

Clause 15 in Report No. 12 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on September 22, 2016.

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Human Services Planning Board of York Region – Creating Progressive Employment Opportunities in a Changing Economy

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated August 15, 2016 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:

1. Council approve the Human Services Planning Board of York Region work plan and actions related to the progressive employment community result under *Making Ends Meet in York Region: A Road Map for 2015 to 2018*.
 2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report, for information, to the local municipalities, Human Services Planning Board of York Region, and Community Partnership Council under the Local Immigration Partnership.
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Report dated August 15, 2016 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services now follows:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council approve the Human Services Planning Board of York Region work plan and actions related to the progressive employment community result under *Making Ends Meet in York Region: A Road Map for 2015 to 2018*.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report, for information, to the local municipalities, Human Services Planning Board of York Region, and Community Partnership Council under the Local Immigration Partnership.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the emerging work plan related to progressive employment and seek approval for the plan. The

report includes steps the Board is taking to create progressive employment opportunities in a changing economy.

3. Background

York Region champions collaborative human service planning

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region (the Board) is comprised of 34 leaders from the private sector, education, hospitals and the police as well as a cross-section of community leaders, government advisors, resource members and individuals from a range of private sector organizations. Its primary purpose is to enhance the effectiveness of human services in York Region through capacity building and collaborative advocacy.

Council appointed the Board to its first term in April 2010 and re-appointed the Board to a second term from March 2015 to November 2018.

The Board is co-chaired by Regional Councillor, John Taylor, Town of Newmarket and Susan LaRosa, Community Leader Member. A complete list of Board members is outlined in Attachment 1.

The Board has updated its action plan for the next three years

In November 2015, Council endorsed the Board's *Making Ends Meet in York Region: A Road Map for 2015 to 2018* which builds on previous work to address economic vulnerability. Board members renewed the Making Ends Meet in York Region Community Model for Change (Table 1), which strategically focuses the Board's efforts.

Table 1
Making Ends Meet Community Model for Change

Making Ends Meet in York Region

Target Population	Low to moderate income residents in York Region who are struggling to make ends meet (households earning \$78,000 or less annually)	
Community Results	Housing options that are affordable for everyone in our community	Progressive employment opportunities in a changing economy
Experience	How do residents experience the community results?	
Indicator Areas	Housing Options and Availability	Underemployment
	Housing Affordability	Precarious Employment
Performance Accountability "Turn the Curve"	Commitment to take individual and collective actions by organizations, agencies, partners, funders, and stakeholders to advance community results	

This report provides an update on the 'progressive employment' community result and highlights actions the Board is taking to advance its vision in this area. Under progressive employment, the Board is focusing on two employment indicators:

- 1. Underemployment:** monitors the number of residents who are working, but not at their full capability (based on their level of education, skills and experience).
- 2. Precarious employment:** measures the number of temporary, casual, short-term, fixed term or self-employed (without employees) often associated with low wages, lack of benefits and greater risk of injury.

The Board recognizes the realities of today's changing job market

After reviewing the current employment landscape, the Board is focusing efforts on progressive employment in a changing economy as a way to address some of the employment related challenges low and moderate income residents may be facing.

'Progressive' implies movement, which suggests progressing into better employment or out of underemployment. The phrase '*in a changing economy*' acknowledges that there are a number of external factors at play around job security and the types of jobs available.

Board research evaluates employment barriers and opportunities

To better understand the employment challenge, the Board, along with employment experts and Regional staff, analyzed published research and available data and talked to service providers and employers to understand the key trends and underlying root causes of underemployment and precarious employment.

Some of the key findings from the research are:

- Non-employment issues can negatively impact an individual's ability to work. For example, lack of affordable child care, transportation, and housing were identified as major barriers to accessing stable employment.
- Extensive work experience requirements for entry level jobs can be a barrier for recent graduates and newcomers to obtaining employment in their respective fields.
- Communication skills and understanding of Canadian workplace culture is valued by employers. Soft skills along with the appropriate technical skills are essential for businesses to thrive.
- Increased globalization and technological change are changing the types of jobs available in our economy and impacting the required skill set and qualifications.
- Specific needs were identified such as, more on-the-job training including soft-skills training, employment service information and system navigation support, conveniently located service locations with flexible hours and workplace cultural training for recent immigrants and young workers.

The Board will continue to monitor emerging research as the work progresses.

4. Analysis and Options

The Board’s research efforts have been an important first step to understand their role in advancing progressive employment opportunities in York Region

The Board is using evidence-based research to inform its priorities and set direction. Based on these findings, the Board is targeting its work within four emerging action areas where it believes it can make a difference.

Board members’ understanding of this issue and desire for action is also rooted in their roles as employers. Large employers like TD Bank, IBM Canada, both York Region School Boards, Southlake Regional Hospital, Markham Stouffville Hospital and York Regional Police, as well as employment sector agencies like the Workforce Planning Board of York Region & Bradford West Gwillimbury, have been engaged and supportive of this work.

As work progresses, additional partners may be added to support these actions.

Board Work Plan 2016-2018: Progressive Employment

1) Exploring new workforce development strategies

The Board intends to build new partnerships and engage with key stakeholders to create awareness of the employment challenges and opportunities facing York Region residents and employers. The Board will explore workforce development strategies that create pathways to quality jobs such as job laddering opportunities, sector-specific training and employment programs that link employers, trainers and employees.

The Board’s direction aligns with the Region’s *Economic Development Action Plan 2016 to 2019* to support workforce development strategies that encourage career progression. For example, the Region and the Board have started discussions with NPower Canada, a York Region and Toronto based company that trains and mentors individuals, including youth, to assist them in getting jobs in the technology sector. This is a component of expanding United Way Toronto & York Region’s Career Navigator™ program in York Region. This initiative focuses on supporting marginalized youth to access employment training opportunities and social supports to obtain credentials and experiences needed for in-demand jobs.

Specific actions in this area include:	Lead and Partners
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Specific actions in this area include:	Lead and Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host an Employment Learning Forum for employers and service providers in fall 2016 to hear from employment experts, learn about leading practices and build understanding of progressive employment opportunities in a changing economy. 	<p>York Region - IBM Canada, United Way Toronto & York Region, Workforce Planning Board of York Region & Bradford West Gwillimbury</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community partners to promote workforce development strategies and create pathways to progressive employment e.g. partner with United Way Toronto & York Region's Career Navigator™ program which is designed to develop meaningful career opportunities for youth facing multiple barriers. 	<p>United Way Toronto & York Region - IBM Canada, York Region, Employer Representatives, NPower Canada</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the creation of Community Benefit Agreements that mandate local job creation and training opportunities through infrastructure development projects. Community Benefit Agreements could contribute to more training and employment opportunities for marginalized populations and youth to help them start new careers. 	<p>United Way Toronto & York Region - York Region, Employer Representatives, Workforce Planning Board, Local Immigration Partnership Council</p>

2) Building and showcasing a business case for employers outlining the benefits of adopting progressive employment practices

The Board will conduct research and gather data on leading employment practices to help develop a business case that encourages employers to adopt practices that improve employee experiences (i.e. increase productivity, improve work-life balance and elevate morale). The Board will engage employers to develop the rationale and tools to encourage progressive employment practices.

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region Employment Learning Forum will provide a first-hand opportunity to learn about leading progressive employment practices which could be embedded into future tools.

Specific actions in this area include:	Lead and Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case and identify tools employers can use to create progressive employment opportunities. 	United Way Toronto & York Region & York Region - Workforce Planning Board, KPMG, Employer Representatives, Local Immigration Partnership Council, local Chambers of Commerce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with employers to enhance community awareness about the benefits of providing progressive employment opportunities and encourage them to adopt tools. 	York Region - Workforce Planning Board, United Way Toronto & York Region, Local Immigration Partnership Council, Employer Representatives

3) Advocating for public policy and programming that support progressive employment

The Board will establish policy positions on federal and provincial employment legislation to improve employment outcomes for residents and employers. A variety of advocacy activities will be developed to engage key government decision-makers.

Specific actions in this area include:	Lead and Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for federal and provincial funding and programming that improves income security, access to benefits and government programs for precarious workers and employers. 	Human Services Planning Board - York Region Members and their networks - United Way Toronto & York Region, Employer Representatives, Government (Provincial and Federal)

4) Enhancing social services systems and supports to help residents pursue progressive employment opportunities

Research has demonstrated that progressive employment opportunities are vital to a community's health and well-being. Those experiencing progressive employment are likely to report improved quality of life, increased savings potential and enhanced ability to plan for family life.

Between 2006 and 2012 the number of York Region's working poor has increased from 31,270 to 42,930 residents (Custom Tabulation, Statistics Canada's 2006 and 2012 Income Tax Data). Research has shown that the working poor face unique challenges such as having less access to employer-funded health benefits compared to middle and higher income workers. In addition, they find it harder to pay for their children's school supplies or school trips. Overall, the working poor may require enhanced supports to help manage the costs of living and to help them advance to better quality jobs.

The Board will explore opportunities to improve employment outcomes for this group.

Specific actions in this area include:	Lead and Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities to enhance Regional programs and services that support progressive employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to child care and after-school programs for families who are precariously employed ▪ A low income transit fare pilot ▪ Flexible and alternative ways to access employment services 	<p>York Region - York Region Transit/VIVA, United Way Toronto & York Region, Employment Ontario agencies, Local Immigration Partnership Council, Government (Provincial and Federal), Local Municipalities</p>

Next Steps

The Board will provide regular progress updates to Council as key milestones are achieved. Table 2 sets out the Board's proposed activities over the next year:

Table 2
Proposed Activities for 2016 - 2017
Moving from ‘Talk to Action’

Activity	Completion Date
Collective Action Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective actions involve all board member organizations working together to advance the <i>Making Ends Meet</i> housing and employment goals. The Board will solidify commitments and build partnerships to move these actions forward. 	September 2016
Employment Learning Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board, in partnership with key stakeholders, will host an Employment Learning Forum for employers and service providers. 	November 2016
HSPB-YR Action Plan 2017 to 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board will provide Regional Council with an update on the progress towards achieving the <i>Making Ends Meet</i> goals. 	January 2017
Mobilize Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek further contributions and support from the broader community to advance the <i>Making Ends Meet</i> Community Results. This will happen through targeted communication such as meetings, community discussions, social and traditional media and through HSPB members and their networks. 	January 2017 – onward

Link to key Council-approved plans

Making Ends Meet is well aligned with the Region’s strategic direction

The Board’s work under the progressive employment community result is consistent with York Region’s strategic direction and priorities as reflected in the following documents:

- Vision 2051 goal to “promote the creation of quality jobs throughout the Region, for every resident of every skill and education level”.
- 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan goal to “support the development and retention of a Region-wide workforce to maintain economic progress in the Region”.
- 2016-2019 Economic Development Action Plan’s objective to “support education/training and employment supports to enhance career progression at all stages of life”.

5. Financial Implications

Funding for the implementation of *Making Ends Meet in York Region: A Road Map for 2015 to 2018* strategy will be aligned with the Community and Health Services annual budget process. No new funding is required.

The Human Services Planning Board of York Region Terms of Reference directs the Board to pursue additional resources (e.g. in-kind support, funding etc.) from a variety of external sources to realize its vision.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Striving to create inclusive, healthy and resilient communities represents common ground for the local municipalities, York Region and the Board. The Board’s work under the progressive employment community result is intended to benefit local municipalities. The Board will continue to engage partners in the community to advance the Making Ends Meet progressive employment goals. A proper balance of labour force skills and the ability to enable local businesses to meet their employment challenges is an essential element for sustained economic vitality.

7. Conclusion

The *Making Ends Meet: A Road Map 2015-2018* renews and refocuses the Board’s original commitment to address economic vulnerability in York Region. Under the progressive employment community result the Board has taken a leadership role in engaging community partners to advance this work. It is the Board’s hope that by continuing to work together it will find new and innovative ways to help York Region residents make ends meet.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, Director Strategies and Partnerships at ext. 72090.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

August 15, 2016

Attachment (1)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

**Human Services Planning Board of York Region
Membership List**

(Term March 26, 2015 - November 30, 2018)

Member Organizations

Regional Government Sector	
Wayne Emmerson	Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), The Regional Municipality of York, Ex-Officio Member
John Taylor	Regional Councillor, Town of Newmarket and Co-Chair, Human Services Planning Board of York Region
Mario Ferri	Regional Councillor, City of Vaughan
Adelina Urbanski	Commissioner of Community and Health Services Department, The Regional Municipality of York
Education Sector	
Patricia Preston	Director of Education, York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB)
J. Philip Parappally	Director of Education, York Region District School Board (YRDSB)
Hospital-based Healthcare Sector	
Leah Martuscelli	Director, Human Resources & Privacy, Southlake Regional Health Centre
Community-based Healthcare Sector	
Rebecca Shields	CEO, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) York Region
Jo-anne Marr	President and CEO, Markham Stouffville Hospital
Non-Profit Community Investment Sector	
Pedro Barata	Vice President, Communications and Public Affairs, United Way of Toronto and York Region

Community Safety Sector	
Chief Eric Jolliffe	York Regional Police
Children, Youth and Family Services Sector	
Michael Braithwaite	Executive Director, 360° Kids
Seniors/Healthy Aging Sector	
Christina Bisanz	CEO, CHATS-Community & Home Assistance to Seniors
Business Community Sector	
Pat Horgan	Vice President, Manufacturing, Development and Operations, IBM Canada
Rachael Wong	District Vice President, Markham, TD Bank
Innovation Sector	
Karen Dubeau	Director of Partner Engagement, ventureLAB
Training/Education Sector	
Tina DiSimone	Dean, Faculty of Applied Arts and Health Sciences, Principal of King Campus, Seneca College
Stan Shapson	University Professor, c/o Faculty of Education, York University
Newcomer/Immigrant Support Services Sector	
Moy Wong-Tam	Executive Director, Centre for Immigrant and Community Services (CICS) and representing the Welcome Centre Immigrant Services and its five lead agencies
Noor Din	CEO, Human Endeavour
Community and Social Support Based Services Sector	
Medhat Mahdy	President and CEO, YMCA Greater Toronto

Community Leader Members

Housing and Community Planning Sector	
Thomas Fischer	Regional Vice President, York Region, Habitat for Humanity
Community Development Sector	
Susan LaRosa	Co-Chair of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region
Bill Hogarth	Former Co-Chair, Human Services Planning Coalition
Charles Beer	Principal, Counsel Public Affairs
Homelessness Sector	
Stephen Gaetz	Professor, York University & Director of the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness/Homeless Hub
Faith-based Organization and Homelessness	
Rehana Sumar	Executive Director, Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold (MIOTC)

Government Advisor and Resource Members

TBD	Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development
Kim Baker	CEO, Central Local Health Integration Network (CLHIN)
Nadia Frantellizzi	Regional Representative, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)
Jim Baird	Commissioner of Development Services, City of Markham
Darryl Gray	Director of Education and Outreach, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
TBD	Ontario Trillium Foundation
Daryl Chong	CEO, Greater Toronto Apartment Association