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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT FUND STRATEGY: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDED 2010 ONE-YEAR PROJECTS

The Community and Health Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated October 8, 2009, from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council approve the full list of community service projects included in *Attachment 1 (Private)* under the Community Development and Investment Fund (CDIF) Strategy for one-year funding and that the Region enter into 2010 Purchase of Service agreements with the agencies for such projects after due diligence verifications are completed.
2. The Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to execute the Purchase of Service agreements with the successful agencies, subject to review by Legal Services.
3. The Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to allocate any new or related CDIF funds that may become available during the course of 2010 to projects and activities that fall within the framework of provincial guidelines and the CDIF Strategy and that the Commissioner be authorized to execute Purchase of Service Agreements with agencies that meet this criteria.
4. For the 2011 CDIF funding cycle, the Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to approve funding for all community service projects under the CDIF Strategy and execute Purchase of Service agreements with successful agencies, subject to review by Legal Services.

2. PURPOSE

This report requests approval for the funding of community service projects recommended through the Region's 2009 CDIF Purchase of Service process.

The private attachment to this report should be considered in a closed session of Committee and Council because it concerns security of regional property. In 2010, these projects will result in a variety of priority community services to vulnerable residents across York Region and will be implemented under Purchase of Service agreements.

As in past years, this report also seeks approval for the Commissioner of Community and Health Services to be authorized to allocate any new or related CDIF funds that may become available during the course of 2010 within the framework of provincial guidelines and the CDIF Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

Since the CDIF Strategy was approved by Regional Council on April 18, 2002 through the adoption of Clause No. 1 of Report No. 4 of the Community Services and Housing Committee, it has become evident that purchasing priority community services from those agencies that are best equipped to deliver the services is a cost-efficient and effective way of supporting the needs of York Region residents.

In recent years, emerging challenges, including rapid and diverse population growth, increasing community need and growing pressures on agencies to offer community-based supports have placed pressures on CDIF and the community as a whole.

To address these concerns, on April 24, 2008, with the adoption of Clause No. 1 of Report No. 3 of the Community Services and Housing Committee, Regional Council approved both an increased investment in CDIF to purchase additional services and also extended the kinds of projects which can be considered for funding to assist agencies in building service capacity. The focus of the CDIF Strategy on service delivery and on the three priority funding areas of homelessness supports, employment supports and family and children's services has served the community well and remains unchanged.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The CDIF Purchase of Service Request follows established procedures of collaboration across departments

The annual CDIF Purchase of Service process has been administered by the Region's Supplies and Services Branch since 2003. This collaboration between the Community and Health Services Department and the Supplies and Services Branch ensures that essential features of the Region's purchasing process are included in the process.

Timely and appropriate information was provided to allow eligible agencies to respond to the Call for Proposals

The Purchase of Service Request for projects to receive one-year CDIF funding in 2010 was released to the community on August 6, 2009.

The communications strategy for this Purchase of Service Request included:

- Advance notice to the community that a Purchase of Service Request would be issued August 6, 2009. This notice was placed in the York Region Media Group and the King Weekly newspapers on July 23, 2009, and also communicated to potentially eligible and interested community agencies via e-mail.
- Information was posted on the Region's website on August 6, 2009 with a link facilitating easy access to the CDIF Purchase of Service web page.
- An email announcement of the release of the Purchase of Service Request, with a link to the document download page, was sent to more than 80 potentially eligible community agencies on August 6, 2009.
- Three newspaper advertisements were placed in each of the York Region Media Group and the King Weekly newspapers covering all of York Region, between August 6, 2009 and September 10, 2009.

The community responded very positive. As in past years the total value of the proposals received exceeded the amount of funding available. When the Purchase of Service request closed on September 10, 2009, 55 eligible proposals totaling almost \$6.0 million were received.

The projects recommended for 2010 funding will provide a wide range of services across the region

All proposals were evaluated by the Community and Health Services Department as well as by external funders including the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the United Way of York Region. The Supplies and Services Branch also participated in this process.

Each proposal was scored using the criteria established by Regional Council including:

- agency effectiveness
- agency financial management
- agency capacity
- project benefits in the priority areas
- project methodology and activities
- project costs and budget
- project/program sustainability

The Selection Committee also sought to:

1. Identify projects which focused on service delivery to the clients that the Department is mandated to serve in each of the priority areas (Homelessness Programs, Family and Children's Services and Employment Supports).
2. Avoid project and service duplication.
3. Ensure services would be directed to low income residents throughout York Region.

4. Recommend projects that also address issues faced by residents because of the current economic conditions.

The 33 projects outlined in *Attachment 1 (Private)* totaling \$2,870,180 are recommended for 2010 funding. All projects will be delivered between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010.

It is important that the recommended projects are considered by Council, at this time, so that agencies know what the outcome of their proposal is and can plan accordingly. If these projects are not approved at this time, agencies may be forced to discontinue programs and lay-off staff, with resulting disruption of services.

As required by the CDIF Strategy, a report to Regional Council outlining the outcomes of the 2010 projects will be submitted to Regional Council in the Spring of 2011.

The Commissioner of Community and Health Services to be authorized to approve CDIF projects for the 2011 funding cycle

Over the six years of implementation of the CDIF Purchase of Service process, the practice has become part of the regular business of the Community and Health Services Department. This process is well respected by the community as it has come to recognize not only the integrity of the process itself, but the value and positive impact on vulnerable York Region residents.

Community-based agencies rely on CDIF to provide them with the funding necessary for the staffing and other resources needed to implement programs and services in the community. As such, agencies are not able to plan for the coming year until they have received the results of their CDIF application. If these projects are not approved at this time, agencies may be forced to discontinue programs and lay-off staff. In the past, the timing for this decision has been delayed until December in a municipal election year such as 2010. This places pressure on agencies who must wait until the very end of the year to learn if their project will continue in the new year. It is therefore recommended that for the 2011 CDIF funding cycle the Commissioner of Community and Health Services be authorized to approve funding for community service projects under the CDIF Strategy and execute purchase of service contracts with successful agencies, subject to review by Legal Services. This will enable agencies to plan proactively for program delivery in 2011 without a potential break in service or unnecessary staff lay-offs .

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All CDIF funding is managed within the Department's base budget

The total funding amount of \$2,870,180 for projects recommended in this report to receive one-year funding through this community process in 2010 is managed within the annual approved budget allocations for CDIF within the Community and Health Services Department's base budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Investments made through CDIF result in tangible benefits in each local municipality. In 2008, approximately 50,000 York Region residents from all municipalities directly benefited from these services. This is a direct result of the increased investment in CDIF made by Regional Council in 2008. More projects received funding and more of the Region's most vulnerable residents were provided with needed community social services to support families and children, prevent homelessness and provide important employment supports. This will continue in 2010 as services will be directed to residents in all nine local municipalities.

7. CONCLUSION

The CDIF Strategy continues to make a positive difference in the community services available to low income and vulnerable residents across the region and has established the framework for an equitable and transparent process to distribute and manage funds in the community.

The services purchased by the Region under CDIF help residents find and keep work and provide families with options that allow parents to stay in the workforce and reduce child poverty. Other services actively prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless or help those who are homeless to re-establish themselves.

The CDIF Strategy also successfully builds on existing community supports by fostering community development and partnerships in every municipality. In addition, the extensive use of community volunteers increases the return on the funding invested while at the same time helping to build a stronger volunteer sector.

The flexibility of the Strategy allows the Region to quickly respond to changing social and economic conditions by also providing social service supports for residents who have been adversely affected by the current challenging economic conditions.

For more information on this report, please contact Cordelia Abankwa-Harris, Managing Director, Strategic Service Integration and Policy at Extension 2150.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is enclosed separately).