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**Date** December 9, 2020 **Report No.** 2020-538

**To** Chair and Members  
Human Resources Committee

**From** Aaron Wallace  
Acting General Manager, Community Services and Social Development

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## 1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item [ ]  
Item For Consideration [X]

## 2.0 Topic Youth Intensive Project [Financial Impact: None]

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## 3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Report 2020-538 regarding the expansion of the Provincial Youth Project BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT an increase of one temporary Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Service Coordinator position, funded entirely by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services from January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 BE APPROVED.

## 4.0 Purpose and Overview

This report is to provide information to Human Resources Committee as it relates to the funding of the Provincial Youth Project for a 15 month period. One temporary contract staff is required for the period from January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 to provide intensive case management supports to youth aged 14-29 who identify themselves as a person with a disability.

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## **5.0 Background**

The provincial government launched the Youth Project in 2018. Specially trained Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) Youth Project Caseworkers in Sault Ste. Marie, Sarnia-Lambton and Toronto-Scarborough provide intensive case management support to youth aged 14-29 who identify themselves as a person having a disability.

Based on the encouraging outcomes from these initial sites, effective January 1, 2021 the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) is expanding the Youth Project to three additional sites participating in the Employment Services Transformation (EST) catchment areas. These expanded sites include Brantford, Peel and Peterborough who will partner with MCCSS to collaboratively design and deliver the Youth Project to meet the localized needs of youth with disabilities in Brantford-Brant and help to improve outcomes and quality of life for this demographic.

MCCSS selected the additional EST sites based on their availability and access to a range of community resources, the established partnership of OW and ODSP relationship in that community that is required to work closely together to support youth as well as sites that have demonstrated capacity for managing significant change (i.e. EST, COVID-19 and service delivery innovations).

## **6.0 Corporate Policy Context**

### **6.1 High Quality Of Life & Caring For All Citizens**

Brantford will be recognized as a safe and healthy community – one that promotes and enables the well-being of its citizens, and supports access of all citizens to a full range of health and community services. Examine the feasibility of proceeding with initiatives to enhance accessible community health and wellness.

### **6.2 Excellence in Governance & Municipal Management**

Brantford will be recognized as a fiscally responsible and well-managed city that provides efficient and effective government services.

## **7.0 Input From Other Sources**

Input was received from Human Resources and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS).

## **8.0 Analysis**

### **8.1 Scope and Roles for Municipalities**

As a result of the participation in the project, sites are expected to:

- Recruit Youth Project Caseworkers and support them throughout the duration of the project,
- Implement project parameters (i.e. specialized youth caseload, youth active with community agencies, etc.), and
- Participate in the project evaluation and reporting.

Youth Project Caseworkers will carry a caseload of up to 50 youth in order to invest and engage in building trusting and supportive relationships with youth, their support systems and the community. Project evaluation to date found that this investment is critical for youth to access the supports they need to move towards greater independence.

It is expected that Youth Project Caseworkers will:

- Meet with youth regularly both in office/virtually and in the community to support youth at school, during appointments, etc.,
- Build a wide breadth and in-depth understanding of community supports,
- Proactively share community resources,
- Empower/equip youth with tools and skills to maintain community connections, and
- Make active connections and strengthen partnerships with community resources and employment services.

These specially trained Youth Project Caseworkers use a flexible and personalized approach to work closely with youth and their support systems (parent, teachers, etc.) who work together to set and support the Youth's desired goals to gain skills and education to help prepare for and find work. Youth Project Caseworkers will build close connections with community resources and services (i.e. mental health supports, employment services, etc.) that have proven to be a catalyst for youth and project success.

City of Brantford staff is reaching out to community agencies to explore the possibility of collaborating to target young people at highest risk for poor outcomes through this project.

## 8.2 Outcomes

Nearly 500 youth with disabilities have participated in the project to date and 68% of them reported achieving goals they set. Youth reported improvements in accessing mental health supports, pursuing education, volunteer activities and employment. Additionally, the project has received positive support and recognition, not only from caseworkers and clients, but from community and municipal partners.

Results/Impacts of the Youth Project are reported in Figure 1 below. Youth involved in the Youth Project are:

- Meaningfully engaged in their career development process,
- Connected to the supports and services they need to achieve their goals,
- Empowered and equipped to move towards independence and self-reliance, and
- Contributing to their communities through employment and volunteer opportunities.

### Results/Impact:



- Access to mental health supports for youth **increased from 65% to 85%** after 3 months
- Participation in education opportunities **increased from 25% to 41%** after 12 months
- Average earnings **increased from \$46/month to \$168/month** (average) after 12 months



- 86% of youth received at least one referral to community resources (e.g., employment, education, mental health supports)



- 99% of youth established at least one goal and **68% achieved at least one goal**
- Youth and caseworker survey respondents felt overwhelmingly positive about the project

Figure 1-Results/Impact of Youth Project 2018-2020

## 9.0 Financial Implications

There is no financial impact to the Municipal budget.

Effective January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 through a Service Agreement, Brantford-Brant will receive an allocation of 100% Provincial funding for the salary and benefits for one Temporary Contract Staff.

Funding Period	Amount
January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021	Up to \$100,000.00
January 1, 2022 - March 31, 2022	Up to \$25,000.00 (pro-rated 2021 amount)

Table 1-Youth Project Funding Allocation

## 10.0 Conclusion

Delivering the Youth Project demonstrates the City's commitment to be recognized as a healthy community, improving the quality of life for youth with disabilities and their families. The Youth Project has been positively recognized and supported by participating communities and municipal partners and has resulted in positive outcomes for the youth and communities served. It is therefore recommended that the City accept the invitation and funding to deliver this program commencing January 1, 2021. At the conclusion of the 18 month contract, or in the absence of an additional provincial funding commitment or replacement funding, it is expected that the project would not continue.



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Aaron Wallace  
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Becky Lala  
Manager, Family and Income Stability

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Attachments (if applicable)

Not Applicable

Copy to:

Not Applicable

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required ☐ yes ☒ no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk ☐ yes ☒ no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? ☐ yes ☒ no