, what is the main purpose of your trip?
Doors Open Waterloo Region: 70%; to visit friends/relatives: 7%; personal: 7%; pleasure/vacation: 5%; business: 2%; other: 9%.

Other interesting survey information: 42% of respondents were first-time Doors Open visitors (56% were repeat Doors Open visitors)

56% of respondents reported they had visited 2-5 sites, 25% visited 6-10 sites, and 19% visited 1 site.

Of respondents who used the Doors Open Waterloo Region Map & Guide, 79% found it easy to use.

Visitor survey quotes:
Nice to be welcomed by friendly staff.
Great way to promote the area history.
Time well spent.
Good variety of buildings and activities.
The talk by rych mills was excellent!!!
Locations were close together and walkable.
Learned a lot about the area I've lived in all my life.
Don't stop doing this; great opportunity to learn; explore new places.
I really enjoy seeing these buildings, especially ones we don't usually get inside of. I also like hearing the history of the building/area.
The people we met at the sites as well as fellow visitors were very friendly.
Excellent! We had a wonderful afternoon together as a family and it was FREE!
This event was on par with Toronto, where they have many sites to see - very good in that way.
Always an enjoyable day and an event that I mark in my calendar every year. Greeters and volunteers in all venues were very friendly and informative. In the case of new and renovated buildings with a high LEED/ecologically sound component, the tours were very interesting as well as informative. This is encouraging with regard to [our] society’s future.

I walked to 8 sites in Kitchener/Waterloo. I really appreciate that. It was nice to have music events added to some of the sites.

We visited 20 Queen N. - wonderful to be invited to see this beautiful building and to learn how it is being used. Thanks for the tour.

The survey also collected feedback from a few visitors who expressed frustrations about, and suggestions for improvements in, these areas: event length (too short); tour waiting times (at one site); DOWR Map & Guide contents; the inability to print an easy-to-use version of the Map & Guide from the DOWR website; public awareness, publicity, advertising and signage for the event should be increased.

Questions or comments about this report can be directed to:
Jane Snyder or Karl Kessler
Doors Open Waterloo Region 2012 coordinators
c/o Photographic Memory, 519-747-5139 doorsopen@regionofwaterloo.ca
ATTACHMENT 2

Key:
NEW = First time in Doors Open.
GREEN = Green building, built to LEED environmental standards.
10th = 10th anniversary site: celebrating its own anniversary, or in some way participating in the Doors Open Waterloo Region 10th anniversary.

CAMBRIDGE (2344 total visits)
1) Gore Mutual Insurance Company NEW: 404
2) Cambridge Historic City Hall and Cambridge City Hall GREEN: ~450
3) Fire Hall Museum and Education Centre: 325
4) Wesley United Church: 260
5) University of Waterloo School of Architecture in Cambridge (Former Riverside Silk Mill) 10th: 327
6) Old Hespeler Town Hall / The Hespeler Heritage Centre: ~180
7) Hespeler Hotel NEW: 250
8) St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church: 148

KITCHENER (4314 total visits)
9) Rockway Gardens NEW 10th: 30
10) Waterloo County Gaol and Governor's House 10th: 724
11) Queen Street Conservatory (Former Economical Mutual Fire Insurance Co.) NEW: 521
12) The Walper Hotel 10th: 600
13) St. Matthews Lutheran Church NEW: 370
14) Victoria School Village (Former Victoria Public School) NEW 10th: 301
15) Joseph Schneider Haus National Historic Site 10th: 453
16) WalterFedy NEW GREEN: 341
17) University of Waterloo School of Pharmacy: 530
18) A Grander View (Enermodal Engineering) GREEN: 444

WATERLOO (4792 total visits)
19) Sun Life Financial 10th: 969+
20) Bean-Wright House / Hillcrest House: 714
21) St. John’s Lutheran Church NEW 10th: 225
22) The Button Factory / Waterloo Community Arts Centre: 357
23) The Waterloo Hotel NEW: 380+
24) CIGI Campus: 704
25) 1820 Log Schoolhouse NEW: 473
26) Erb Street Mennonite Church NEW 10th: 275+
27) Environment 3, University of Waterloo NEW GREEN 10th: 320
28) The John M. Harper Branch (Waterloo Public Library) NEW GREEN: ~375

WOOLWICH (1851 total visits)
29) Region of Waterloo International Airport (NEW) and Waterloo Wellington Flight Centre: 1198
30) St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church and Cemetery: 141
31) Edward Halter Home: 82
32) St. Boniface School: 80
33) SOLRS / WCR Locomotive Restoration Shop NEW: ~350

WELLESLEY (544 total visits)
34) St. Clement Roman Catholic Church: 108
35) St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church 10th: 115
36) Wellesley Township Heritage and Historical Society Historical Room NEW: 71
37) Wellesley Mill / Millstream Market & Grill NEW: 250+
MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee
From: Lynn Randall, Director, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration
Copies: Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Commissioner, Social Services
File No: S13-30
Subject: COMMUNITY START UP AND MAINTENANCE BENEFIT STUDY

As part of the pre-planning for the newly announced Provincial Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative, and in light of the spring Provincial Budget announcement to remove the Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit as a mandatory benefit under Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program, the Region retained Org Code Consulting, Inc. to: consult with internal stakeholders from Employment and Income Support and Housing. They covered Community Start up and Maintenance Benefit; consult with multiple external stakeholders on the Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit; analyze community gaps and assets; and explore options and provide recommendations.

Attached separately is a copy of the study which provides a background history of the Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit, an overview of a system based approach to addressing housing stability, a summary of the consultations and some interim and longer term recommendations for consideration.

Staff has used this information to inform the approach to implementing the Community Homelessness Prevention Program in 2013.

For further information please contact Lynn Randall at 519-883-2190 or you can email: lrandall@regionofwaterloo.ca or Marie Morrison at 519-883-2238 or you can email: mmorrison@regionofwaterloo.ca
Towards Informing a System-Based Approach for Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention

Considerations for Implementation of the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative

December 2012
OrgCode Consulting, Inc.

Docs # 1282788
INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The History of CSUMB & Its Current Accepted Use
Cost Sharing Arrangement
The 2012 Budget Impacts to CSUMB
Declining Support to Housing Stability
The New Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)

HOUSING STABILITY: UNDERSTANDING NEED AND A SYSTEMS BASED
APPROACH

System-Based Thinking in Addressing Housing Stability
Needs Are Not Equal and Why “First Come, First Served” Doesn’t Work in Ending Homelessness: The Importance of Common Assessment, Coordinated Access and Prioritization
The Difference Between Homeless Prevention and Eviction Prevention

CONSULTATION

Who Was Consulted
Consultation Questions, Format & Limitations
Results of the Consultations

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION MOVING FORWARD

Interim Recommendations
Longer Term Recommendations
Other Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS

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APPENDIX B: Consultations Conducted in Waterloo Region for
APPENDIX C: Options for Service Delivery
INTRODUCTION: The End of the Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB): Reduced Funding and New Opportunities

Come January 2013, the CSUMB will no longer exist in Ontario.

This mandatory benefit has been accessible to Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients through various program incarnations for the better part of two decades. The benefit is currently such that eligible singles and couples can access up to $799 and eligible families (with dependents) can access up to $1,500 once every two years (with the possibility of a secondary issuance in exceptional circumstances) to assist with the costs of starting up a new residence or in maintaining a current residence. The main way the benefit has been used is to secure last month’s rent, which has allowed people experiencing homelessness to access housing and lower-income people to move from one accommodation to another. It has also been used commonly for furniture, moving, storage and utility hook-ups and arrears.

The discontinuation of this benefit did not happen overnight. Changes have been afoot in Ontario as a result of the Provincial Municipal Fiscal Service Delivery Review (2008) and the Province’s Long-term Affordable Housing Strategy (2010) which identifies plans to consolidate provincial housing and homelessness programs. The elimination of CSUMB by the Province is running parallel to the phase one consolidation of homelessness programs and with the new cap placed on OW Discretionary Benefits¹. The cumulative financial impact of these changes in Waterloo Region totals a loss of approximately $6.4M in funding to support the health and stability of people with the lowest levels of income. Each of the changes must be considered both individually and collectively regarding their impact, priorities, and approaches moving forward.

In the new reality, as directed in the 2012 Provincial Budget², a total of $62.6M or 50% of the former CSUMB expenditures will be reinvested into the new consolidated program entitled the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). This funding is being redistributed across Ontario as part of a “needs-based” funding allocation based on Statistics Canada Deep Core Housing Need (households who spend over 50% of their income on housing and also have issues related to suitability and adequacy). The Region will receive $2,156,615 through the needs-based allocation - a fraction of the funding the community once received for CSUMB through OW and ODSP.

Removing CSUMB from social assistance and including a portion of the funding in the new CHPI means that the Regional Municipality of Waterloo (the Region), as Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (Service Manager), will be able to decide how

¹ For further information see Region of Waterloo Community Services Committee Report SS-12-019, May 8, 2012.
best to use these reinvested funds to meet local needs and to achieve the following two CHPI outcomes:

1) People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing; and
2) People at risk of homelessness remain housed.

The new reality is one of increased flexibility in program delivery. This is a marked difference to the current practices that OW and ODSP workers are familiar with and it fundamentally changes the resources and approaches to addressing housing access and stability to people who are experiencing homelessness or precarious housing. This change is not a small administrative amendment. The mandatory aspect of the benefit is gone with the benefit itself. The Region can do a “re-think” on how best to use the reduced funding in a way that maximizes impact towards the mandated CHPI outcomes.

In working towards the consolidation of homelessness programs in the Region, the following planning principles were established by Region staff:

- Meet funding and program requirements of CHPI as set by the Province;
- Involve all stakeholders who will/may be affected by any changes;
- Communicate effectively with all stakeholders who will/may be affected by any changes;
- Minimize system destabilization as much as possible;
- Set realistic timeframes;
- Identify clear roles and direction;
- Explore a wide range of options; and
- Utilize promising practices and identified community needs to inform any changes.

In order to support new program exploration related to the ending of CSUMB, the Region retained OrgCode Consulting, Inc. to:

- Consult with internal stakeholders from Employment and Income Support and Housing on the CSUMB;
- Consult with multiple external stakeholders on the CSUMB;
- Analyze community gaps and assets; and,
- Explore options and provide recommendations.

This report responds to these action items. The report begins with a short introduction, followed by background information including an overview of the previous CSUMB, its genesis and changes over time, changes announced through the 2012 budget, and a description of the new CHPI program. The report then shifts attention to discuss how the Region has been working to strategically address homelessness and to explore the matter of housing stability within a systems-based context of service delivery. The report provides evidence of housing affordability issues for particular types of households in the Region, and draws upon evidence and practice in other jurisdictions when appropriate to do so. The consultation process used for the report is outlined and the results summarized. The report concludes with recommendations for consideration that includes rationale to assist with deliberations for moving forward.
BACKGROUND

The History of CSUMB & Its Current Accepted Use

The genesis of CSUMB began in 1993 when it was a start-up benefit. By 2004, the start-up benefit became the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit.\(^3\) In the initial incarnation of the benefit, OW and ODSP recipients were entitled to an issuance once per year, though the conditions for access were limited to start-up activities. When the “maintenance” element was added to the benefit, it allowed for more discretion about how the funding could be used, but it also meant that the benefit was only accessible once every two years unless there were exceptional circumstances.

A brief history of the benefit and other significant developments in income supports in Ontario is outlined below:

- Prior to 1993 - Before Community Start-Up Benefit (CSUB), Last Month’s Rent (LMR) was issued and people discharged from institutions (hospitals, long term care, prisons etc) were eligible to receive a Discharge Allowance once their eligibility for General Welfare Assistance (GWA) was determined.

- August 1993 - CSUB is a mandatory benefit up to $799 (for individual recipients and recipients with dependent children) restricted to discharge from an institution, victims of family violence, and premises certified as unsafe or uninhabitable.

- October 1995 – Family Benefits Allowance (FBA) and GWA reduced 21.6%

- 1997/1998 - FBA/GWA reformed (May 1998 the OW Act was proclaimed and June 1998 the ODSP Act was proclaimed).

- April, 1999 – Maximum CSUB raised to $1,500 for eligible families with dependent children

- December 2004 - CSUB became Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB) and eligibility is changed to maximum eligible once every 24 months from once every 12 months.

- January 2013 – CSUMB will cease to exist, with 50% of the funding transferred from the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).

The “mandatory” component of the history of the benefit cannot be overlooked and is worthy of attention in considering the impact of the change to OW and ODSP recipients in the Region. Currently, any OW or ODSP recipient meeting the criteria is granted the

\(^3\) For the relevant text from the initial legislation, please see Appendix A.
benefit when:

- he or she is establishing a new principal residence within or outside the geographic area or will be remaining in his or her current residence; and
- the administrator is satisfied that he or she will need financial assistance to establish the new principal residence or to remain in the existing residence.

CSUMB is issued according to the *Ontario Works Act, 1997* prescribed by the Province of Ontario (see Appendix A).

Discretion can be exercised in non start-up situations, though the Province provides some examples for consideration:\textsuperscript{4}:

- Costs to purchase/rent a generator where it is required to maintain a recipient’s health and welfare.
- Costs to purchase or repair household appliances necessary to the health and well-being of the benefit unit where recipients own their homes and are in receipt of the maximum shelter allowance.
- Costs of new or replacement smoke alarms and batteries for recipients who own their homes and are in receipt of the maximum shelter allowance.
- Costs to eradicate bed bugs where there is an isolated case of bed bug infestation to the recipient or benefit unit’s belongings.

When the benefit was amended to include maintenance and the 24-month window for receipt of the benefit, certain exceptional circumstances were named\textsuperscript{5} that would allow a household to receive the benefit again within the two-year period:

- the necessity to relocate as a result of a catastrophic event (e.g. flood, fire);
- the necessity to relocate as a result of domestic violence;
- the necessity to relocate as a result of a disability (e.g. where a recipient is moving to a home that better meets his/her disability related needs); and,
- other circumstances where the caseworker with supervisory approval is satisfied that it would be harmful to the health and welfare of the participant if not approved and the need for the funds have been clearly identified.

Focus group discussions and meetings with OW and ODSP staff across the Region revealed that there was flexibility and interpretation in the application of the regulations. This was noted as being especially pertinent for “a situation that is harmful to the client’s health and welfare” and “moving to a significantly improved situation”. Persons with lived experience who were accessing the benefit were also aware that the degree of

\textsuperscript{4} These considerations were shared with CMSMs and available on the Government of Ontario website.
\textsuperscript{5} These were shared with CMSMs and available on the Government of Ontario website.
situational interpretation and flexibility varied with the OW or ODSP worker who was handling their file.

**Cost Sharing Arrangement**

While the CSUMB was paid 100% by the Province for ODSP, the Province paid 80 cents of each dollar that was invested in CSUMB through OW. The cost sharing allowed municipalities like the Region of Waterloo to find value in its 20-cent investment in each dollar\(^6\). As a mandatory benefit, there was no limit regarding the amount of CSUMB issued in any given year including the number of households receiving the benefit or the cumulative, annual benefit expenditure. For 20% of the cost of program expenses, the Region was able to accomplish the following (and more): help people experiencing homelessness secure housing; help low-income households furnish their apartment; assist ex-offenders establish themselves post-incarceration in the mainstream community as opposed to environments with criminogenic forces; and, provide victims of domestic violence with the opportunity to flee their abusers and re-establish themselves in independent housing.

**The 2012 Budget Impacts to CSUMB**

As part of the 2012 Provincial Budget, the government announced plans to eliminate CSUMB as a mandatory benefit under OW and ODSP effective January 1, 2013\(^7\). A total of 50% of the $110 Million spent annually on CSUMB across the Province will be moved from MCSS to MMAH. The funding will be integrated with the five programs that have been earmarked for consolidation under the new CHPI. The Province has committed to include the scheduled upload related to CSUMB as part of the funding.

Regulations were also amended which impact CSUMB. Ontario Regulation 189/12 that was created under the Ontario Works Act, 1997 was amended on June 20, 2012 and Ontario Regulation 134/98 was put into place which will allow CHPI to support individuals with a number of housing stability related costs without these being counted as income for those on OW and ODSP (See Appendix A for further information).

**Declining Support to Housing Stability**

While the Province has identified interest in improved housing stability for Ontarian’s through its Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy (2010), funding for supports to housing stability have been decreasing over time. In 2004, CSUMB changed from being an annual entitlement to one available once every two years (unless there were exceptional circumstances). Moving from annual availability to availability once every

\(^6\) 80/20 cost-sharing has been in effect from 1998 up until 2009, when, as a result of the Provincial Municipal Fiscal Service Delivery Review (2008), the Province began uploading the municipal share of Ontario Works costs (including CSUMB). The 2012 cost-sharing arrangement is 82.2% provincial and 17.2% municipal. The scheduled upload will see the Province paying 100% by 2018.

Review of the Former Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit - Towards Informing a System-Based Approach for Rapid Re-Housing and Homelessness Prevention

two years – while keeping the amount available constant ($799 for singles and couples; $1,500 for households with dependent children) represented a 50% reduction in funding to the benefit.

But that is not the only decrease if one considers that the Consumer Price Index was 85.6 in 1993, changing to 121.5 in 2012. Consider what this means for the $799 available to singles and couples. The average annual rate of inflation has been 1.86% since 1993 and according to the Bank of Canada, the same "basket" of goods that $799 could purchase 19 years ago would cost $1,134.09 in 2012, a 42% increase. For those households with dependent children, the $1,500 basket of goods in 1993 would require $2,129.09 in 2012.

Then, there is the reduction of funds that the Region can expect as CSUMB ends. Come January 2013, the Region will receive $2,156,615 - a fraction of the funding the community once received for CSUMB-related activities. Expenditures on CSUMB for both OW and ODSP in 2011 were $4,431,352. CSUMB historically was never capped. The benefit could be tapped into, subject to eligibility, for as many persons/households as necessary in a given year.

The Region has made great strides in focusing attention on housing stability for low-income and households experiencing homelessness despite the decreased “real” value that the CSUMB has had over time. In the new reality, with the benefit gone come January 2013 and the amount of funding reduced, it is imperative that the Region consider a more narrowed focus to housing stability supports given the reduced funding available to housing stability. There simply is not enough funding coming from the Province to do otherwise.

The New Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)

The CHPI is a provincial consolidation of five programs that benefit low-income and homeless Ontarians including: Provincial Rent Bank, Domiciliary Hostel Program, Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program, Emergency Hostels, and Emergency Energy Fund. One of the pillars of Ontario’s Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, the intent of the consolidation is to transform the system from reactive responses to homelessness to one that is more proactive, people-centered and focused on permanent solutions. The consolidation and policy approach at the provincial level puts more emphasis on local level programming and resource allocation relative to local needs. Doing so is intended to result in better outcomes for those served, as well as streamlined access to appropriate housing and support services.

Across the Province, the funding envelope for CHPI is $246 million for 2013-14. This includes the funding associated with the five consolidated programs, 50 per cent of provincial expenditures from the former CSUMB and the scheduled upload of both the Emergency Hostel Services and CSUMB portion of OW.

MMAH indicated on September 27, 2012 that the annual CHPI allocation for the Region
of Waterloo will be $7,653,382. This funding can be used to support services in any of the following four service categories:

- Emergency Shelter Solutions;
- Housing with Related Supports;
- Other Services and Supports; and
- Homelessness Prevention

All funded services are intended work towards the following two key CHPI outcomes established by the Province that will measure performance and ensure accountability:

a) People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing; and,

b) People at risk of homelessness remain housed.

Further information regarding CHPI, including program guidelines, investment plans and service agreements is anticipated later this fall.
HOUSING STABILITY: UNDERSTANDING NEED AND A SYSTEMS BASED APPROACH

Most households in the Region – like most Canadians – have their housing needs met in the private market, through ownership or rental. Subsidized housing is an exception, not the norm, even for people who live in low income (only 5.2% of householders in Waterloo Region live in subsidized housing, referred to locally as Community Housing). For many people receiving OW or ODSP and living in the private market, the CSUMB assisted with affordability. Households that have to disproportionately spend their monthly income on housing have less funding available to meet all other basic needs (e.g., food, utilities, clothing, transportation, children’s activities etc.).

Table A, on the following page, outlines seven different household scenarios and income sources. As is clear in almost all instances, households in the Region experience housing affordability issues, and a need to dig into basic need allowances to cover shortfalls in housing. A standard measure of housing affordability is to pay no more than 30% of net income towards housing costs. Households are considered in “deep core housing need” when they must pay over 50% of their net income towards housing costs. The needs-based allocation of CHPI is tied to deep core housing need. What the table shows is that those on OW, ODSP and Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement have housing costs at or above 50% of their income.

Consider that a single person household on OW will be spending 97% of their monthly income on rent, leaving essentially nothing to address other basic needs. Even a single ODSP recipient – which receives approximately $500 more per month that their single OW counterpart – can expect to pay 68% of his/her monthly income on rent and will have less than $394 to meet all basic needs in month. Economic poverty clearly impacts many population groups, but undoubtedly does not impact them equally – and this must be considered when prioritizing how to spend reduced funding for housing stability in the Region.
TABLE A: Analysis of Housing and Basic Needs Costs by Income Source & Type of Household\(^8\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>INCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family of 4, Ontario Works</td>
<td>$1,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family of 4, Minimum Wage Earner</td>
<td>$6,792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family of 4, Median Ontario Income (after tax)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent Household with 2 Children, Ontario Works</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Person Household, Ontario Works</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Person Household, Old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement</td>
<td>$1,272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Monthly Calculations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income from Employment</th>
<th>Basic Allowance(^9)</th>
<th>Maximum Shelter Allowance</th>
<th>OAS/GIS(^10)</th>
<th>Child/Family Benefits(^11)</th>
<th>GST/HST Credits(^12)</th>
<th>Ontario Sales Tax Credit</th>
<th>Employment Insurance Paid(^13)</th>
<th>Canada Pension Plan Paid(^14)</th>
<th>Working Income Tax Benefits(^15)</th>
<th>TOTAL INCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$448</td>
<td>$688</td>
<td></td>
<td>$744</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>$88</td>
<td>$(33)</td>
<td>$(74)</td>
<td>$74</td>
<td>$2,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$347</td>
<td>$634</td>
<td></td>
<td>$743</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>$88</td>
<td>$(120)</td>
<td>$(312)</td>
<td>$312</td>
<td>$2,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$227</td>
<td>$372</td>
<td></td>
<td>$744</td>
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<td>$88</td>
<td>$21</td>
<td>$29</td>
<td>$29</td>
<td>$6,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$590</td>
<td>$474</td>
<td></td>
<td>$744</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>$88</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$1,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,272</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$744</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>$88</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>$642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rental Housing Expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Monthly Rent (may or may not include heat and/or hydro)(^16)</th>
<th>3 Bdrm</th>
<th>3 Bdrm</th>
<th>3 Bdrm</th>
<th>2 Bdrm</th>
<th>Bachelor</th>
<th>1 Bdrm</th>
<th>1 Bdrm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,029</td>
<td>$1,029</td>
<td>$1,029</td>
<td>$904</td>
<td>$621</td>
<td>$761</td>
<td>$761</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Funds Remaining for Other Basic Needs | $1,003 | $1,610 | $5,331 | $951 | $21 | $394 | $565 |

| Percentage of Income Required for Rent | 51% | 39% | 16% | 49% | 97% | 68% | 57% |

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\(^8\) Table adapted from Public Health’s 2012 Nutritious Food Basket Scenarios – Waterloo Region.

\(^9\) Basic and maximum shelter allowance. OW and ODSP rates effective May 2012. Source: Social Assistance, Pension and Tax Credit Rates April to June 2012, Ministry of Community and Social Services.

\(^10\) OAS and GIS rates as of May 2012. Source: Social Assistance, Pension and Tax Credit Rates April to June 2012, Ministry of Community and Social Services.

\(^11\) This includes the maximum Child Tax Benefit, National Child Benefit Supplement and Ontario Child Benefit, effective July 2011 through July 2012.

\(^12\) This is based upon net annual income. The GST/HST and Ontario Tax Credit are issues on a quarterly basis, but calculated on a monthly basis. The figures are derived from GST/HST and related provincial program calculator, effective June 2011 through June 2012.

\(^13\) Based upon the Employment Insurance Premium Rates as of July 2012.

\(^14\) Based upon Canada Pension Plan Rates as of July 2012.

\(^15\) As determined by the Working Income Tax Benefit Online Calculator, July 2012.

\(^16\) Rental rates by unit type come from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Rental Market Report, Ontario Highlights, from spring 2012.
Scenario Notes:

1 = 2 adults (male and female ages 31-50), 2 children (girl age 8, boy age 14), on OW.
2 = 2 adults (male and female ages 31-50), 2 children (girl age 8, boy age 14), income is based on one minimum wage earner working 40 hours/week at $10.25 per hour
3 = 2 adults (male and female ages 31-50), 2 children (girl age 8, boy age 14) where income from employment is based on median after tax income for two parent families with children (CANSIM Table 202-0605), however the Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan contributions are calculated using median total income two parent families with children (CANSIM Table 202-0411), where there is an assumption of a dual income family with a split of 65/35 between partners.
4 = 1 adult (female age 31-50), 2 children (girl age 8, boy age 14), on Ontario Works
5 = 1 adult (male age 31-50), on Ontario Works
6 = 1 adult (male age 31-50), on the Ontario Disability Support Program
7 = 1 adult (female age 70+), with income based on OAS and GIS
System-Based Thinking in Addressing Housing Stability

This principle-based approach that underlies the consolidation of homeless programs across the Region, as required by the Province, considers the needs of government, the community based sector and end-users of services. In a post-CSUMB environment, the investment of the reduced funds in the Region needs to conform to these principles, while also staying attuned to the four goals of the Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy – Policy Framework endorsed by the Region:

1. Increase housing retention
2. Reduce the length of time that people experience transitional homelessness
3. End persistent homelessness
4. Increase community inclusion

These four goals, when considered as a whole, point to a system-based approach towards reducing and ending homelessness. There is an increasing body of work produced related to system-based approaches to ending homelessness, reducing the length of time that people spend homeless, improving community inclusion through maximizing the strengths of service providers across the community, and increasing housing retention. This approach has been proven to be successful, in part, by individual communities that have embraced this approach for some time, as well as emerging approaches across the United States where the new Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act now requires communities to work as systems of service rather than a collection of isolated projects. What does system-based thinking have to do with options for investing a fraction of the funds previously available through CSUMB?

A system-based approach aims to leverage the individual strengths of a range of service providers and funding sources across a continuum of service rather than expecting any one project or funding source to present all of the answers to ending homelessness or stabilizing a lower income person with complex, co-occurring issues in housing. It is an approach where the sum of the parts is seen as exceeding any single part.

A system approach collectively aims a community towards:

- reducing first time instances of homelessness
- decreasing the length of time homeless for those experiencing homelessness
- prioritizing service delivery to those that have the most in-depth needs first
- using a common assessment tool across service providers rather than need being determined differently based upon where a person shows up in the continuum of services
- coordinating access to available resources, and in the process ensuring the expertise of individual providers is leveraged while decreasing duplication of services
- decreasing the number of times that a person in need has to repeat their “story” and other pertinent information
- examining accountability across the community as a whole in addition to any particular entity within the system (a system is only as good as its weakest provider)
- reducing unnecessary repeat service use
- seeing all contributors to homelessness and vectors of homelessness in equal parts rather than focusing on one part of the system (e.g., shelters) without considering other areas (e.g. people leaving corrections)

All Roads Lead to Home: The Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy for Waterloo Region Policy Framework released in January 2012 speaks to the three conditions in equal parts for housing stability to effective occur: adequate housing; adequate income; and, adequate support. Each of these has a bearing on how a system-based approach is considered, and the type of investment that would make sense with the new resources that stem from the old CSUMB.

**Adequate Housing**: CSUMB previously has helped individuals access adequate housing from homelessness, and has assisted people who were in undesirable housing situations (which one may describe as inadequate) in being able to move. Undoubtedly, the end of CSUMB will impact the relationships between people seeking housing and landlords. For example, it would seem landlords have come to rely on CSUMB as the source of money for last month’s rent.

**Adequate Income**: one cannot lose sight of the fact that the reinvestment of some of the funds previously used for CSUMB have been transferred in the Province’s eyes from being a component of income support, and placed squarely into the camp of housing stability. While, as previously outlined in this report, some types of households will remain very disadvantaged by their lack of available income, the CSUMB never addressed these issues stably, nor was it designed to. Innovation is required in how the reduced funds can more purposely be aligned to housing stability relative to available income rather than being seen as a patch in the income–support.

**Adequate Support**: while CSUMB has been used as part of a support strategy for households (for example, an 11th hour resource for households facing eviction; a tool to help a household move when in conflict with neighbours), it is not an adequate support in and of itself. For one, the CSUMB is available only once every two years, for a limited amount of funds and only under certain conditions. The reduced funding provides an opportunity for more integration of financial resources into a more community-based support structure, as appropriate, to advance the flexibility of how this type of financial tool can be linked directly into the provision of case management, intensive case management or other types of proactive community-based supports to help people access and maintain housing.
Needs Are Not Equal and Why “First Come, First Served” Doesn’t Work in Ending Homelessness: The Importance of Common Assessment, Coordinated Access and Prioritization

One of the most difficult parts of a system-based approach for people to understand is that access to services cannot be – nor should it be – first come, first served. This, for some service providers and government supports, is a radical departure to how access to supports and financial resources have been provided. However, it is increasingly understood that evidence-informed decision-making is the best approach for addressing homelessness and the needs of under-housed people on a system basis.

The truth is, needs are not equal. Emerging research from New York City and Alameda, for example, has demonstrated that most prevention investments have been inaccurate in their allocation of resources. Most people faced with housing hardships – including those that may be seeking financial assistance – will resolve their housing situation without ever becoming homeless and without ever actually needing the financial resource. In fact, what is emerging is an understanding that those households where the investment makes most sense is amongst those that most clearly resemble the existing longer-term homeless population in the community.

There is a need to better understand when, how and under what conditions a reduced financial resource to assist with housing stability can best be informed by a system-approach. A system based approach is fair, inclusive, and transparent and focuses on:

- having a common assessment approach across service providers,
- coordinating access into the support system so that the right individual gets to the right program in the Region at the right time to end their homelessness, and
- one where there is a triaging of need to prioritize which household should be served next.

Various key stakeholders in the movement towards ending homelessness – the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and Housing and Urban Development – all promote and encourage common assessment and coordinated access. Simply put, this approach is the most efficient use of available resources. It leverages the strengths of individual service providers. It makes the system much more easy to navigate for households experiencing homelessness. And it reinforces the core concept that homelessness programs fundamentally exist to end homelessness. Common assessment and coordinated access is now being enshrined in legislation and regulations in the US, making it mandatory for communities to have homeless serving programs and financial resources operate like a system rather than a collection of projects.

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17 See, for example, Gale, Katharine and Debbie Raucher. *Homeless Prevention in Alameda County: Phase 1 Report*. EveryOne Home, Alameda County. 2008.
Different models can be considered based upon the terrain of local providers, geography and available resources. An overview of the most dominant models are included in Table B below:

Table B: Description of Approaches to Provide Common Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central location or locations</td>
<td>Locations within a geographic area where individuals or families must present for homeless services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211 or virtual system</td>
<td>Hotline that screens and directly connects callers to appropriate homeless housing/service providers in the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;No wrong door&quot; approach</td>
<td>Individual or family experiencing homelessness can present at any homeless service provider in the area but is assessed using the same tool &amp; methodology so that referrals are consistently completed across the Continuum of Care (CoC)¹⁸</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized team of assessment/support workers</td>
<td>Provides assessment services to providers within the CoC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional “hubs”</td>
<td>In larger geographic areas, a regional approach in which “hubs” are created within smaller geographic areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key for consideration in planning is that the models outlined above attempt to place these types of financial resources into the hands of the community. Financial resources are simply one tool that can be leveraged to help divert people from homelessness or end homelessness. It is important that they are seen as being an integrated function rather than something acting separate and apart from other housing stability supports. Like the Housing Stability trinity outlined for the Region (adequacy in income, housing and supports), the financial resource is seen as one element of moving forward, not as a stand-alone support.

All of these models conform to the same guiding principles. The differences between the “old” way of doing business and the new way that emerges through the coordinated approach is outlined in Table C.

Table C: Changes in System-Approaches to Addressing Homelessness

¹⁸ In the Ontario context, the CMSMs play a role quite similar to the role provided by the Continuums of Care as it relates to local investments in addressing homelessness.
### Old System vs. New System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Old System</strong></th>
<th><strong>New System</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program-centric</td>
<td>Client-centric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique forms &amp; assessment process for each organization/program</td>
<td>Standard forms &amp; assessment across the community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc referral process by programs</td>
<td>Coordinated referral process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneven knowledge about housing &amp; services</td>
<td>Accessible information about available housing &amp; services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it stands in service delivery in the Region, while there is a movement towards a more “people centered” approach to service delivery (as outlined in *All Roads Lead Home*) this is not a universal reality. Most income support structures by the nature of the regulation and legislation that informs its usage are program-centric. The approaches used to assess needs in the community-based service sector are different amongst service providers, but also different from how needs may be examined in an income support program. System navigation is often focused on who a service provider knows rather than the strength of the system as a whole. And there is no doubt that knowledge is uneven as a result.

One of the opportunities that the post-CSUMB environment creates for the Region is the ability to think more innovatively in a system-context, unrestricted by barriers and limitations imposed by the Province in how support can and should be delivered. The “re-think” allows for a re-purposing of the investment. This isn’t about trying to carry on “business as usual” with reduced funding and a new mandate; this is about leveraging the opportunity to align with the strategic direction of the Region as a whole in working to end homelessness.

Undoubtedly one of the critical success factors in moving forward is increasing the common assessment tools used across the Region to help establish the priorities moving forward in serving households. Provinces such as Alberta have already seen the value in coordinated assessment tools between housing programs and income supports and are currently engaged in a multi-city pilot project to advance this idea forward. States such as Michigan have begun to mandate housing resource centres in each community as a one-stop vehicle for housing and income support needs being met in one environment. Given that the Region’s income support staff identify they are already engaging in outreach, there may be opportunities to where lessons have already been learned and can be leveraged for success.

One of the keys to success moving forward is having an evidence-informed assessment tool that all service providers in the community can use. The key is to have the new financial resource linked into presenting acuity of households. Moving forward, the Region may want to consider adopting an assessment tool to assist with evidence-informed decision-making in the priority setting process of determining which households to serve with the reduced funding.
The Difference Between Homeless Prevention and Eviction Prevention

The CSUMB has historically been used to assist with prevention activities, in addition to helping households access housing. This became more prevalent once “maintenance” was added in addition to the “start-up” components of the benefit. The benefit has been used to help pay for rental arrears, utility arrears and other matters deemed to be necessities to keep the household in housing.

It is increasingly important that communities increase their vigilance in distinguishing homelessness prevention activities from eviction prevention activities. This stems from decreased resources as well as increased knowledge related to how households respond to potential housing crises.

Nobody can accurately predict homelessness. There is not a concrete, logical cause and effect relationship. We can take two households with almost identical issues, and yet it would be impossible to accurately predict which one will become homeless and which one does not. Research sponsored by the Department of Homeless Services in New York City recently concluded that their prediction efforts were only accurate 2 out of 10 times, and most often with those households that had characteristics common to the existing chronically homeless population.

Moving forward in the Region in a post-CSUMB environment, this has an impact on how the use of the funding should be considered. From an inclusion perspective, with the funding being seen as part of the broader spectrum of financial resources that may be available, the funds must be clearly related to how discretionary benefits may be made available through Income Support – which are changing at the same time. Secondly, the funds should be focused on homelessness prevention, not broader eviction prevention, and intensely linked to those households with the same/similar characteristics as longer-term shelter residents. Finally, any household seeking assistance for prevention type activities should have exhausted all other options prior to seeking the new funds, and it should be deemed through the assessment that the household is at imminent risk.
CONSULTATION

The consultation process was intended to gather input and commentary from a broad range of stakeholders involved in supporting housing stability or working with people at high risk of homelessness on how CSUMB is perceived and most frequently used. Information was also gleaned on the gaps that currently exist, and what opportunities may be created through the end of CSUMB and the arrival of new program.

Who Was Consulted

OrgCode conducted a range of conversations and facilitated numerous focus groups throughout the Region. The consultations occurred in person in small group and larger meeting formats, as well as through phone conversations and email exchanges. The engagement started in May 2012 and concluded in August 2012. Altogether more than 90 people from across the Region participated either in a professional capacity or as a person with lived experience (see Appendix B for list of consultation meetings).

Included in the consultations were the following:

- Employment & Income Support frontline staff and managers
- Social planning staff
- Legal aide workers
- Rent bank staff
- Housing support workers
- Mental health case managers
- ODSP managers
- Shelter operators
- Outreach workers
- Advocates for persons with lived experience
- Ex-offender/post-incarceration support workers
- Persons with lived experience, including:
  - Persons with disabilities
  - Persons with disabled family members
  - Persons with compromised mental wellness
  - Domestic violence survivors
  - Persons who have experienced homelessness
  - Persons who have experienced living in low-income
  - Persons who have experienced conflict with the law, including those who have experienced incarceration
  - Persons who moved to the Region from elsewhere in Ontario, elsewhere in Canada or other countries
The application of CSUMB across the Province has been diverse over the past two decades. For the purpose of this project, OrgCode contacted various municipalities across the Province and, while not an exhaustive comparative study it was clearly evident that the Region used the income support benefit in similar ways to larger urban environments with rental rates are also well above the shelter allowance portion of OW. These municipalities included Toronto, Peel, Durham, London, Kingston, Ottawa, Barrie and Sudbury.

Consultation Questions, Format & Limitations

The consultations followed the same format and question sequence to maintain the integrity of the information gathering process:

1. In your experience, what are the most common ways in which CSUMB has been used?
2. What will be the impact if people do not have access to CSUMB-type funding?
3. One year from now, what will be different as a result of CSUMB changes?
4. With more limited resources, what is the best way to determine eligibility and delivery CSUMB-type funding?

Responses were captured in writing during the consultation and direct quotes were recorded, when possible.

One of the reasons why a qualitative, consultative approach was used is that there are holes and limitations with CSUMB data. Available data on CSUMB issuances—amounts per household, number of households, exceptional issuances, cumulative annual expenditure by reason for CSUMB issuance—are not accessible through existing income support data systems. A “file crawl” revealed that last month’s rent was the most popular reason for issuance as well as the limited number of times which CSUMB was accessed, but the audit examined only one year of files. To round out the responses and opinions shared through the consultations a more rigorous examination of data will be required which looks at 2+ years of data (given the benefit is available once every two years), examines the experience of persons with No Fixed Address at the time of issuance compared to others (shelters report that more than 95% of shelter residents access CSUMB to secure housing), and to better understand the number of times the issuance has been made relative to the dollar amount of the issuances, as well as secondary (exceptional) access of the benefit within the two year period (reason, amount, times, etc.).

Results of the Consultations

Since 1993, access to CSUMB has been “normalized” and included as part of the toolkits of OW and ODSP (formerly Family Benefit Allowance General Welfare Allowance until 1997/98). The “normalized” aspect of the benefit has resulted in landlords coming to expect the funding to be available for last month’s rent.
Overwhelmingly, persons with lived experience and workers who support people who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of housing loss considered the financial tools as fundamentally needed to end homelessness in addition to being a resource built into the budgeting process for people living in low income.

During consultations, people spoke about how CSUMB allowed households to escape abusive situations or less than ideal housing situations (e.g., poor state of repair; difficulties with landlords or other tenants; distance to health care resources, etc.). CSUMB was cited as the key tool that was used to help shelter residents find their way back into housing. Those already housed spoke of how CSUMB allowed them to upgrade their housing situation, improve their living habitat (for example, replacing furniture) or addressing emergency situations (for example, a mental health crisis leading to arrears in rent and utilities).

While persons with lived experience talked about how the CSUMB had helped them out of homelessness or in accessing furniture or appliances once housed, the perspective on the funding was not as universally positive amongst income support workers or managers from OW or ODSP. Said one income support worker:

“I wouldn’t say people abuse CSUMB, though some of my colleagues might. But I will say that people that have been in the system for a long time know all about it, how it can be used and when they will be entitled to it. They even start calling to see when their two years are up. They are planning ahead on how it will be used. They know what they are entitled to better than some staff.”

Often, CSUMB was seen as the best financial benefit source that households were able to access when faced with eviction, though the consultations revealed some confusion in how the CSUMB was accessed in these instances compared to other discretionary benefits. The relative ease of access and speed for processing meant that tenancies could be saved at the 11th hour, which was especially important for legal aide workers and other support workers helping with prevention activities.

It must be expected that a consultation with such a broad range of stakeholders would reveal many different perspectives. The only point of agreement regarding the use of CSUMB funding was in accessing money for the last month’s rent so that housing could be secured. Based on feedback from the consultations, landlords in the Region, including some of the large property management firms, have relied on CSUMB being available when those on assistance are seeking rental accommodation. While it was suggested that some landlords that have worked consistently with this population may be willing to explore different business practices in the absence of securing last month’s rent, this was not an opinion universally shared.

CSUMB has been used in other ways beyond last month’s rent such as utility arrears, utility hook-ups, rental arrears, storage and furniture but the level of agreement was mixed on the level of importance. This was especially true when those consulted were confronted with the reality that there would be less money available to assist with
CSUMB-type activities. Most people who were consulted agreed that having access to the last month’s rent would get someone housed or re-housed out of a bad situation and that other sources of funding could be explored to resolve the other issues for which funding was not as readily available. Remarked one consultation participant attending the session with people who work with ex-offenders:

“More than anything else we’re talking about getting people housed. Newer furniture and stuff may be nice, but before anything else we need to have the money going to last month’s rent. Taking away from that and having some people stay homeless – moving from jail to the homeless shelter because of that – is plain wrong. So, yes it is a tough choice, but it is also a no brainer if a bunch of people are going to be homeless because they can’t access last month’s rent.”

Regarding rental arrears, it was frequently mentioned that people who experience a risk to their tenancy because of non-payment of rent are very resourceful and that CSUMB is not the only tool that should be made available. This sentiment is supported by emerging research on prevention programs in the United States, as previously mentioned, that have accurately predicted that the loss of tenancy will result in homelessness in approximately 20% of the cases being tracked. While it was acknowledged that CSUMB was the “go to” funding source for people on OW and ODSP when they were confronted with an eviction for non-payment of rent, respondents said that a Regional CSUMB-type fund with significantly less money may be better applied to other situations rather than settling rental arrears.

On the matter of utility arrears and utility hook-ups, one person with lived experience eloquently described the situation as follows:

“The people in the Region would likely be generous in helping out us poor people have heat and electricity. It’d be much harder to get them to understand why we need last month’s rent.”

It was also noted that most existing resources to help people out with utilities require CSUMB funding to be exhausted first. A change in process and program parameters that requires people to exhaust utility-specific funding before looking for CSUMB-type funding is more logical in the new reality. Further, Discretionary Benefits, the Waterloo Region Energy Assistance Program (WREAP) and the Rent Bank were all named as possible sources for dealing with some of the same issues that the CSUMB has been used for and that amendments in the practices or parameters of those funding sources may be more appropriate when changes are implemented in January 2013 and beyond.

The St. Vincent de Paul and Salvation Army Thrift Store – both in Kitchener – were contacted to better understand their thinking about the impacts of the end of CSUMB funding on people seeking furniture and household essentials. Frontline staff from both organizations indicated that it would be difficult to predict how this may change the way that they operate or in the types of demands. Salvation Army Thrift Store staff mused that it could impact their inventory of available furniture. Many people who were consulted held the opinion that these St. Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army and other
comparable organizational resources would find a way to pick up the slack. However, these organizations did not indicate whether they would or could do so. Persons with lived experience explained that used furniture and household goods tend to breakdown quicker and need to be replaced more frequently than newer items; in that regard, they spoke favourably about the potential of using CSUMB funds to purchase new furniture and household goods.

Persons with lived experience offered many other illuminating comments as well:

- People who had experienced domestic violence repeatedly indicated that the CSUMB was the difference between having to stay with an abuser, being “trapped” in a women’s shelter or “starting life over again”.
- People who had experienced homelessness repeatedly spoke of the CSUMB being the difference between a landlord being willing to even speak with them or having no housing options. Non-profit housing providers validated this comment.
- People who were already housed and had used CSUMB one or more times while being housed suggested it was the only way to move out of substandard housing, replace worn furniture that was already well used or address new health issues that come up.

People who were consulted noted that provincial policies and actions seem to be at odds and that the quest for better addressing homelessness is going to be impossible without access to a benefit that assists people in moving out of homelessness. People believe that homelessness will increase without access to CSUMB-type funding. In addition, it was identified that shelters that are already shouldering profound demands will face increased demands and may need to become more restrictive in who is assisted and the conditions under which they are assisted.

The matter of where in the community a CSUMB-type fund would be best administered revealed polarizing opinions. Persons involved with Ontario Works administration (direct support and management) indicated that they would be well positioned for administration given their existing infrastructure and they reinforced their opinion by stating that referring a person to a community agency to access funding would be a costly extra step in the process. Conversely, community-based supports frequently spoke of their direct connections with clients and that sending people to EIS would be a step that was not client-centred. None of the persons with lived experience spoke positively of their engagement with OW staff. Some people did speak favourably about their relationship with ODSP staff and, specifically, about the fact that there was less stigma associated with the ODSP relationship.

The consultations indicate that there is a disconnect in the relationship between the community-based sector and income support staff that deliver OW. Many community-based sector staff spoke about how their clients do not like engaging with OW staff and that they would prefer to have all of their needs met in the community. Conversely, many OW staff spoke about how their clients do not like having to engage with
community-based organizations and would rather have all of their needs met through OW. Both perspectives are probably true depending on how staff has interpreted their relationships with clients, the degree of need and the types of services being provided. This does not offset the fact that a disconnect currently exists. Refer to Appendix C for a list of possible service delivery options.
RECOMMENDATIONS & OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION MOVING FORWARD

Given the recent provincial direction regarding CSUMB, the Region has taken the opportunity to make further improvements to the housing stability delivery system. The Region cannot continue with “business as usual” with the reduced funding allocation under CHPI. The program approach should align with the general intent of *All Roads Lead Home*, the policy directions and actions that have been put in place over the past few years, and be defensible in program design. Low-income is not experienced uniformly across the Region. Homelessness is not experienced uniformly across the Region. Some populations are more disadvantaged than others and this must be considered when moving forward as the scope of investment in housing stability narrows.

The following eight recommendations are organized into three general categories:
- Interim – those matters that should be considered for action in 2013, and which help establish a solid base for moving forward with other recommendations in 2014 and beyond;
- Longer Term – those matters that can be considered no sooner than 2014 and are grounded in the action and traction of implementing the interim recommendations;
- Other – those matters for consideration that will assist the Region in moving forward towards successfully addressing the housing stability needs of lower-income and homeless individuals, but are only peripherally related to the advent of the new program.

**Interim Recommendations**

1. **Make evidence-informed decisions regarding the most effective use of available CHPI and discretionary funding, and communicate the changes to all relevant parties.**

**Key Points**
- More information on how CSUMB has been used historically will result in better policy and program decisions.
- The funding available under CHPI has to be aligned with how the Region plans to provide discretionary benefits so that they are complementary.
- A proactive communication strategy is needed so that all relevant parties understand what the end of CSUMB and the new funding means to them.
**Discussion**

The current income support data system does not allow for a comprehensive report on CSUMB usage. To better understand how the benefit has been used historically and improve service delivery moving forward, a more detailed “file crawl” will be required. Choosing a representative random sample of OW and ODSP files is the best way to move forward. Examining a minimum of two years of files is critical (compared to the one year that has been conducted thus far), with a preference for at least five years as it will capture several cohorts of potential CSUMB users. The file review should be used to identify the volume of CSUMB use (unique users as well as repeat users), the total number and value of the issuances (collectively and the average per person), and well as categorizing the purpose of the issuances. While non-identifiable information is all that is required, it will also be helpful to understand the characteristics of the households that have accessed the benefit (for example, single versus households with at least one dependent; OW versus ODSP recipients; length of time on OW or ODSP; etc.). Policy and program recommendations are expected to be improved through this additional information.

At the same time as the CSUMB is ending and the reduced funding is being provided to communities, changes are also underway with discretionary benefits available to OW and ODSP recipients. The more the Region can appropriately rationalize where a household can access housing stability funds, discretionary benefits, energy funds, emergency issuances, and rent bank – and why – the better off the community as a whole will be. While it may be argued that efficiencies could be achieved with a “one stop shop” to assist households all being in the same place, the truth is that doing so does not take into consideration how clients are accessing services in community, nor does is consider the best possible “bundling” of services relative to types of household needs. Multiple service points in a community can actually help break down silos and improve integration of service in a system context throughout the Region.

It needs to be known and understood amongst community services, income support workers and people that receive OW/ODSP that CSUMB is ending. It needs to be communicated that the reduced funding from previous CSUMB funding is now funding under a new program (CHPI) that does not need to follow the same regulatory criterion that CSUMB followed. To effectively move forward, it must be widely disseminated that the funding is now the responsibility of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The Province of Ontario undoubtedly sees the funding as being part of the housing stability investment, not a traditional income support. Reflecting this in program design locally will be important to align with new provincial guidelines and outcomes.
2. More narrowly define eligibility and purpose of the available funding, while maximizing opportunities for improving the ways in which household needs are met.

Key Points
- What is occurring is not the continuation of CSUMB under a new name and with less funding.
- The same broad range of conditions that may have made someone eligible for CSUMB are not the same conditions why someone would be eligible going forward.
- Whereas there were financial limits on the amount of funding a household was eligible for under CSUMB every two years, the ceiling and timeframe no longer need to be considerations.
- Consider last months rent as a priority.
- Households on OW and ODSP and older adults on OAS/GIS are particularly disadvantaged in meeting their housing needs and other basic needs each month.

Discussion

There has never been the need to prioritize needs amongst those seeking assistance as CSUMB is a mandatory OW and ODSP benefit. Persons with lived experience, several community agencies and, to some degree, OW and ODSP income support staff were clear about the fact that there is a considerable degree of subjectivity that goes into decision-making in the current issuance of CSUMB, and that this subjectivity increased once “maintenance” was added to the benefit. A large number of participants noted the variation and perceived inconsistencies that exists (e.g., different receipt practices, different approval of eligible expenses such as Kijiji purchases versus retail stores, degree to which income support workers are involved in budgeting) relative to where a person tries to access benefits within the Region (depending on the worker or office). Removing this degree of subjectivity will be helpful.

The 1993 CSUB criteria is helpful to consider in the new reality, where access to funds was restricted for individual recipients and recipients with children that were discharged from an institution, victims of family violence, and premises certified as unsafe or uninhabitable. The only addition to this that will be relevant in 2013 and beyond is ensuring that homelessness is also a state from which someone may be considered for assistance. In prioritizing, it will be helpful for the Region to also consider the needs of single person households on OW and ODSP before other households. The evidence as presented in this report is clear – these households have even more acute economic needs than other low-income households in the Region.

The current CSUMB limits of $799 for singles and couples and $1,500 for families with dependents have lagged since inception relative to the level of inflation. A more individualized approach to investment on an individual household basis may be more effective and consistent with the overall goal of housing stability. The Region should...
invest beyond these thresholds as appropriate when it makes the difference between an interim action step and a more permanent solution to an underlying housing stability issue. There will likely be reduced funding per household (single or otherwise) in most instances. However, in some situations where there has been a repeated pattern of return to homelessness, accessing additional resources may make the difference in ending the cycle back into homelessness. Funding is a tool that can be used to reduce repeat episodes of homelessness. For example, the Rent Bank loan fund is just one of the tools within the Rent Bank and Eviction Prevention Program.

The funding should be made available on an annual basis rather than once every two years. Those households for whom the resource is intended are much more likely to experience in-year housing instability. It should be accepted that this is the reality for a small number of households that the funding aims to serve. As such, while generally established to be available once per year, it is recognized that assisting a recipient to access housing more than once in a given year if needed, advances the agenda of housing stability overall in the Region.

There will likely continue to be situations that arise in the Region where a financial resource will be necessary to assist and no other existing financial resource exists. Examples of the types of situations that may be appropriate:

- a person that finds themselves in a second (or additional) abusive situation where a financial support to move is essential to leaving the abuse;
- an unforeseen event like a fire that destroys property and belongings and moving is required;
- instances where the likes of a prolonged hospital stay has resulted in arrears or more imminent risk to housing stability;
- costs to eradicate bed bugs where there is an isolated case of bed bug infestation to the household’s belongings;
- Costs to purchase/rent a generator where it is required to maintain a person’s health and welfare;
- Costs to purchase or repair household appliances necessary to the health and well-being of the household where no other funding is available; and
- Costs of new or replacement smoke alarms and batteries for owner households where no other funding is available.

3. Implement community-based service delivery aligned with other related supports (e.g., Rent Bank).

Key Points
- An investment in community-based, region-wide, housing stability focused service delivery is best aligned and consistent with direction in All Roads Lead Home.
- It will be important to consider a delivery agency with experience and a high degree of accountability.
Discussion

There are various approaches to delivering service, each with pros and cons. A table outlining various options for delivery of funding is available in Appendix C. The recommended option is to invest the new funding into a comprehensive housing stability program in the community that also includes the Rent Bank and serves the entire Region. This will maximize the opportunity for one entity to best determine if Rent Bank or other housing stability resources are the best investment depending on the presenting needs of the household and the ability of the household to meet eligibility criteria. The Rent Bank would become a “one stop” location for households at risk in their housing stability, as well as housing access. The Rent Bank already has a comprehensive financial management system given the nature of its work, and as such there is infrastructure to build upon for the delivery of this new program.

Income support workers spoke of how efforts have been made in recent years to increase integration with community-based service providers, such as shelter specific OW workers. Leveraging this expertise, it would be possible to consider having one or more OW workers work out of the Rent Bank on several days of the week (if not every day) to increase integration with other income supports (basic allowances and other discretionary benefits) and improve partnership without requiring the client to go to two different locations.

Investments in staffing and perhaps improvements to physical space or more space will be required for the program to be successful as envisioned in this manner. However, it further builds a community-based infrastructure to respond to the needs of individuals experiencing low income and/or homelessness in community.

The variation on a second option to be considered is to have a staff person involved in administration of the funds to have a rotating schedule through OW and ODSP offices throughout the month. These touchdown points, at pre-determined times, will improve access to the resources for those households that are resistant to accessing resources in the community and already have a connection to income supports. This mobile approach benefits the end user of services, but also provides a complimentary asset to the OW and ODSP offices and further enhances integration between the community-based sector and income support offices.

It should be noted that extensive consideration and analysis went into whether the best option would be to have OW offices administer the new funds, as they had CSUMB. In the end, community-based service delivery was determined to be the best option. There were several reasons for this:

a) This is a new program, not a continuation of CSUMB under a new name. A clean break from historical practices was deemed to be appropriate to position the community in best moving forward with this new funding as a housing stability investment, not an income support benefit.
b) People with lived experience consulted did not speak favourably about having to go to OW to receive the funding. While admittedly a small cross section of benefit recipients were consulted, it is important to note that not one of them wanted to connect with OW to access the new funding.

c) While OW undoubtedly has a strong administrative infrastructure, the new funding program cannot use existing OW administrative systems.

d) Connectivity to OW would not be lost altogether for income support recipients. End users would be able to still benefit from the skills of OW staff as well as the expertise of staff in the community based sector.

**Longer Term Recommendations**

4. Implement a standardized assessment tool, grounded in evidence, to prioritize those households that will receive funding.

**Key Points**

- “First come, first served” rather than assessing for “greatest need” is a highly ineffective manner to operate a homeless service system.
- Standardizing assessment across service providers will improve housing stability and service outcomes for households in need.
- Transparency in assessment improves accountability while also providing additional helpful information on the nature of the population seeking assistance.

**Discussion**

The Region, in partnership with community service providers, will need to consider the most appropriate standardized assessment tool and coordination process across the continuum of services to maximize the use of available resources. Prioritization in service delivery and access to funding assistance needs to be intimately connected to this process, rather than having “side doors” to service access. This approach will also reinforce housing stability goals across the Region.

5. Distinguish between homeless prevention and eviction prevention.

**Key Points**

- There is limited evidence that households are prevented from becoming homeless due to eviction prevention funding.
- Most households confronted with an eviction do not become homeless, but those with a history of homelessness are more likely to become homeless when faced with an eviction.

**Discussion**

Because CSUMB has been used broadly in prevention interventions, removal of CSUMB as a mandatory benefit under OW presents an opportunity to more clearly distinguish between homeless prevention and eviction prevention. The funding should
not be a broadly defined resource that allows for a “catch all” in prevention-type activities. Instead, the funding should be more narrowly defined as being available for people at imminent risk of homelessness. Imminent risk of homelessness means not simply that they have an eviction notice or will lose their dwelling, it means that doing so is most likely going to result in homelessness – that all other options have been exhausted.

**Other Recommendations**

6. **Encourage the use of strategies such as more trusteeships and rent paid directly to landlords for program participants.**

**Key Points**
- CHPI funding is not the only tool that can be used to promote housing stability.
- Improving the likelihood of rent being paid on time and in full through the likes of trusteeship or direct payment of rent to the landlord can be helpful.

**Discussion**

The available information on the post-CSUMB funding presents no obstacles to infusing other practices that may improve housing stability as a condition of receiving funds.

Many of those consulted spoke of the need to increase third-party payment of rent to increase housing stability. This type of comment was even more prevalent when income support staff and community-based non-profit staff spoke of people with more complex issues and/or repeat users of CSUMB within the two year period. Enhancing integration in support between the community-based sector and income supports, it is recommended that third party payment of rent become a requirement for those individuals and multi-person households seeking financial support.

Another tool that may be employed which came up several times in the consultations was the use of trustees – both “Capital T Trustees” (most often through Public Guardian) as well as “Small t trustees” through community agencies or friends/families of the client. For those situations where arrears or chronic budgeting issues would seem to be the reason for repeated homelessness or imminent risk of homelessness it would seem prudent to consider the introduction of trusteeship as a condition of accessing the funds.

In both instances because the funding is no longer a mandatory benefit governed in the same way as it was when it was CSUMB, there would appear to be the flexibility to introduce these tools to help improve housing stability overall.
7. Work to Better Understand Other Services Necessary to Promote Housing Stability and Fund Accordingly.

Key Points

- CSUMB allowed for purchase of furniture, appliance repair, moving and storage.
- The capacity and interest of other organizations to meet these needs after CSUMB ends is not well understood at this time.

Discussion

One of the ways CSUMB had been used historically was to allow recipients to purchase new or used furniture with the funds, subject to receipts. It is not possible, currently, to determine how much of the CSUMB funding spent in the Region was used in this manner. OW recipients, ODSP recipients, OW staff, ODSP staff and service providers all indicated, however, that the funding was used in this way, although there was some split in opinion on whether the use of the funds in this way, especially for already housed individuals, was absolutely necessary in all instances.

For households falling into homelessness, the CSUMB could mean the difference between having to give up all possessions and the ability to store those belongings until housing could be secured again. Storage was deemed to be an eligible cost. It is not possible, currently, to determine how much of the CSUMB funding spent in the Region was used in this manner. If analysis reveals this to be a prudent investment and decreases costs of replacing furniture and other belongings, then it may be worthy of ongoing investment as a percentage of the overall allocation.

Moving costs were also eligible under CSUMB. Again it is unclear how much was spent on this activity as part of the overall Region CSUMB expenditures and more investigation is required. Consultations indicated that in rare instances it was accessed to move belongings out of a place that a household could no longer afford or was being evicted from and into storage, but that it was more frequently used to help households move into a new place after they had lost housing.

A number of social enterprises currently provide service in these areas (e.g., accessing furniture, assist with moving, repair appliances, provide support with bed bug treatment) which may be destabilized by the ending of CSUMB. It will be important to better understand the role these services play in the community and impacts based on the ending of CSUMB.
8. Work to increase available energy-related funds through separate fundraising activities.

**Key Points**
- CSUMB has historically been used to assist with utility arrears.
- Exhausting Waterloo Region Energy Assistance Program and Discretionary Benefits for energy issues is more appropriate than using the CHPI funding for this purpose.
- Specific fundraising may be required for this purpose.

**Discussion**

Only in rare instances moving forward should the CHPI funding be used to address utility arrears. Specific energy funds (Waterloo Region Energy Assistance Program – WREAP) and Discretionary Benefits need to be tapped into first and exhausted prior to looking to the CHPI funds to address energy issues.

It is suggested that a regional fundraising campaign be established to gather resources specifically for an Energy Fund through individual and corporate donations. This would potentially de-link energy related demands on low-income households from housing stability investments and leave the CHPI funding primarily for housing access.
CONCLUSION

The Region of Waterloo is trying to ensure that they have identified the best possible approach to administering reduced funding in a post-CSUMB environment come January 2013. While the reduced funding is not ideal, the enhanced flexibility that the funding presents and the transfer of the funding outside of income supports to the housing domain is an opportunity to make some changes within the Region. These changes can be made in a way that continues to align with the housing stability domains of income, housing and supports espoused in *All Roads Lead Home*.

The program options moving forward need to be consistent with the Region’s established principles and the four goals of the housing stability system. To that end, this project:

- included persons with lived experience in having a voice in what a future program may look like, as well as providing direct comment on the ways in which CSUMB was most used and most useful
- involved a broad range of community agencies and staff involved in the delivery of Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support program
- considered ways in moving forward that are not “business as usual” but also not so removed from the experience of service delivery in the Region so as to destabilize the manner with which persons in need receive services and financial assistance
- respects the need to end persistent homelessness, including chronic or frequently episodic engagement with the homeless service delivery system
- place strong emphasis on community inclusion rather than solely a government response, while recognizing that government has a strong role to play in social planning, social development, social policy and financial stewardship
- emphasizes accountability in service delivery
- follows the lead of promising practices when appropriate to do so and in keeping with the resources and skill within the Region
- remain true to the Region’s values, even as the program changes

Clear through the contact that OrgCode made with other Ontario jurisdictions in the course of this project, the Region has a positive reputation in working towards addressing homelessness and meeting the needs of people that experience living in low income. There is clear value in the community-based sector supporting people who are accessing housing and supporting people experiencing various issues once they are housed. Addressing homelessness and economic poverty in the Region will remain linked to the efforts of the non-profit sector. Whether the allocation option is placing the funding into the hands of the non-profit sector or increasing the links that income support staff have with non-profit service delivery, undoubtedly the community-based sector presents the most promising direction for ending homelessness and preventing homelessness when there is imminent risk.
The movement towards placing non-profits at the forefront of any approach is not an indictment of the work or approach used by OW across the Region. Rather, the recommendations reflect that those in need are in contact with the community-based sector and income supports; that the funding is available through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing rather than the Ministry of Community and Social Services; and, that income supports are only one domain in the Region’s approach to supporting housing stability.

The recommendations contained within this report are based almost exclusively on the qualitative input of those consulted. This was a result of the lack of quantitative information readily available on CSUMB usage throughout its history. It is entirely possible that some of the assumptions made by those consulted and translated into potential action by the consultants are based upon false premises. Deeper analytical work to understand how CSUMB has been used and by whom relative to the recommendations contained within the report is recommended.

Building consistency across service providers and income supports through common assessment tools and coordinated access will improve the use of available resources. It will set into motion the opportunity for improved prioritization in who gets served through which interventions and which financial resources are available based upon need. In an era of finite resources this is essential for ensuring the most appropriate household accesses the most appropriate supports and resources to address needs.

There is no blueprint for success in the new reality that emerges January 2013. However, based upon the track record within the Region and knowledge gleaned and considered in other contexts, the Region is well poised to continue delivering positive person-centred services that will assist in the mission of ending homelessness, increase housing retention, reduce the length of time that people experience homelessness and maximize community inclusion. It embraces a more system focused orientation that reduces the reliance on any single pillar within the broad range of supports, emphasizing instead a more collective approach.

The Region is also well positioned to chart a new course in service delivery without destabilizing community agencies or those that have traditionally received CSUMB, even though new eligibility and business approaches are imminent. Key to success will be true partnership between income supports and the community-based sector such that they are seen in seamless lockstep in supporting people in need. Also key will be advanced communications that help people who receive benefits to understand the changes afoot, how it impacts them, and how their housing stability remains paramount in the new approach to housing stability.
APPENDIX A: Ontario Works Regulations: Part VII
Other basic financial assistance Benefits

55. (1) The following benefits shall be paid with respect to each of the members of a recipient's benefit unit if the administrator is satisfied that he or she meets the criteria for them and income assistance is being paid on his or her behalf:

4. An amount, not exceeding the maximum amount to which a recipient is entitled under subsection (3), in respect of a residence if,
   i. the recipient will be establishing a new principal residence whether within or outside the geographic area or will be remaining in his or her current residence,
   ii. the administrator is satisfied that the recipient will need financial assistance to establish the new principal residence or to remain in his or her current residence,
   iii. the recipient,
      A. is being discharged from an institution that provided for his or her basic needs and shelter,
      B. has satisfied the administrator that it would be harmful to his or her health or welfare to remain in his or her current residence,
      C. has been evicted from his or her current residence,
      D. has received a notice of termination or a notice to quit with respect to his or her tenancy or a final demand for payment under a mortgage and has satisfied the administrator that, if a payment is made, he or she will not be evicted from his or her current residence,
      E. has had a utility within the meaning of paragraph 8 of subsection 42 (1) or the energy for heat as described in paragraph 10 of subsection 42 (1) to the current residence discontinued and has satisfied the administrator that if a payment is made the utility or energy will be resumed, or
      F. has received a notice that a utility within the meaning of paragraph 8 of subsection 42 (1) or the energy for heat as described in paragraph 10 of subsection 42 (1) to the current residence will be discontinued and has satisfied the administrator that if a payment is made the utility or energy will not be discontinued, and
   iv. the recipient,
      A. has not received payments under this paragraph or under paragraph 4 of subsection 44 (1) of Ontario Regulation 222/98 (General) made under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997 or has received payments that in total are not greater than the maximum amount to which the recipient is entitled under subsection (3) within the preceding 24 months, or
      B. has received payments under this paragraph or under paragraph 4 of subsection 44 (1) of Ontario Regulation 222/98 (General) made under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997 within the preceding 24 months the total of which equal the maximum amount to which the recipient is entitled under subsection (3), but the
administrator approves additional payments that in total are not greater than the maximum amount to which the recipient is entitled under subsection (3) because of exceptional circumstances.

55. (3) Subject to the approval by the administrator under sub-subparagraph 4 iv B of subsection (1) of an additional payment under exceptional circumstances, the maximum amount payable under paragraph 4 of subsection (1) in any 24-month period is,
(a) $1,500, if the recipient has one or more dependent children; or
(b) $799, in all other cases.

In summary, the aspects of the amended regulation that are relevant to this report are as follows:

- Paragraph 4 of Subsection 55 of the Regulations is revoked.
- Subsection 55 (3) of the Regulations is revoked.
- Subsection 54 (1) of the Regulations are amended by adding the following paragraph [The following payments by Ontario shall not be included in income]:

26. A payment made under the consolidated housing and homelessness program administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing by a service manager designated under the Housing Services Act, 2011 and applied to,

i. rent deposits, including first and last month’s rent,
ii. establishing a new principal residence,
iii. maintaining the health or welfare of a member of a benefit unit in his or her current residence,
iv. arrears on any of the costs of shelter listed in subsection 42 (1) (see below), or
v. other services, items, payments or costs related to housing and homelessness, as approved by the Director.

“Shelter” is defined in 42 (1) as the cost for a dwelling place used as a principal residence with respect to any of the following:

1. Rent, other than amounts paid for parking and cable (except where cable is required for security system).
2. Principal and interest on a mortgage or loan incurred to purchase the dwelling place or to make repairs that the administrator determines are necessary in order for the property to continue to be used as a dwelling place.
3. Occupancy costs paid under an agreement to purchase the dwelling place.
4. Taxes.
5. Premiums for an insurance policy with respect to the dwelling place or its contents.
6. Reasonable and necessary payments, approved by the administrator, for the preservation, maintenance and use of the dwelling place.

7. Common expenses required to be contributed for a condominium or a co-operative housing unit except that portion of the common expenses allocated to the cost of energy for heat.

8. The following utilities, if they are not included in rent or common expenses:
   i. An energy source used for household purposes other than for heat.
   ii. Water and sewage.
   iii. Rental of a furnace and a hot water heater.

9. Rent under a land lease.

10. The cost of energy for heat.
## APPENDIX B: Consultations Conducted in Waterloo Region for New Program Exploration for Former CSUMB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Approximate # of People in Attendance</th>
<th>Method (e.g., phone, in person)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 4, 2012</td>
<td>Corrections After Care Committee</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4, 2012</td>
<td>STEP Home Agency Advisory Group</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11, 2012</td>
<td>Waterloo Region Housing</td>
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<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 15, 2012</td>
<td>Lutherwood</td>
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<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 19, 2012</td>
<td>Waterloo Regional Homes for Mental Health</td>
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<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
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<td>June 20, 2012</td>
<td>Women's Crisis Service Water Region</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 20, 2012</td>
<td>Waterloo Regional Homes for Mental Health</td>
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<td>Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 21, 2012</td>
<td>Waterloo Region Community Legal Service</td>
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<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 22, 2012</td>
<td>Persons with Lived Experience (STEP Home PAG, ALIV(e), KDCHC- HAG)</td>
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<td>In Person</td>
</tr>
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<td>June 22, 2012</td>
<td>Employment &amp; Income Support (3 Meetings)</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 25, 2012</td>
<td>Salvation Army Thrift Store</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 29, 2012</td>
<td>Persons with Lived Experience</td>
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<td>July 9, 2012</td>
<td>Region of Waterloo Social Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 13, 2012</td>
<td>St. Monica’s House</td>
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<td>July 20, 2012</td>
<td>Persons with Lived Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 31, 2012</td>
<td>Region of Waterloo Employment &amp; Income Support</td>
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<td>In Person</td>
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## APPENDIX C: Options for Service Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client support dollars available through multiple community service agencies</td>
<td>As has been done in other jurisdictions, one option is to provide a range of community based service providers an annual allocation of funding that they can use as “client support dollars”. Maximizing the flexibility of the post-CSUMB resources, the intent would be to have these organizations focus their attention almost exclusively on helping clients access housing and avoid imminent risk of homelessness. Through the common assessment tool, the Region can be assured that the process for establishing needs and priorities is the same across service providers, but there are limitations on service coordination across service providers. Duplication of funding is also possible without a central database, as clients may attempt to access funds from more than one service provider. There may also be inefficiencies in administration across providers in managing and accounting for the funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralized support dollars available in conjunction with the Rent Bank</td>
<td>Placing these post-CSUMB funds in the same organization that delivers the Rent Bank more squarely positions the organization as the financial resource “go to” in the community for households that face housing access or retention needs. Through one location, the organization can best assess which financial assistance fund(s) – working independently or stacked together – offers the best “menu” of options for any household to get out of homelessness or avoid homelessness. With administrative systems already in place, accountability is unlikely going to be a problem in this scenario, though increased staff and space will be a required investment to be effective in meeting needs. Income support workers spoke of how efforts have been made in recent years to increase outreach with community-based service providers, such as shelter specific OW workers. Leveraging this expertise, it would be possible to consider having one or more OW workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work out of the Rent Bank on several days</td>
<td>Work out of the Rent Bank on several days of the week (if not every day) to increase integration with other income supports (basic allowances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the week (if not every day) to increase</td>
<td>and other discretionary benefits) and improve partnership without requiring the client to go to two different locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integration with other income supports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and improve partnership without requiring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the client to go to two different locations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decentralized service hubs attempt to maximize access points for people in need, but are not universally available in all service providers. As a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>specialized resource, this allows for improved consistency in service delivery and community-based planning while also respecting that not all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>households that may want/need to access financial assistance would be comfortable in all service environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Region can think strategically related to geography and service types in selecting the appropriate hubs. For example, it may make sense to have a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hub in a domestic violence environment, another in a shelter or two, and another at the Rent Bank. Diversity is essential for maximizing potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staffing and administrative investments are higher in this type of approach to service delivery – an accepted cost related to the service design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More Region input is also likely required to ensure consistency in practice across the hubs given the population differences, service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>differences and geographic area covered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If there are a limited number of hubs, like the Rent Bank model, it may be possible to have OW workers work out of these environments to enhance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>partnership and integration across financial service options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create community service hubs within non-</td>
<td>If CSUMB were to be administered in OW offices, it will require separate data and administrative processes as it will not be integrated into</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profit service providers</td>
<td>other technology. Given this situation, one might also consider a different model of service delivery where on several days per week at set hours a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>representative from the community-based sector works out of an OW or ODSP office. This is the opposite of the approach outlined above which suggested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that OW workers work in community based environments (Rent Bank or Hubs).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| OW maintain service delivery with improved integration with community-based sector | A final option would be to have OW staff in OW offices continue to maintain the administration of the funding in a post-CSUMB environment.

With solid business practices already in place related to cheque issuances and the possibility to mitigate risk in some capacities relative to the community-based sector because it is government staff, OW offices may be seen as attractive. They also have the benefit of having privacy impacts addressed already for income support recipients. Plus, the opportunity to integrate the availability of this funding with other financial support options like Discretionary Benefits cannot be overlooked.

But there are other realities and concerns that must also be considered. Long-term it would seem that income support provision in the Province is moving more and more towards a virtual access model. Integration in a physical environment makes less compelling sense when this is the case and increases the possibilities of community based integration. The reality of the funding (post-CSUMB) is that a separate data infrastructure will be required to monitor and allow for issuances; it will not be integrated with income support data systems, so there are no advantages over the community sector in this regard; and, there are limitations to knowledge of community services.

Undoubtedly there is some expertise from OW staff that has been gleaned through years of practice of CSUMB issuances that the Region would not want to lose when setting up the new financial support. For example, using CSUMB appropriately with other financial benefits is critical; business practices related to receipts and accounting for expenses is important; how staff have related to landlords has been seen as successful by staff as important; etc. These may be exchanged with the community-sector or integrated into it if the option selected is to go with community-based service delivery. |
The Region of Waterloo Library (RWL) is undertaking a Service Review to better understand the expectations of both library users and non-users. For this project, RWL has partnered with Corporate Resources - Citizen Service in a pilot of the Service Improvement, Planning and Implementation (SIPI) Methodology. SIPI has four steps, the first two of which are: Measure clients' satisfaction; and Measure clients' expectations and priorities. Citizens Service uses questions from the Common Measurement Tool (the foundation for the Citizens First reports) which enables comparison with other municipalities and development of drivers of citizen satisfaction with government services.

The RWL data has been collected through a household telephone survey of 870 RWL users and 400 non-users, conducted by ERIN Research Inc. The overall response rates were 48% and 40% respectively, which is twice that for most surveys, indicating the high level of Township residents' interest in the Regional libraries.

The research results are documented in the report “Region of Waterloo Library Service Review and Forward Look” dated November 1, 2012. The Executive Summary is attached, and the complete document is in the Councillors’ Library. As shown in Figure 1, overall satisfaction with most library services is extremely high, rating 8.5 to 9.5 out of 10. Another important finding is the contribution of library staff to overall client satisfaction. As shown in Figure 4, staff performance is one of the direct drivers of overall satisfaction, and also an indirect contributor to the other drivers which are: services and programs that meet my needs; sense of community; and physical structure. The best way to improve overall satisfaction with library services is for RWL to make improvements in the specific services supporting these areas.

The suggested areas of improvement arising from the research are being further refined and tested, prior to bringing recommendations concerning programs, services and branch hours to Regional Council through Library Committee, in 2013. Some of the preliminary recommendations have also been included in the Library Committee’s proposed 2013 budget, which will be forwarded to Regional Council in January 2013.
REGION OF WATERLOO
LIBRARY SERVICE REVIEW and
FORWARD LOOK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
BY ERIN RESEARCH INC.

November 1, 2012
Executive summary

Introduction
The Region of Waterloo Library (RWL) serves 63,800 residents of the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich, through ten library branches and a library headquarters. The Service Review Project provides an evidence-based foundation for a comprehensive service improvement plan for these Regional libraries. The rural communities are diverse, varying in size, demographic characteristics, library use and needs. The Region of Waterloo commissioned ERIN Research to conduct a comprehensive survey of both library users and residents who do not use the libraries. While striving to improve services, it is important to note that libraries consistently rate among the highest in client satisfaction of all public sector services. In Citizens First 5, a survey of more than 6,000 Canadians, libraries were rated 8.0 out of 10 in overall satisfaction. In the current survey, Region of Waterloo libraries score 9.0 out of 10.

Method and sample
Two surveys were conducted by telephone between August 15 and September 13, 2012:

- The Library User Survey was administered to a randomly selected sample of 870 Township residents who had used a Regional library in the past year.
- The Non-User Survey was administered to a randomly selected sample of 400 residents who had not used a Regional library in the past year.

Response rates were very positive: 48% for library users and 40% for non-users. Response rates are about twice what one might expect for a typical telephone survey, reflecting both advance communications about the survey done by the libraries and a high level of interest by residents.
PART 1: LIBRARY USERS

Satisfaction with library services

The ten branch libraries in the system range from small to large, and from aging structures to new buildings with the latest technology. The individual branches each have their own character and strengths. Given this, there is a high degree of satisfaction with the services, as the following figure demonstrates.

Figure 1. Satisfaction with library services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Satisfaction (0-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing a book or other library material</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlibrary loan</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's &amp; family reading materials</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Reference Services</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Wi-Fi</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading recommendations</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family reading areas - couch, educational toys etc</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying and printing</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the library's computers</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting rooms or areas - some have rentable spaces</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloading an e-book</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a statistically significant difference among Townships for the item on Family reading areas. North Dumfries rates this at 9.3, followed by Wellesley, 9.0; Wilmot, 8.5; and Woolwich, 8.4.

Online services

Fifty-two per cent of library users reported that they had used the library website during the past year. There is noticeable variation on the basis of age. One-third of those over age 65 use online resources compared to one-half of the younger patrons.

The most common online activities are to access the catalogue, renew a book, place a book on hold, and get information about the library. The range of satisfaction ratings for web services is similar to that for non-electronic services.

While users are overall very positive about web services, there were a number of recurring complaints and suggestions, focused on navigation and searches.
Satisfaction with children’s programs

Forty-eight percent of library users had children under age 18 living in the home. This is the potential audience for children's programs. Of this group, 43% had used one or more children's programs in the past year.

Residents give uniformly high ratings of children's programs across age groups, from 9.1 to 10 out 10 for 14 age-related library programs. Usage of programs peaks in the 4- to 7-year age range, where more than half of families with children make use of programs. In the open-ended comments, a number of respondents recommended the provision of more programs to attract Tweens and Teens, who appear to lose contact with the library during those years.

Satisfaction with adult programs

While parents and children are the focus of programming efforts in the Regional library system, three adult programs have been offered recently. Computer training emphasizes basics for those with little computer background. Scores for the “One book, one community” program where a Canadian book is identified and which members are invited to read, received an 8.5 out of 10 rating, and general interest and special events received an 8.1 rating. The one outlier, Computer Training received a 6.8 out of 10.

Getting to the rural libraries

On foot and by car are the two main modes of transport, accounting for 96% of library users. Those who walk tend to spend slightly longer getting to the branch than those who drive, but the difference is slight. The majority of residents get to their library in less than 10 minutes.

Communications

Library users were asked to rate each of 5 communications channels as a means of getting information about their library.

Approximately 82% of Ontario’s population has Internet, so it not surprising that library users rate email high among preferred communications channels. From a practical perspective, Internet has the advantage of low cost compared to radio, television or print. A balanced strategy of building email capability while continuing to communicate through community newspapers and posters would reach a wide audience. Channel preferences do not vary by Township, with one exception. Community newspapers score a relatively high 7.1 out of 10 in both North Dumfries and Woolwich, and lower in Wilmot (6.3) and Wellesley (5.8).

Thirty-eight percent of respondents have a smart phone, and 69% of these expressed interest in a library app that would enable them to reserve and renew items, and perform other library tasks.


**Hours of service**

Overall, 78% of library users said that current hours of service meet their needs. This pattern varies across Townships, North Dumfries and Wilmot being more satisfied with current hours of service than the others.

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**Figure 2. “Do current library hours meet your needs?”: results by Township**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Dumfries</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellesley</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilmot</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolwich</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who said that current hours did not meet their needs were asked whether extra hours should be added in the morning, afternoon or evening. There is a slight preference for additional morning hours, with evening hours also popular:

- 54% would welcome additional morning hours
- 33% checked additional afternoon hours
- 46% checked additional evening hours.

Libraries are currently closed on Sunday and Monday. Asked whether they would like to use the library on these days, respondents prefer opening Mondays over Sundays. Still, only about 30% are “Very likely” to use the Monday option. This echoes the result reported earlier, where 78% stated that current hours meet their needs.

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**Components of the library experience**

A higher level view of library services focuses on library staff and the place of the library in the community. Library users assessed their library on six components. Several questionnaire items are used to measure each component (Figure 3).
### Figure 3. Components of the library experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component (average agreement)</th>
<th>Agreement (0-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programs and services</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs &amp; services are inclusive &amp; accessible</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The technology available meets my needs</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library's programs meet my needs</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can usually find what I want</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The books and other materials meet my needs</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The collection of ebooks meets my needs</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff treat me with respect</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't hesitate to ask library staff for help</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff are friendly and helpful</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff are knowledgeable and competent</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are enough staff to serve customers well</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business processes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to check out and return material</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules and policies are clear</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to register for programs</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sense of community</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library has a welcoming atmosphere</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is an important hub in our community</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is in touch with the needs of our community</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library supports ethnic and cultural groups</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It gives me an opportunity to connect with friends</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The physical structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library building is accessible</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is well laid out</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library building is attractive</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library has adequate seating and study areas</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library has adequate parking</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource to residents</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is an important resource for children</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is an important resource for adults</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is an important resource for teens</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library provides good value for tax dollars</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is forward-looking, it tries out new ideas</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It receives funding to serve the community well</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drivers of customer satisfaction
Drivers of satisfaction fall into two groups: direct drivers (arrows that touch Overall Satisfaction) and indirect drivers (arrows one or two steps removed).
Staff play a critical part in the drivers of satisfaction of libraries in the four Region of Waterloo townships. Their contribution is mainly as enablers: they help to create the conditions that lead to overall satisfaction. The logic of the library user is not so much, “I am satisfied with the library because I like the staff”, but rather, “I am satisfied with the library because its services and programs meet my needs, and this is due in large part to library staff”.
Staff contribute to the other direct drivers as well, to the sense of community that users feel and to users’ appreciation of the physical structure. When one adds up the total effect that staff have on satisfaction (i.e. by following each of the pathways from staff to satisfaction) staff performance is the largest driver.
Satisfaction with the library is a complex interaction among the six drivers. To the extent that improvements are made in any of them, overall satisfaction can be expected to increase.

Figure 4. Direct and indirect drivers of customer satisfaction

The drivers account for 50% of the variance in overall satisfaction.

Note: Each arrow denotes a statistically significant impact from one element to another; heavier arrows reflect stronger influences.
**Priorities for improvement**

The survey presented a set of 16 possible initiatives that the libraries might pursue and library users indicated their interest in each one on a scale from “Not a priority” to “A major priority”. Wifi in all branches tops the list by a slight margin. Priorities two and three focus on “older adults”. Individuals age 50-plus constitute 48% of the sample, and those age 35 to 49 make up another third of the sample, so the focus on “older adults” would seem to come down to “programs and materials for people like me”.

In general, priorities whose ratings differ by .5 or more differ to a statistically significant degree. Thus, providing Wifi (6.9) is a significantly higher priority than expanding adult lifelong learning programs (6.2).

**Figure 5. Priorities for action**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority (0-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide Wifi in all library branches</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase materials for older adults</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand programs and services for older adults</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More books and hard copy resources</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase availability of ebooks</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand adult lifelong learning programs</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve facilities for individuals with disabilities</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand computer training programs</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand programs services for tweens and teens</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand resources for young children, families</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand adult literacy programs</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase space in branches</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer services programs outside of the library</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase library hours</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide materials in other languages</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide programs and services in other languages</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART 2: NON-USERS
The non-user sample consists of 400 respondents and was structured to reflect the composition of the four Townships with respect to age and gender. The survey of non-users had two main objectives:

- To understand why this group does not use library services
- To compare perceptions of users and non-users on the role of the library in their community.

While this group is referred to as “non-users” for convenience, many of them frequent other libraries and have used Regional libraries in the past:

- 29% use other libraries in the area. The Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and university/college libraries are all used by similar numbers. This figure also includes some who use church libraries,
- 60% have used Regional libraries in the past.

The 60% of respondents who were former users were asked why they stopped. Two thirds of this group gave one or more specific reasons for stopping, primarily, a) using the Internet to get information, b) preferring to buy books, and c) using other nearby libraries. The other third gave very general answers such as “I’m too busy” or “I’m just not into reading” or, “I don’t need the library”.

PART 3: SEVEN KEY RECOMMENDATIONS GOING FORWARD
Seven recommendations are made based on both quantitative and qualitative results for users and non-users. The context is important: library users think very well of the Regional Library system and its branch libraries. Their overall satisfaction score of 9.0 out of 10 attests to this. The recommendations that follow should be read in this context – building for the future on a highly successful institution.

1. Maintain current staffing levels and expertise.
2. Continuously improve RWL website functionality and increase opportunities for use of online applications.
3. Use online offerings to enhance users’ experience and to attract non-users who are already technology-based.
4. Build on the use of inexpensive online and community outreach strategies to sustain existing users and attract new users.
5. Make library hours consistent each day library is open.
6. Focus on retaining teens and tweens with innovative, age-relevant initiatives.
7. Replicate library review survey in 2014, using an arms-length expert, to measure progress against the baseline results.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting date</th>
<th>Requestor</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Assigned Department</th>
<th>Anticipated Response Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27-Nov-12</td>
<td>S. Strickland</td>
<td>That the matter of mandatory CPR and AED training for all Regional employees be referred to staff to report back with options for a Health &amp; Safety staff training policy.</td>
<td>Public Health/Human Resources</td>
<td>Jun-2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>