



York Region

Alliance to End HOMELESSNESS

510 Penrose Street
Newmarket,
Ontario L3Y 1A2

December 15th 2009

Chair Fisch and Members of Regional Council
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge St.,
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1

Dear Chair Fisch and Members of Council,

Re: York Region 2010 Budget – Additional Investment in Social Infrastructure

I am writing on behalf of the York Region Alliance to End Homelessness. Our mission is to facilitate collaborative solutions to homelessness and poverty in York Region. We wish to make a submission regarding the Community and Health Services budget for 2010. I am also requesting an opportunity to make a deputation at the upcoming meeting of Regional Council on December 16th, 2009.

We realize that deputations regarding the budget should happen during the committee process. We have participated in the York Region budget process over the past two years, but were unaware of the change in budget schedule this year due to the upcoming municipal election in 2010. While the delay in this communication may impact the response of members of Council to our request, we feel compelled to participate in the process, even at this late stage, by communicating our issues and our request for your consideration.

Our request is for Council to add an additional \$1.3 million to the Community and Health Services Committee budget in 2010 to be placed in a reserve fund for investment in critically needed social infrastructure that includes long term funding of key community partners and a funding stream for community based collaborative planning.

We acknowledge the additional investments that have been made by Council to address the growing human service needs across the region:

- Increased funding through Community Development and Investment Fund including new agency funding and 3 year funding for some programs;
- Early Investment of \$1 million in 2009 (pending the release of the Community and Health Services Multi-Year Plan) and \$1.3 million in 2010;
- Proposed investment to maintain Best Start service levels in 2010.

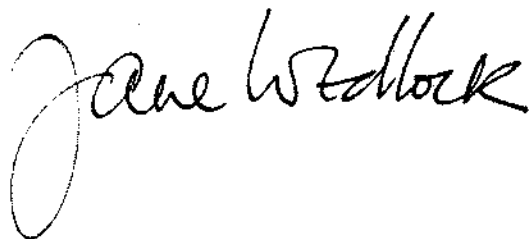
The reduced pressure on the budget of GTA Pooling (\$13.3 million) and ODSP upload (\$8.9 million) creates a window of opportunity for urgently needed support for the social service sector in York Region. We believe that investments in social infrastructure are key to ensure effective response to growth pressures and to facilitate the development of equitable healthy communities.

We respectfully request that members of council consider the following:

- Community organizations/coalitions not only deliver services, they are significant partners in the achievement of strategic regional goals to develop healthy and sustainable communities – particularly in the area of homelessness and affordable housing;
- Community organizations such as the York Region Alliance to End Homelessness are regarded as key stakeholders and expected to provide input and expertise as part of municipal and regional planning processes – but this is not something that is funded;
- As local municipalities engage in updating official plans, there are more studies being conducted that are highlighting social issues in our communities. There is a need for the development of innovative collaborative solutions;
- Our effectiveness as community partners will be enhanced if we can move beyond silos and have a more systems approach to collaborative planning and service delivery.

We want to continue to be key community partners – but without ongoing investment in these key partnerships and a collaborative approach to planning that is funded, our ability to continue this work is in jeopardy.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jane Wedlock". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of "Jane" being a large, stylized capital "J".

Jane Wedlock
Executive Director – Community Strategist
