

10

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STRONG COMMUNITIES COALITION: A COALITION OF HUMAN SERVICES IN DURHAM, HALTON, PEEL AND YORK

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, May 3, 2006, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Staff of the Planning and Development Services department report back to Council on the government relations activities of the Strong Communities Coalition as well as implications for the Region.
2. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to area municipalities, the Human Services Planning Coalition (HSPC) and the United Way of York Region.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Strong Communities Coalition (SCC), including its background information, key findings of PricewaterhouseCoopers' audit report, the SCC's key messages and communication strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

In the face of rapid and sustained population growth, and given the increasing cultural and socio-economic diversity, meeting the social service and health care needs of GTA/905 residents has been a challenge due to one factor in particular – the fact that provincial funding for social services and health care services has not kept pace with population growth in the region.

The Human Services Planning Coalition (HSPC) of York Region has documented the extent of the per capita funding gap for health and social services in its two reports: "*Fair is Fair: Health Care Investment in York Region*" (2002) and "*Towards a New Model for Social Services Funding in York Region*" (2003). In these two reports, the HSPC has not only identified the specific per capita funding gap in health and social services, but also proposed the Rozanski Approach as a solution to the under-funding issues. The HSPC recommends that the Province adopt the principles of adequacy, affordability, equity, stability, flexibility and accountability as the cornerstone of a new fiscal allocation system that recognizes the impact of population growth and demographic change.

Similarly, the Peel Fair Share Task Force has been seeking to achieve a more equitable share of funding to build capacity in the region to meet the escalating needs. The “*Portraits of Peel: Facing the Facts*” was launched in May 2005 as an instrument for advocacy on social and funding issues. The release of “*Portraits of Peel*” prompted a proposal by Peel United Way and 905/GTA Healthcare Alliance to form an under-funding coalition between Peel, Halton, York and Durham.

Recognizing a common purpose, a coalition was established on June 20, 2005. It was led by the GTA/905 HealthCare Alliance (a group of 10 hospitals in the 905 area) and the United Way Agencies of York, Peel, Halton, Ajax/Pickering and Oshawa/Clarington. On February 28, 2006, the GTA/905 Coalition was officially named the *Strong Communities Coalition: A Coalition of Human Services in Durham, Halton, Peel and York (SCC)*.

The SCC was created out of the need to speak out about improving local access to health and social services for the three million residents of Durham, Halton, Peel and York and the need for fair population-based funding to address the growing funding gap for these vital services. Its mandate is to advocate for equitable and sustainable funding policies and formulae for health and social services in the GTA/905 communities.

In December 2005, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP was retained by the SCC to conduct an independent expert audit of the per capita funding of key social services for the GTA/905 with respect to the validity of the data sources, assumptions, methodology and conclusions. The audit report was completed and submitted to the SCC on April 20, 2006 for final sign off by the leading United Ways. This report, together with four affiliated supporting documents, is scheduled for release at Queen’s Park in September this year.

Prior to and post the release of the audit report, the SCC will stage a series of government relations activities, including briefings with Regional Chairs, Mayors, Councillors, MPPs and Ministers over the summer, to secure stakeholder support, advocate for the audit report’s recommendations and carry the key messages to the Ontario Government.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Relationship to York Region’s Growth Management Plan

To adequately plan for the continued rapid population and employment growth over the next 25 years, and to conduct a comprehensive review of the Region’s Growth Management systems, York Region is embarking on a comprehensive public information and engagement process to collect feedback on the Region’s Sustainable Development Initiative. The results of this consultation process will help in moving York Region forward to a more sustainable Region, including the incorporation of a sustainable development theme into the ongoing and future Growth Management workplan.

The work of the Strong Communities Coalition will contribute to and fit well with the Region's Growth Management initiative.

In particular, the SCC's recommendations are consistent with those of the HSPC and its communication strategy will help ensure that human services in York Region keep pace with its growth.

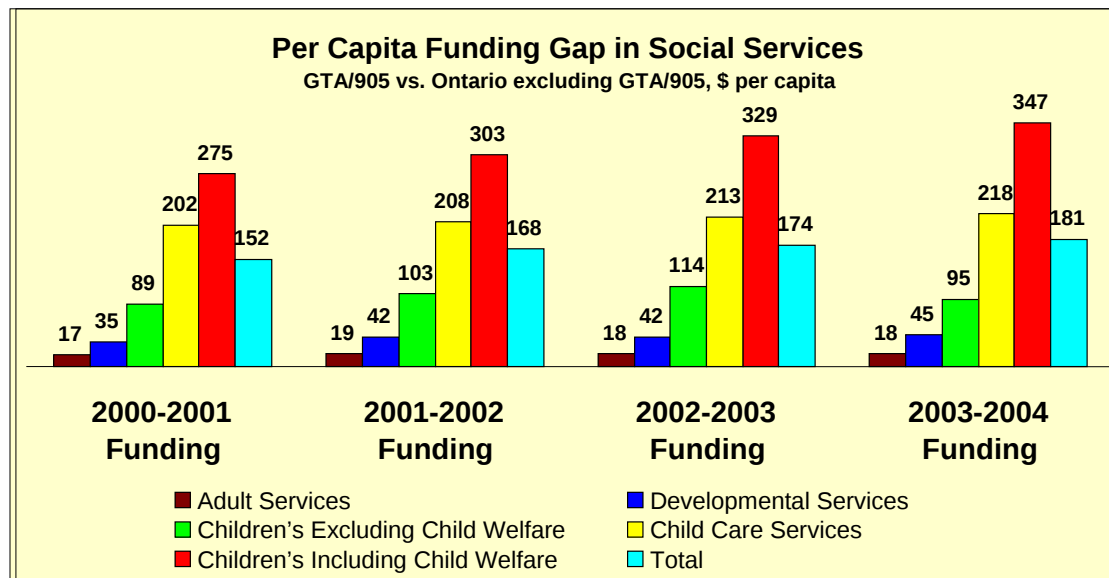
4.2 Key Findings of the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Audit Report

The PwC audit reviewed social services in the areas of adult services, developmental services, child care and children's services, including children welfare and health care services. The reviews were also conducted within the realms of hospital services and services provided by Community Care Access Centres (CCAC), such as home care. Here are the key findings of the audit.

4.2.1 The GTA/905 Lags Other Regions in Per Capita Funding for Social Services

The chart below summarizes the per capita funding gap in social services between the GTA/905 and the provincial average in 2003/04.

Figure 1



The table below shows the total funding gap between the GTA/905 and other Ontario Regions in 2000/01 and 2003/04:

Table 1

Per Capita and Annual Operating Funding Gap,
Social Services, 2000/01 and 2003/04

<i>GTA/905 vs. Other Ontario Regions</i>	<i>Total Funding Gap, \$ million, 2000/01</i>	<i>Total Funding Gap, \$ million, 2003/04</i>
Developmental Services	94.8	138.3
Adult Services	28.0	34.6
Child Care Services	74.6	86.9
Children's Including Child Welfare	213.7	291.7
Total	411.1	551.5

Based on the above chart and table, the following is a detailed analysis of the per capita and total funding gap in key social services between the GTA/905 and other Ontario regions:

ADULT SERVICES:

Since 2001 and as of 2004, the per capita funding gap for GTA/905 residents' Adult Services has increased from \$17 in 2000/01 to \$18 in 2003/04 below the provincial average. It is still less than half of average provincial funding levels. This means that the annual gap in funding for these services has grown from \$28 million below the provincial average in 2000/01 to \$34.6 million below in 2003/04 - an increase of \$5.7 million since 2001.

CHILD CARE SERVICES:

Since 2001 and as of 2004, the per capita funding gap for GTA/905 residents' Child Care Services has increased from \$202 in 2000/01 to \$218 in 2003/04 below the provincial average, still about half of average provincial funding levels. This means that the annual gap in funding for these services has grown from \$74.6 million below the provincial average in 2000/01 to \$86.9 million below in 2003/04 - an increase of \$12.3 million since 2001.

CHILDRENS' SERVICES INCLUDING CHILD WELFARE:

Since 2001 and as of 2004, the per capita funding gap for GTA/905 residents' Children's Services including Child Welfare has increased from \$275 in 2000/01 to \$347 in 2003/04 below the provincial average. This means that the annual gap in funding for these services has grown from \$213.7 million below the provincial average in 2000/01 to \$291.7 million below in 2003/04 - an increase of \$78 million since 2001.

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES:

Since 2001 and as of 2004, the per capita funding gap for GTA/905 residents' Developmental Services has increased from \$35 in 2000/01 to \$45 in 2003/04, far below the provincial average. This means that the annual gap in funding for these services has

grown from \$94.8 million below the provincial average in 2000/01 to \$138.3 million below in 2003/04 - an increase of \$43.5 million since 2001.

4.2.2 There Has Been a Growing Gap in Community Care Access Centres (CCAC) Funding

Table 2

Per Capita and Annual Operating Funding Gap, CCAC Funding
GTA/905 vs. Other Ontario Regions

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Per Capita Funding Gap, \$	24.8	25.9	28.3	31.3
Total Funding Gap, \$ million	63.5	69.4	78.9	90.7

This table shows that since 2003, the per capita funding gap for GTA/905 residents' home care and school programs service through Community Care Access Centres has increased from \$25 in 2002/03 to \$31 in 2005/06 below the provincial average. This means that the annual gap in funding for these services has grown from \$64 million below the provincial average in 2002/03 to \$91 million below in 2005/06 - an increase of \$27 million since 2003.

4.2.3 There Is a Sizeable Gap in Hospital Funding and the Funding Gap Has Been Growing

Table 3

Per Capita and Annual Operating Funding Gap, Hospital Services
GTA/905 LHINs vs. Other LHINs

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Per Capita Funding Gap, \$	156.9	154.0	175.8	187.2
Total Funding Gap, \$ million	584.7	592.1	696.0	762.7

This table demonstrates that since 2003, the per capita funding gap for GTA/905 residents' hospital care has increased from \$157 in 2002/03 to \$187 in 2005/06. This means that the annual gap in funding for GTA/905 hospital services has grown from \$584 million below the provincial average in 2002/03 to \$762 million below in 2005/06 - an increase of \$178 million since 2003.

Based on the analysis in its report, PwC concludes that a sizable gap exists between per capita health and social services annual operating funding in the GTA/905 area compared to the rest of Ontario, and that the annual operating funding gap grew over the 2002/03 - 2005/06 period.

The conclusions of PwC's analysis are presented in the table below:

Table 4

Type of Funding	Most Recent Period for which Data Is Available	Total Annual Operating Funding Gap		Per Capita Annual Operating Funding Gap	
		Amount, \$ millions	Three year Growth, %	Amount, \$	Three year growth, %
Social Services	2003/04	551.5	33.8 (2000/01 to 2003/04)	181	18.8 (2000/01 to 2003/04)
Hospital Services	2005/06	762.7	30.5 (2002/03 to 2005/06)	187	19.3 (2002/03 to 2005/06)
CCAC Services	2005/06	90.7	42.8 (2002/03 to 2005/06)	31	26.2 (2002/03 to 2005/06)

4.2.4 PwC's Conclusions are Consistent with the HSPC's Findings

PwC's audit results reconfirm the HSPC's findings of per capita funding gap between York Region and the Provincial Average as documented in the HSPC's report of *"Towards a New Model for Social Services Funding in York Region"*.

Addressing the under-funding of social services is an important part of the Region's sustainability and growth management plan.

4.3 Key Messages of the Coalition

Based on the PwC audit report, SCC proposed the following key messages to the Province:

- Local and timely access to health and social services is necessary to maintaining strong and vibrant communities in the GTA/905. Being the engine of economic growth in Ontario, improving local access to human services in the GTA/905 is essential for continued economic growth and prosperity in Ontario.
- Provincial human services funding to the GTA/905 has not kept pace with the rapid and sustained population growth in the regions. A new report by PwC makes this clear.
- The lack of resources in high growth regions like the GTA/905 is compromising local and timely access to health and social services. This means that the three million GTA/905 residents must wait longer for services, leave their communities to seek care, and may end up going without.

- To maintain the strength, vibrancy and prosperity of GTA/905 communities and to help make *Places to Grow* succeed, the *Strong Communities Coalition* is asking the Government of Ontario to improve local access to health and social services in the GTA/905 by:
 1. Developing a health and social services strategy for Ontario's high growth region to compliment *Places to Grow*, and that this strategy is developed in consultation with GTA/905 stakeholders, including members of the *Strong Communities Coalition*.
 2. Revising the way the Province allocates provincial funding for health and social services across Ontario so that provincial funding for these services is allocated on the basis of population size, growth and characteristics, that is, *population-based*.
 3. Providing immediate growth funding for health and social services in the GTA/905 and continuing that growth funding until population-based funding is in place.

4.4 The SCC's Communication Strategy

Once the Audit and its affiliated recommendations have been reviewed and approved by the SCC partners, the following approach is recommended for the release of the GTA/905 PwC human services audit:

Securing Stakeholder Support - Pre-Release

Prior to the release of the PwC Report, United Way CEO/Executive Directors, GTA/905 Health Alliance representatives with key UW board members will contact the Regional Chairs, Mayors, etc to let them know about the Audit, plans to release and invite them to participate in the release once the date is determined and finalized.

United Ways and GTA/905 Health Alliance will meet with hospital CEOs and/or senior communications staff in their regions to review messages and roles for the launch.

Briefing Provincial Government - Pre-Release

To ensure that the Province is not caught off guard with the release of the PwC report, messaging will resonate with decision-makers and all parties are aware of the issues, SCC members will offer to brief relevant Ministers, their staff and ministry staff as well as members of the official opposition prior to the release.

Releasing the PwC Report - the Week of September 25, 2006

SCC will host a media conference at Queen's Park with United Ways' spokesperson, GTA/905 Health Coalition spokesperson and PwC spokesperson presenting the information in the week of September 25 when the Legislature resumes. The release will also provide opportunity for GTA/905 political leaders to speak to the needs, i.e. Regional Chairs/Mayors. An invitation will be extended to all MPPs from the collective regions to attend this event.

Regional United Ways will circulate a press release to local media and potentially host a community announcement of the Audit with social services providers, hospital representatives, business leaders and other supporters of the United Way attending.

Advocating for the Report's Recommendations - Post Release

SCC will seek Post-Release briefing meetings with key cabinet ministers in all human services and the finance portfolio. SCC members will arrange a "lobby day" where representatives from all the GTA/905 regions (United Ways and their member agencies, SCC) go to meetings at Queen's Park with as many MPPs as can be arranged.

United Way and its stakeholders will also arrange briefings with local MPPs to present the Audit, ask for their support and advocacy around it.

Building Community Awareness of the Report - Post Release

To ensure understanding by key stakeholders of the report's findings, United Ways will present the Audit findings to their member agencies at regular forums or other community meetings. United Ways will also present the Audit's findings to Regional Council, Municipal Councils, municipal Boards of Trade, ethnic business associations, community groups and other applicable groups.

Leveraging Community Stakeholders to Take the Message to Government

To increase the voice to government about the human services gap in the GTA/905, the SCC will arrange for a group of spokespeople (United Ways and Board members or other supporters as well as Health Coalition and Hospital CEOs) to go to pre-arranged meetings for a 905 Lobby Day.

United Ways will ask their respective Regional Councils and Municipal Councils for an endorsement of the Audit to be sent as a resolution to the Ontario Government. United Ways will also ask the boards of community organizations, Boards of Trade and the like to write letters to the Ontario Government endorsing the Audit's findings

4.5 Relationship to Vision 2026

The release of the PwC audit report will build a strong case for the under-funding of human services and send key messages to the Province requesting population-based funding for health and social services for the GTA/905. It works to secure new funding models to "respond to the needs of our residents".

In the goal of "managed and balanced growth", the Region will be "anticipating and responding to the human service needs of a growing and changing population". SCC's communication strategy will support this goal by taking a proactive role in addressing the rapid population growth and advocating for population-based funding for social services and health care in the GTA/905.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As United Ways take the lead in implementing the communication strategy of this project, the associated costs will be shared by the leading United Ways. This report has no immediate financial impacts for the Region.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Prior to the release, SCC will brief Mayors and Councillors of local area municipalities about the PwC audit report and the upcoming audit release at Queen's Park. In addition, United Ways will present the audit findings to Municipal Councils, Boards of Trade, business associations and community groups to seek their support.

7. CONCLUSION

The PwC audit report has further confirmed the HSPC's findings of historic under-funding for health and social services in York and other 905 areas. SCC's key messages to the Province are in alignment with the funding approach recommended by the HSPC. The implementation of the SCC's communication strategy will ensure all parties are aware of the under funding issues in human services in the GTA/905 and thus influence funding policy as it pertains to human services in the GTA/905 including York Region.

Regional staff will continue to participate in the discussions of the SCC and provide information and data support to this Coalition.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.