

## **Document 2 – Community Funding Framework Review Environmental Scan: Needs and Gaps**

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### **Executive Summary**

In 2006, the Ottawa City Council approved the Community Funding Framework (CFF). The Community Funding Framework guides the investment of \$24M in viable non-profit community-based organizations to sustain a strong social infrastructure of community services that supports equal access to basics. This is achieved by:

- Supporting the inclusion of people who are low income, at risk, isolated or otherwise marginalized;
- Promoting the quality of life for the full diversity of citizens.

The CFF portfolio includes six funding streams (Renewable Community Funding, Emergency Funding, Sustainability Fund (currently inactive), Major Capital Project Funding, Community Bus Transportation Funding and Non-Renewable Project Funding (2018, 2019 only)). There are currently 89 valid renewable funding contribution agreements with 89 agencies. Since 2013, no new agencies have been able to receive Renewable Community Funding from the City of Ottawa.

Community needs, priorities and the funding landscape have been changing; however, the CFF priorities, goals, and funding process have remained the same since 2006. Therefore, in 2018, the City of Ottawa, Community and Social Services, began a review of its Community Funding Framework. The goal of the Community Funding Framework Review (CFFR) is to identify a way to enable the City to sustain a healthy social infrastructure through a funding program that meets existing priority needs and at the same time offers enough flexibility to address emerging needs.

A reference committee of community agencies (both funded and non-funded by the City) was established to provide feedback and guidance for the CFFR. To date, as part of the Phase 1 of the CFFR, the City has undertaken an environmental scan which has included:

- An As Is scan;

- Municipal comparison;
- Background research with demographic analysis; and
- Consultations/engagement with 150 agencies and 185 individuals<sup>1</sup>

Additional information comes from a City administered, 2017 Agency Sustainability Survey with the agencies receiving Community Funding. The survey received a 73% response rate, with 67 out of 92 (at that time) agencies participating. In 2018, the Community Health and Resource Centre Coalition commissioned the Social Planning Council of Ottawa to produce a Community Wellbeing Report (2018)<sup>2</sup>. This included socio-demographic research and an agency survey of community agencies receiving funding from the City's Renewable Community Funding stream. The survey received a 44% response rate, with 39 agencies participating; survey findings are integrated in this report. For a full list of consulted research, please see Appendix B.

This Environmental Scan: Needs and Gaps report summarizes and analyses all these inputs to provide the basis for the next phase in the CFFR. Phase 2 of the project focuses on analysing all research and feedback and developing options for changes to the Community Funding Framework that will be validated with the community, presented to City Council in late 2019, and implemented into 2020.

## **Municipal Scan**

- Most municipalities have a community funding portfolio, a project funding stream and a renewable core funding stream. Ottawa's project funding stream is significantly lower than the average.
- All comparable municipalities have a closed/renewable core funding stream
- Project funding streams in other municipalities are much larger than Ottawa's; many are cost-shared with the province.

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<sup>1</sup> EKOS Research Associates. (2019). Stakeholder Consultation on Community Funding Framework. Consultation and Engagement Summary Report

<sup>2</sup> Social Planning Council of Ottawa (SPCO). (2018). The Ottawa Community Wellbeing Report: Spotlight on the Role and Wellbeing of Ottawa's Community Services. Retrieved from: [https://www.spcottawa.on.ca/sites/all/files/Ottawa\\_Community\\_Wellbeing\\_Report\\_2018\\_Final.pdf](https://www.spcottawa.on.ca/sites/all/files/Ottawa_Community_Wellbeing_Report_2018_Final.pdf).

- Some municipalities have an overarching social well-being/sustainability strategy in place, which includes community funding as a component, with a common purpose of building stronger, more resilient and inclusive communities.
- These municipal strategies have outcomes tied to priorities.
- There is a general acknowledgement that non-profits contribute to increased social inclusion (particularly among priority groups), civic participation, community well-being and engagement with public sector processes.

### **Ottawa Community Needs and Challenges**

- Changing demographic patterns: aging population (seniors), more newcomers, youth, all experiencing more complex needs
- Deepening poverty, particularly intersectional poverty (gender and race-based)
- Growing social isolation, exclusion and discrimination
- Growing unemployment among youth and immigrants
- Increasing food insecurity, particularly among equity seeking groups
- Increased mental health challenges and addictions, creating complex needs among residents (barriers, deepening poverty, unstable employment)
- Rural and suburban challenges including lack of service(s), isolation and connectivity barriers
- Lack of affordable housing and a low vacancy rate in Ottawa
- Equity seeking groups are disproportionately affected

### **Agency Needs and Pressures**

- Increasingly competitive environment for funding. There is less available funding and it is short-term and project-based – distraction from service delivery to seek out more funding
- Growth in number of agencies in the sector, an indicator that overall need is increasing
- Need is growing due to a combination of more clients requesting service and more complex needs

- As a result, agencies have adapted by introducing fees, introducing and/or increasing waitlists, restricting hours and programs
- Non-funded agencies are frustrated that there is no on-ramp to renewable funding
- While volunteerism is increasing, the quality and consistency of volunteer hours are changing
- Staffing challenges - attraction, retention and burnout

### **Considerations for the Community Funding Framework**

- Predictable, renewable funding for core services is highly valued and unique in the funding landscape. It is critical for the sustainability of the sector and should be maintained
- Clarify the CFF vision, mission, mandate and priorities. Shift focus from access to basics to assisting the most vulnerable residents and those facing the most barriers to accessing service
- Clarify funding streams
- Create on-ramp to renewable funding
- Increase transparency and clarity of funding decisions and tie them to demonstrated impact
- Define eligibility and evaluation criteria
- Capital funding could be redistributed
- Institute a review cycle for CFF vision, mission, priorities, and funding decisions
- Assist the sector with building capacity, making connections, collaboration and partnerships, and reducing costs where possible
- Address systemic issues and root causes

Based on these key findings, the final section in this report provides informed considerations for the Community Funding Framework moving forward, organized under three categories, as summarized below.

#### **1. The City's role in supporting social infrastructure**

- 1.1. Maintain the City's commitment to Ottawa's social infrastructure. Increase investment to address growing needs and sector weakening.
- 1.2. Maintain the investment in community-based hubs
- 1.3. Align CFF vision with City, Council, and Community and Social Services Department priorities
- 1.4. Collaborate with other internal and external funders
- 1.5. Foster sector collaboration and capacity building
2. Structural changes to the CFF
  - 2.1. Clarify CFF vision, mission, mandate, and funding priorities. Focus on the most vulnerable residents and prioritize equity seeking groups.
  - 2.2. Considerations to inform revisions include strengthening sector, furthering collaboration, and demonstrating impact.
  - 2.3. Institute a review cycle of CFF vision, mission, mandate and priorities
  - 2.4. Develop evaluation framework with clear criteria for funding decisions and measures of progress
  - 2.5. Conduct an analysis of agencies currently funded on alignment with revised CFF
  - 2.6. Establish long-term goal of the CFF to address systemic issues and root causes of poverty, food insecurity social isolation, and homelessness.
3. CFF funding streams
  - 3.1. Clearly define funding streams
  - 3.2. Continue to prioritize and offer renewable core and program funding
  - 3.3. Offer an equitable opportunity for agencies to be considered for renewable funding
  - 3.4. Maintain a project funding stream

See the Conclusion: Opportunities and Considerations for the CFF section of this report for more details on each of these considerations.

## **Funding Landscape**

### **Overview of Community Funding in the City of Ottawa**

Community Funding within the City of Ottawa is integral to maintain a healthy social infrastructure – that is, as a city, providing the necessary social supports (facilities and services) to help residents meet their needs, maximize their potential for development and enhance community connectiveness and cohesion.

The City recognizes that investment in non-profit and voluntary sector organizations makes an important contribution to a strong social infrastructure by:

- Addressing the needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable residents;
- Promoting civic engagement and building bridges among communities and cultures;
- Providing employment opportunities and attracting financial investment and talent;
- Improving community wellbeing and cohesion; and
- Generating social and volunteer capital.

In 2001 post-amalgamation, 97% of existing community funding contracts were grandfathered from previous municipalities into the Community Funding program. The grandfathered contracts stated whether an agency received core or program funding. These define today if an agency can receive core funding, which is renewable.

Core funding is intended for core operational costs, which are defined as direct costs to run programs including staffing, volunteer coordination, staff training, outreach, community development, marketing and promotions, evaluation, planning and ongoing development, transportation costs related to programs, and expenses such as electricity, heat, gas, insurance, rent and supplies. Core funding provides the foundation on which other agency programs, services and operations can be effectively delivered.

Program funding is intended for the operational costs of a specific program. This funding cannot be transferred from one program to another or used as core funding for the agency as a whole.

City Council approved the Community Funding Framework on February 8, 2006 (Ref No. ACS2006-CPS-CSF-0001), which governs all mechanisms for community funding, including the allocations, processes, priorities and streams.

From 2006 – 2013, the City of Ottawa administered an annual \$500K, one-time project funding program that included a three-year funding option, which provided an on-ramp to Renewable Funding for new agencies who could demonstrate a track record. This

program was cancelled in 2013. Since then, no new agencies have been able to receive Renewable Community Funding from the City of Ottawa.

Prior to 2012, the Community Funding portfolio also included a Sustainability Fund to assist agencies to address sustainability pressures. This funding was originally \$300K, increased to \$500K in 2007 and ran annually until 2011. In 2017 and 2018 Council approved \$500K and \$325K respectively, for addressing agency sustainability pressures.

The City invests \$24M in funding through the Community Funding portfolio, which includes six streams: Renewable Community Funding, Emergency Funding, Sustainability Fund (inactive), Major Capital Project Funding, Community Bus Transportation Funding and Non-Renewable Project Funding (2018, 2019 only). There are currently 89 valid renewable funding contribution agreements with 89 agencies. The renewable funding agreements consist of a combination of core and program funding.

Over the past several years, the Community and Protective Services Committee and Council heard directly from agencies that have not been receiving Renewable Community Funding from the City. As a result, as part of the 2018 Budget, Council approved the creation of \$100K one-time, non-renewable, one-year project funding, for eligible agencies not receiving Renewable Community Funding. In addition, there was a commitment from staff to review the current Community Funding Framework and bring forward any recommended changes to Council in 2019. The \$100K project funding stream was once again approved as part of the 2019 budget process.

While the City's Community Funding priorities, goals and process have remained the same since 2006, community needs, priorities and the non-profit funding landscape have changed. The lack of a project funding mechanism (since 2012) has also left the City unable to respond to emerging social needs in a timely fashion. In addition, over the past several years, program outcomes for funded agencies have been tied to a three-year reporting cycle. This has resulted in the inability to effectively measure outcomes or speak to impacts in a consistent and timely manner.

Community Funding is one of several municipal funding programs, which include Cultural Funding, Economic Development Funding, Rural Funding, Development, Planning and Building Funding, Recreation Funding, and Environmental Funding.

## **The Funding Environment**

The funding environment has become limited, more competitive and restricted to short term projects and programs. This includes not only local funders, but also provincial ones (ex: Trillium). Other local funders provide funding to non-profit/voluntary sector organizations (e.g. United Way Ottawa and Ottawa Community Foundation with an emphasis on short term funding that delivers on specific organizational priorities aligned to respond to community needs.

The United Way has recently changed how it delivers funding to focus on three priority areas (Youth, Poverty, and Healthy People, Strong Communities) and in 2017 invested \$5.3M in these programs. In 2017, 64% of local agencies surveyed by the City reported a reduction in United Way funding (21% of agencies reported a significant reduction), with no agencies reporting an increase<sup>3</sup>.

The importance and distinctive nature of the City's Community Funding has been highlighted by both funded and non-funded agencies as a unique and highly valuable source of funding. While funding has become more limited, the increased demand for services from agencies has put pressure on agency budgets. During the CFFR consultations held in the Fall of 2018, many agencies spoke of the fact that funders other than the City offer only short-term and one-time funding, making the City unique in the provision of renewable, long-term funding<sup>4</sup>.

Agencies cited that they were adapting to this environment by implementing a reduction in services (including reduced follow up with clients), introducing caps and/or restricting intake and programming hours, as well introducing and/or lengthening existing wait lists and introducing fees<sup>5</sup>.

## **Municipal Scan**

A scan of four similarly sized municipalities/regional governments (Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and the Region of Peel), conducted as part of the background research for the CFFR, has shown some similarities and some differences with the City of Ottawa.

Ottawa, Toronto and the Region of Peel have a similar median age of about 40 years<sup>6</sup>. Calgary and Edmonton have a slightly younger median age at about 37 years, partially

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<sup>3</sup> SPCO, 2018

<sup>4</sup> EKOS, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada. (2017). Census Profile, 2016 Census. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>



due to the influx of young adults seeking employment in the oil sector. Of the five, Ottawa has the lowest proportion of immigrants (19.7%), which is less than half of Peel (50.5%) and Toronto (46.1%) and somewhat less than Calgary (29.4%) and Edmonton (23.8%)<sup>7</sup>. Ottawa has one of the highest urban Indigenous populations (2.5%), second only to Calgary (2.7%)<sup>8</sup>.

Similarities and differences among the community funding frameworks include:

- Community funding is 100% funded by the municipalities in Ontario, whereas in Alberta it is up to 80% funded by the province and up to 25% by the municipality;
- The funding priorities varied, but most municipalities focus on vulnerable populations and decreasing risk factors;
- All municipalities except the Region of Peel offer renewable core funding;
- All municipalities offer a project funding stream that is focused on capacity building and emergency support. The size of the project funding stream varies considerably, from \$100K in Ottawa to \$6.8M in Peel and \$3.5M in Toronto.

Ottawa's investment in Community Funding is like that of Toronto (\$20M plus additional funding approved by Council). Peel Region had the lowest total investment of the five municipalities surveyed, at \$6.8M.

In the Province of Alberta under the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program, the province covers 80% of the total funding for the municipality's community funding program. The provincial government recognizes that municipalities are best positioned to assess community needs and set priorities and to support individuals, families and communities through preventative social programs and services. Calgary and Edmonton both receive this provincial funding. Because of this provincial support, Calgary (\$40.4M) and Edmonton (\$27.3M) have the highest investment in Community Funding of the municipalities surveyed.

Funding priorities varied among the five municipalities surveyed, but most focus on vulnerable populations and decreasing risk factors. Peel specifically prioritizes building

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<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada. (2016). "Geographic distribution of immigrants and recent immigrants and their proportion within the population of census metropolitan areas." Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/t001b-eng.htm>; Peel Data Centre. (2017). "2016 Census Bulletin." Retrieved from: <https://www.peelregion.ca/planning-maps/CensusBulletins/2016-immigration-ethnic-diversity.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada. (2017). "Aboriginal peoples in Canada: Key results from the 2016 Census." Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.htm>

the non-profit sector and strengthening agencies to improve service delivery. Several municipalities tie their outcomes to other city strategies (ex: Strong Neighbourhoods and Youth Equity Strategies in Toronto), while some negotiate with agencies to determine what the outcomes should be. Edmonton has created 16 shared outcomes with the United Way of Edmonton and the greater Region of Edmonton.

Four out of five municipalities have renewable core funding that represents most of their overall funding envelope; Peel has no ongoing core funding. Toronto funds twice as many agencies (198) as Ottawa (89) with a smaller investment (\$16M in renewable core funding versus Ottawa's \$23.3M); however, Toronto also has multiple other streams that can be considered "community funding," such as a Community Service Partnership fund (\$16.5M) and Community Investment Grants (\$3.5M). Toronto and Ottawa have offered Council-approved cost of living adjustments (COLA), while Calgary and Edmonton rely on the province for this. Calgary has the highest investment in renewable core funding (\$38.9M) and funds the same number of agencies as the City of Ottawa (89). All renewable funding streams (Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Ottawa) are currently closed and not taking new applicants.

The biggest difference between Ottawa and the other municipalities is that the other municipalities have much larger and ongoing project funding streams, with an average investment of \$3,160,000 compared to Ottawa's \$100,000 (2017 and 2018). The highest project funding stream is in the Region of Peel at \$6.8M in 2018.

Capacity building and collaboration are all common priorities among the municipalities with a project funding stream, and notably are also among the top priorities for investment identified by agencies consulted by the City of Ottawa<sup>9</sup>. Agency survey responses reflect that while project/short-term funding is not ideal in meeting complex community needs, it does have a place in planning for emergencies or emergent needs.

## **Social Sustainability Frameworks**

Social infrastructure refers to facilities and services that help individuals, families, groups, and communities meet their social needs, maximize their potential for development, and enhance community well-being. Furthermore, social infrastructure includes features of social organization, such as trust, norms, culture, and networks that can improve the efficiency of a society through coordinated actions.

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<sup>9</sup> EKOS, 2019.

A sustainable non-profit sector contributes to strong social infrastructure. Non-profits contribute to a large, diversified, resilient economy and provide considerable social benefits. They create economic opportunities, leverage human capital and public investment into much greater economic activity, and provide recession- and export-proof jobs. Additionally, they increase social inclusion (particularly among equity seeking groups<sup>10</sup>, civic participation, community well-being, and engagement with public sector processes <sup>11</sup>.

Advancing social infrastructure enables:

- innovations that can build and create the future rather than react to it and bring in new resilient systems (assets) to “enable, scale and accelerate social progress”;
- creation of local networks that work in a transdisciplinary manner;
- collaboration among professionals, industries, and sectors;
- innovative physical infrastructure.

Success can be measured by the society’s progress on Sustainable Development Goals and can contribute to outcomes tracked by tools like the Canadian Index of Wellbeing<sup>12</sup>.

A municipal scan of 12 Canadian cities and three international cities revealed four main rationales for developing an overarching social well-being strategy or framework, to<sup>13</sup>:

- Guide and inform the resource allocation of the city and its key partners and stakeholders;
- Prepare for a constantly changing social environment;
- Make measurable, gradual progress over time; and

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<sup>10</sup> Equity seeking groups are groups whose members face systemic barriers to full access and participation in society. The City of Ottawa identifies several such groups, including immigrants, women, racialized people, Aboriginal, youth and older adults. See Diversity Snapshots of the City of Ottawa’s Equity and Inclusion Lens at: <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/get-know-your-city/statistics-and-economic-profile>.

<sup>11</sup> Social Planning Toronto. (2017). Modernizing the Relationship Between the City and the Nonprofit Sector. Retrieved from: <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-108814.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Strandberg, C. 2017. Maximizing the Capacities of Advanced Education Institutions to Build Social Infrastructure for Canadian Communities. Retrieved from: <https://mcconnellfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Maximizing-Capacities-of-Advanced-Education-Institutions-to-Build-Social-Infrastructure.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> CFFR Background Research report

- Support implementation of city initiatives that have social effects through integrating actions and funding programs.

An examination of other municipal strategies has shown that most align their community funding programs to an overall strategic vision, often integrating overall social service delivery. Common among the visions and missions in the funding frameworks of other municipalities in Ontario are the ideas of investing in inclusive, safe and resilient communities that promote physical and mental health and overall well-being, and a focus on building capacity within the community.

The importance of having a clear vision, common objectives and clearly articulated outcomes was also expressed by agencies in the CFFR consultations <sup>14</sup>The City of Ottawa has a significant role in advancing social infrastructure by sustaining efforts in:

- strengthening community assets to address current and emerging needs;
- building relationships and capacity across sectors;
- generating knowledge through outcome measurement; and
- maintaining accountability to its citizens.

### **Strategic Alignment of Community Funding**

The City of Ottawa establishes Term of Council Strategic Priorities and undertakes research over time to inform decision making in many areas affecting social infrastructure, including economic and urban planning.

As part of the development of the new Term of Council priorities and City Strategic Plan (2019-2022), the City is reflecting on the reality that Ottawa will reach a population of 1M this year. The City is at a milestone moment for examining how liveable Ottawa should be and planning for future growth.

The City of Ottawa Official Plan and OttawaNEXT: Beyond 2036 study (2018) have put forward a vision for the City of Ottawa of becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America over the next century. Liveability can be described as the many elements that create quality of life and community well-being in a given place and allow residents to meet their needs. Liveability supports physical and emotional health by creating

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<sup>14</sup> EKOS, 2019

environments where people can thrive in a supportive, equitable and enriching social environment.

To achieve the planning considerations outlined in the OttawaNEXT document, the City must continue to invest in a strong social infrastructure. Sustaining a strong community non-profit sector enhances the city's progress towards the goal of becoming the most liveable mid-sized city in North America<sup>15</sup>.

Sustaining community funding empowers community non-profit agencies to contribute to achieving the desired scenario for Ottawa of lower inequality and high community cohesion<sup>16</sup>, by:

- strengthening the response to changing demographics in the City;
- assisting in the attraction, integration and retention of skilled immigrants and other newcomers, including in the City's rural areas;
- removing barriers and promoting equal access to services;
- tailoring services to equity seeking groups (youth, seniors, Indigenous people, newcomers, women, rural, LGBTQ2S+);
- strengthening opportunities for aging-in-place;
- retaining, attracting and creating opportunities for smart and enterprising young people;
- monitoring health outcomes;
- creating employment opportunities; and
- providing vulnerable and marginalized residents with better integration into neighbourhoods and a higher quality of life.

As the population of the City grows and demographics change, the service needs and expectations of residents will also increase and become more complex. Prioritizing efforts to build sustainable services, promoting safety, culture, social and physical well being for all residents are all important to respond to current and future needs.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> City of Ottawa. (2019). OttawaNEXT: Beyond 2036 Draft Final Report. Retrieved from: [https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/ottawa\\_next\\_en.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/ottawa_next_en.pdf).

Community Funding is an essential piece of building thriving communities in Ottawa through its contribution to the social well being of the City's most vulnerable residents.

The City of Ottawa's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan commits to ensuring every resident has a place to call home by collaborating with community partners and responding to each individual household's needs and circumstances. Community Funding is acknowledged as integral to ensuring that people can access or maintain housing. Community Funding works in support of the goals of the HHP, by investing in programs that ensure people get the help they need (ex: mental health supports, access to nutritious food, poverty reduction and reduced isolation) when they need it, to find and retain housing<sup>17</sup>.

Community Funding has also been aligned to the City's Equity and Inclusion Lens, a tool that supports consistency and coherence in the City's efforts to move equity and inclusion forward in City services, to the benefit of the city. Community funding decisions are inclusive of the needs of equity seeking groups.

### **Picture of Needs and Gaps**

The information in this section comes from the various consultations with the non-profit sector, and from background research that was completed to inform the Environmental Scan. This research included such sources as (complete list is available in Appendix B):

- community consultation reports;
- Community Well-Being Report (2018);
- 2016 Census data from Statistics Canada;
- internal City documents, reports and plans; and
- Conference Board of Canada papers.
- academic and white papers

### **Agency Needs and Pressures**

During the Fall of 2018, community agencies were consulted on the efficacy of the current CFF mandate, the value of the City's renewable approach to funding, the

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<sup>17</sup> City of Ottawa. (2018). City of Ottawa 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan Progress Report 2014-2017. Retrieved from: <https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/Ottawa-Housing-Homelessness-Report-ENG.pdf>

challenges facing the sector as whole (including emerging social needs and existing gaps in programs and services), and considerations for action to help sustain a healthy social infrastructure serving Ottawa's most vulnerable residents<sup>18</sup>.

Through focus groups and a community agency survey, community agencies reported that they are facing mounting financial pressures (including lack of core funding and funding instability), an increased demand for services and new, more complex emerging needs, a need for additional support to sustain core operations, and challenges with employee turnover and retention. In addition, there has been an overall increase in the number of agencies providing similar services, reflecting the growing need in the community.

Ottawa's non-profits are innovating to address these increasing pressures. More than half of the respondents identified the key strategies such as: building program partnerships (83%), developing new program models (77%), coalition building and participation (60%), staff changes (such as replacing staff with volunteers; 57%), and increasing use of volunteers (53%)<sup>19</sup>.

The CFFR consultation process highlighted the following actions needed to address these pressures:

- Maintain the City's focus on core renewable funding;
- Clarify and strengthen the Community Funding mandate to focus on the most vulnerable and those with the most complex needs and/or facing multiple barriers to service;
- Clarify eligibility criteria, and focus on the provision of value-added services to the most vulnerable;
- Place greater emphasis on addressing root causes and system-level issues;
- Increase coordination and collaboration within the sector;
- Establish mechanisms to work cooperatively with other City funders, other levels of government and other funding agencies; and

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<sup>18</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the information in the Agency Needs and Pressures section is drawn from EKOS, 2019

<sup>19</sup> SPCO, 2018

- Formalize the City's role in providing other types of sector supports beyond funding, such as capacity building, information sharing and championing investment to support the most vulnerable residents of the City of Ottawa.

### **Increase in overall costs and demand for service**

Agencies who contributed to the Community Wellbeing Report Agency Survey (2018) reported that the top organizational challenge that they were facing was the increasing demand for service without corresponding additional resources. Compounding this, costs to operate the agencies have increased in the past decade.

The increases in both demand for service and costs were also mentioned as the top challenge facing the sector in the CFFR consultations. Over 84% of agencies (both funded and not funded through Renewable Community Funding) cited that demand for service was increasing across the sector.

According to agencies, factors behind the increased demand for services included:

- increasing population and more clients requiring service;
- clients with more complex and deeper needs; and
- clients requiring different/new kinds of services.

This is supported by the Community Wellbeing Report Agency Survey (2018) with agencies receiving Community Funding. Agencies identified key intersectional issues that create complex and increased demand for services, including:

- growing pressures from the erosion of incomes, including precarious employment, which are dramatically increasing the demand for support of basic needs (food, shelter, utilities, school supplies, and services for children); and
- poverty as a contributing factor to increased violence and substance abuse.

An increase in the costs of running the organization was cited as the most important challenge agencies were facing. A total of 90% of agencies surveyed in 2018 cited that they had unmet budget pressures<sup>20</sup>. Factors contributing to the increase in agency costs were identified as:

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid



- increased infrastructure costs: rent increases, telecommunications costs (phone, internet, wireless), heat, hydro and insurance;
- increase in the cost of food;
- reduction and change in volunteers; and
- funding instability and lack of funding predictability; having to seek new funding sources.

In the CFFR consultations, agencies described their resulting inability to keep up with demand. The fiscal gap has led to negative impacts, among them reductions in service(s), reduction in the quality of service(s), turning clients away or maintaining waitlists<sup>21</sup>. The introduction of these measures suggests diminishing capacity to meet need, which will likely continue to grow, resulting in further increases in unmet need in the city.

Agencies have tried to innovate to close this gap by building partnerships/coalitions, developing new program models, increasing the use of volunteers and diversifying their funding base<sup>22</sup>. Additionally, agencies have had to respond to the lack of predictable long-term funding by spending more time and resources to seek and solicit new funding, which brings little to no sustained benefit and diverts resources from service delivery.

Although the City of Ottawa has regularly provided an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) to agencies receiving renewable funding, agencies report that it still falls short of addressing the increased financial pressures and client demands.

The agency consultations strongly highlighted the critical nature of Renewable Community Funding in supporting the core services needed to address the needs of the most vulnerable Ottawa residents. Also highlighted was the lack of other sources available for renewable core funding and the importance of the City's role in bolstering the sector's capacity through this funding. Focused, project-specific one-time funding is seen as less useful in supporting sector sustainability, and as having the potential to distract agencies from their core mandate. One-time funding that encourages collaboration and capacity building is seen as more constructive.

### **Increasingly complex client needs**

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

Both funded and non-funded agencies emphasised the growth in the number of clients with multiple unmet needs and/or facing multiple barriers to service and/or dual diagnoses (e.g. mental illness and addiction).

Respondents in a 2017 City of Ottawa Agency Sustainability Survey<sup>23</sup> identified eight key emerging needs/trends that were causing additional complexity and pressure:

- Syrian refugees;
- newcomers;
- LGBTQ+ mental health;
- gun and gang violence;
- aging population (from both client and volunteer/donor perspectives);
- expansion of rural areas;
- gentrification; and
- increasing demand from funders to report outcomes (statistics).

Similar findings came from the 2018 CFFR consultations. The top five needs that agencies spoke about most often were:

- mental health issues;
- people facing multiple concurrent barriers (ex: housing, food, unemployment)
- dual diagnoses (e.g. addictions and mental health issues);
- substance use/opioids; and
- war or displacement-based trauma.

Various factors have combined to contribute to these pressures over the past few years, including changes in population demographics and needs, such as<sup>24</sup>:

- The integration of an increased number of recently arrived refugees (Syrian, Yazidis) required responding to complex needs such as low literacy and/or language barriers and/or dealing with trauma from displacement and/or war.

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<sup>23</sup> Internal report shared with survey participants

<sup>24</sup> SPCO, 2018

- An increase in the number of people over the age of 65, combined with increases in housing and overall living costs is contributing to more seniors living in isolation with complex health issues. The senior population in Ottawa is expected to increase to 22% of the total population, by 2031. While most seniors in Ottawa live in urban or suburban areas, in 2011, seniors made up 12.3% of the total population in rural areas of Ottawa. Projections indicate this rural group will grow faster than the general senior population, with an estimated growth rate of 183% between 2011 and 2031.
- 57.2% of residents aged 65 and older and 68.9% of residents aged 75 and older live with a form of disability. The stress for unpaid caregivers of seniors is growing as well.
- Loss of affordable housing through gentrification, with few new affordable units, means that low-income residents can be forced out of their homes by the increased cost of living.
- Higher poverty rates among Indigenous, racialized and immigrant groups compared to the general population, compounded by higher rates of unemployment.
- High youth unemployment, at 18% compared to 7.2% for the general population, with even higher rates among diverse social groups of youth such as immigrant (23.8%) and Indigenous youth (19.9%).

The intersectional nature of this increasing complexity of need can lead to far reaching impacts on community wellbeing. For example, residents living in poverty and facing both short-term and long-term unemployment are more likely to experience symptoms of distress, depression, anxiety, and a reduction in well-being and self-esteem. This results in poor mental and physical health. Furthermore, an individual's mental health interacts with both their employment status and their ability to find and retain housing, as people living with poor mental health face more challenges in keeping their jobs, and while unemployed are less likely to find a new job<sup>25</sup>.

During the CFFR consultations, agencies agreed that the City needs to focus on addressing system-level issues to strengthen the sector and better assist residents facing complex and/or multiple needs.

## **Staffing and volunteers**

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<sup>25</sup> Ottawa Public Health (OPH). (2018a). Promoting Mental Health in Ottawa. At: [https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/reports-research-and-statistics/resources/Documents/mental\\_health\\_summary\\_report\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/reports-research-and-statistics/resources/Documents/mental_health_summary_report_2018_en.pdf)

Challenges with retention of staff and reduced ability to attract quality staff due to limited resources constitute another pressure facing agencies. Associated costs from staff burnout and turnover and hiring and training of new staff continue to exacerbate this situation.

Not having the resources to adequately respond to the increase in need has led to an increase in staff turnover and burnout in agencies. A total of 57% of agencies mentioned this as a challenge<sup>26</sup>, and 22% of agencies surveyed in the CFFR consultations selected this as the most important challenge they were facing. One strategy for dealing with staffing challenges has been to increase the use of volunteers, yet volunteerism is changing and bringing new challenges, too.

In 2017, agencies funded by the Renewable Community Funding Program had over 22K volunteers that worked 945K hours, which equates to 454 full time jobs. The total economic value of these volunteers is over \$25.5M<sup>27</sup>.

Overall, volunteer hours are increasing in the city, according to the 2016 census. However, the scope of volunteerism is also changing, as many residents who volunteer are aging and as a result ending long-held, reliable, and high-quality contributions to agencies. Coupled with this is a shift amongst the younger generations to seek short-term, project-focused volunteer experiences. For instance, many youths are just completing the provincially required 40 hours of community service and do not pursue consistent, long-term volunteer commitments like previous generations did.

The decline in the long-term commitment of volunteers has had a negative impact on the capacity of agencies to complete administrative tasks and on overall service delivery. This is intensified by the need to address gaps in funding by conducting additional fundraising activities and/or completing grant proposals to maintain existing service levels.

In the CFFR consultations, agencies also spoke of the increase in corporate volunteerism, which is contributing to the rise in short-term volunteering. There is a demand from companies to come to agencies to complete one-time projects, often in one day (e.g. painting a wall in a youth centre), but not to provide a long-term commitment. While agencies are grateful for these corporate donors, some agencies

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<sup>26</sup> SPCO, 2018

<sup>27</sup> City of Ottawa. (2017). 2017 Community Funding Framework Statistics. Over 22,000 volunteers contributed 945,000 hours. Assuming \$27/hourly, the total value is \$25.5M

also spoke of the effort required to manage these brief volunteer initiatives, when a monetary contribution would have been better suited to agency needs.

### **Need for capacity building and collaboration opportunities**

The term ‘capacity building’ refers to the process by which investments are made (monetary or resource-based) and/or knowledge is shared to develop and strengthen the overall effectiveness and sustainability of an organization, framework or system. In the context of Community Funding, this refers to the capacity of community services to adequately respond to critical issues of wellbeing in the community.

The 2018 Community Wellbeing Report Agency Survey highlights significant concerns about the capacity of community service agencies to adequately respond to critical issues of wellbeing in the community, given chronic under-funding and burdensome, short-term funding frameworks. Many organizations are at a crisis point, particularly those called upon to address the increasing difficulty for thousands of residents to meet basic needs.

In the consultations, non-profit agencies identified the primary challenge for the next 10 years as the lack of increase in funding, combined with sharply rising needs and complexity of needs. Organizations describe their inability to keep up with demand and the need to reduce the services they offer. Without adequate capacity, agencies are not able to meet the growing and complex need for service; nearly all programs targeted to supporting the most complex needs have waiting lists.

Community non-profit agencies are therefore asking for an increase in sustained funding to realistic levels that would enable them to fulfill their central role as the foundation for wellbeing in Ottawa, benefiting both the individuals they serve and the community at large.

Capacity building with agencies could partially relieve some of the burden of this reality. Agencies are willing to innovate and identify where they can build capacity to respond to the community needs; however, many also feel that they have already reached that capacity threshold. In order to sustain current service levels, non-profit agencies have already implemented a number of strategies, including:

- building program partnerships;
- developing new program models;

- coalition building and participation;
- staffing changes (such as shifting to volunteers);
- increasing use of volunteers; and
- diversifying the funding base<sup>28</sup>.

Additionally, building capacity and strengthening core social infrastructure would enhance agencies' ability to respond more effectively to emergency/crisis situations, such as the tornadoes that moved through eastern Ontario and western Quebec in 2018<sup>29</sup>. Community non-profit agencies play an important role in the city's overall capacity to respond to emergencies and must be adequately supported to be able to fulfill this role.

Agencies have highlighted the importance of the City's role in supporting capacity building and are looking for the City to lead and support agencies to identify new ways of addressing sustainability pressures.

## **Community Needs/Issues**

Poverty, mental health and drug addictions, food insecurity, social exclusion and isolation, and affordable housing have emerged during the CFFR as current, pressing community issues.

### **Poverty**

The City of Ottawa's Equity and Inclusion Lens Snapshot about People Living in Poverty (2017) defines poverty as "more than not being able to afford necessities such as food, shelter and clothing...[it] is deprivation of the resources, choices, and power necessary for civic, cultural, economic, political and social participation in society. Living in poverty also creates barriers to opportunities for meaningful employment, a sense of belonging, and a sense of citizenship"<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> EKOS, 2019; SPCO, 2018

<sup>29</sup> Chianello, J. (2018). "City suffered communication breakdown after tornadoes struck." CBC News. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/city-suffered-communication-breakdown-tornadoes-struck-1.4839382>.

<sup>30</sup> City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) and City of Ottawa. (2017). Equity and Inclusion Lens Snapshot: People Living in Poverty., p. 5. Retrieved from: [https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/poverty\\_ss\\_en.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/poverty_ss_en.pdf).

One in five of Ottawa households had annual incomes higher than \$150K in 2015. At the same time, the income of the richest 10% of Ottawa residents was 8.5 times higher than that of the poorest 10%<sup>31</sup>. This reflects the steady growth of income inequality in Ontario overall, along with concerns that “a persistently unbalanced sharing of the growth dividend will result in social resentment, fuelling populist and protectionist sentiments and leading to political instability”<sup>32</sup>.

Despite living in a city with the fifth highest median family income in the country (\$96,135)<sup>33</sup>, many Ottawa residents are unable to meet their basic needs, with certain segments of the population faring worse than others.

The pace at which residents enter poverty and the depth of the poverty experienced are both increasing across the board, particularly among equity seeking groups. The poverty rate overall has continued to worsen over the past ten years. In 2015, there were 115,175 people in Ottawa, or 12.6% of all residents, living below the low-income threshold (low-income measure after-tax). More than 30% of people in Ottawa’s high-risk neighbourhoods live in poverty<sup>34</sup>.

Poverty makes it difficult to provide home environments for children and youth that are conducive to thriving, due to overcrowding, lack of access to nutritious food and unhealthy conditions<sup>35</sup>. Key challenges for non-profit community agencies providing early childhood education and care services include an increase in the percent and number of children who are low income in Ottawa (from 16.8% in 2005 to 17.1% in 2015), which leads to increased demand for services, as well as the deepening of poverty among families in low income neighbourhoods, which makes it harder for these families to meet the basic needs of their children<sup>36</sup>.

The number of seniors living in poverty is also increasing. The number of low-income seniors aged 65 and older nearly doubled in Ottawa between 2005 and 2015, and their

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<sup>31</sup> SPCO, 2018

<sup>32</sup> Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2015). Quoted in Green, D. A., Riddell, W. C., and F. St-Hilaire. (2017). Income Inequality in Canada. Institute for Research on Public Policy. Retrieved from: <http://irpp.org/research-studies/income-inequality-in-canada>

<sup>33</sup> Statistics Canada. (2017). “Household income in Canada: Key results from the 2016 Census.” Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/170913/dq170913a-eng.htm>

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). (2014). Social Determinants of Mental Health. Retrieved from: [https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/publications/gulbenkian\\_paper\\_social\\_determinants\\_of\\_mental\\_health/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/gulbenkian_paper_social_determinants_of_mental_health/en/).

<sup>36</sup> Statistics Canada (2006). 2006 Census. Available at: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/index-eng.cfm>; SPCO, 2018.

proportion of the population increased from 6.9% to 9.4%. In some Ottawa neighbourhoods, up to 30% of seniors live in poverty, making them more vulnerable to poor health outcomes and social isolation<sup>37</sup>. The percentage of Ottawa seniors living with low income, based on the low income measure after tax (LIM-AT) increased from 6.8% in 2005 to 9.4% in 2016<sup>38</sup>.

The 2016 Census data shows that racialized (visible minority), Indigenous peoples and new immigrants continue to face significantly higher rates of poverty compared to the general population, with even deeper impact on women:

- The unemployment rate for Aboriginal workers was 9.7% compared to 7.1% for the general population<sup>39</sup>.
- The unemployment rate for racialized (visible minority) groups was 10.4%, compared to 7.1% for the general population and 6.2% for non-racialized residents<sup>40</sup>.
- The unemployment rate for immigrant women is six times higher than Canadian-born women, and 2.5 times higher than immigrant men.
- One-in-five single mothers and their children live in poverty in Canada. Nearly a quarter of Inuit and Métis women and more than a third of First Nations women living off reserve also live in poverty.
- The picture is also bleak for women who are racialized, with more than one-in-four living in poverty, and women who live with a disability, a third of whom are living in poverty<sup>41</sup>.

Living in poverty is damaging to mental health, leading to more complex needs among clients served by agencies. In a recent report, Ottawa Public Health found that Ottawa households earning a low income were over three times as likely to report fair or poor mental health compared to those in the highest income group (13% compared to 4%)<sup>42</sup>. Unemployment and poor mental health are intrinsically related to each other,

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Statistics Canada. (2017). Census Profile, 2016 Census – Ottawa. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm>.

<sup>39</sup> OPH. (2018b). Status of Mental Health in Ottawa Report 2018. Retrieved from: [https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/reports-research-and-statistics/resources/Documents/mental\\_health\\_report\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/reports-research-and-statistics/resources/Documents/mental_health_report_2018_en.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> SPCO, 2018.

<sup>41</sup> Ropke, K. (2019). Advancing Gender Equity in the City of Ottawa. CAWI. Retrieved from: [http://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/publications/report\\_advancinggenderequity\\_cityofottawa.pdf](http://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/publications/report_advancinggenderequity_cityofottawa.pdf).

<sup>42</sup> OPH, 2018a



each influencing the other and both contributing to cycles of poverty that are difficult to break.

Poverty has a significant cost for governments, as detailed in an analysis of the economic cost of poverty in Ontario. Combined private and public (or social) costs bring the total cost of poverty in Ontario to between 5.5 and 6.6% of Ontario's Gross Domestic Product<sup>43</sup>. Up to \$13.1 billion a year are lost by the federal and the Ontario governments due to poverty, through:

- poverty-induced costs related to health care and crime;
- annual cost of child or intergenerational poverty; and
- opportunity costs or lost productivity.

Agencies consulted as part of the CFFR mentioned that the high levels of poverty and the lack of affordable housing are an ongoing and major challenge going forward<sup>44</sup>

#### *Mental health and drug addictions*

In the CFFR consultations, 70% of all agencies (80% of the largest agencies) identified mental health as a key emerging need in the community, one complicated by the intersection with addictions<sup>45</sup>. Key pressures on the community sector in addressing mental health and addictions include:

- increase in demand for services to support mental health and addictions, including dementia;
- growing complexity of cases and the need for individualized approaches;
- the urgency of the opioid crisis;
- increasing number of people with mental health conditions living in social housing communities; and
- chronic under-funding, particularly for prevention<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> Ontario Association of Food Banks. (2008). The Cost of Poverty: An Analysis of the Economic Cost of Poverty in Ontario. Retrieved from: [https://www.cwp-csp.ca/resources/sites/default/files/resources/Cost\\_of\\_Poverty\\_ON.pdf](https://www.cwp-csp.ca/resources/sites/default/files/resources/Cost_of_Poverty_ON.pdf).

<sup>44</sup> EKOS, 2019; SPCO, 2018

<sup>45</sup> EKOS, 2019

<sup>46</sup> SPCO, 2018

Ottawa Public Health reported a 77% increase in Emergency Department visits related to unintentional drug overdose in Ottawa, as well as a 38% increase in Emergency Department visits due to drug-related mental health conditions from 2009 to 2015. Approximately 8,600 Ottawa residents received treatment for substance misuse during fiscal year 2014 – 2015<sup>47</sup>.

In the 2018 Community Agency survey, mental health and access to mental health services was identified as one of the biggest social issues facing Ottawa. Mental health and addictions supports were identified as the number one unmet service need<sup>48</sup>.

In the CFFR consultation, more than 80% of agencies reported increasing complexity of need due to mental health and multiple barriers such as concurrent needs related to food insecurity, housing and unemployment. Dual diagnoses, as well as substance use and drug addictions account for the next most frequently named sources of increased service complexity. About one-quarter of agencies also described war or displacement trauma<sup>49</sup>.

## **Food insecurity**

The cost to feed a family of four in Ottawa increased by 18.6% between 2009 and 2017, and many Ottawa residents are not able to afford enough nutritious food. One in 15 households experienced moderate to severe food insecurity in 2017<sup>50</sup>.

Among the households at highest risk for food insecurity are:<sup>51</sup>

- Low-income households: 20.2% of households living below the low-income cut off in Ottawa report being moderately to severely food insecure;
- Racialized groups with a poverty rate that is double the overall rate in Canada;
- Newcomer households: 18.8% of households with newcomers in Ottawa report being moderately to severely food insecure;

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<sup>47</sup> OPH. (2016). Problematic Substance Use in Ottawa: Technical Report. Retrieved from: [https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/reports-research-and-statistics/resources/Documents/problematic\\_substance\\_use\\_2016\\_en.pdf](https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/reports-research-and-statistics/resources/Documents/problematic_substance_use_2016_en.pdf).

<sup>48</sup> SPCO, 2018

<sup>49</sup> EKOS, 2019.

<sup>50</sup> SPCO, 2018

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

- Single parent households, specifically single mother households. Single mother families who have children under 18 years of age are more likely to experience food insecurity than any other type of household, at 33.5%;
- One-person households;
- Households with people who have chronic health problems;
- Households of young adults; and
- Indigenous households.

Each month during 2015-2016, 41,500 Ottawa residents accessed emergency food services. Of those accessing food banks: 35% were families with children; 35% were younger than 18; 31% lived in social housing; 50% lived alone; 28% received disability benefits; and 33% were on social assistance. The number of people accessing food banks grew by 5.6% from 2016 to 2017<sup>52</sup>.

### **Social exclusion and isolation**

The City of Ottawa's Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook defines inclusion as "acknowledging and valuing people's differences to enrich social planning, decision-making and quality of life for everyone. In an inclusive city, we all have a sense of belonging, acceptance and recognition as valued and contributing members of society"<sup>53</sup>. Loneliness and social isolation are now being recognized as public health issues in Ontario, as people who are lonely are more likely to be in the top five percent of health care users<sup>54</sup>.

The sense of belonging in Ottawa increased significantly, from 65% in 2010 to 70.4% in 2016<sup>55</sup>. At the same time, feelings of safety have gone down slightly from 2012 to 2015. Feeling safe after dark is lowest in public places such as downtown, on cycling paths and walking trails or using public transit. Further, the feeling of safety is not equal

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> CAWI and City of Ottawa. (2018). Equity and Inclusion Handbook, p. 12. Retrieved from: [https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/ei\\_lens\\_hb\\_en.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/ei_lens_hb_en.pdf).

<sup>54</sup> Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care. (2019). Connected Communities: Healthier Together. 2017 Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. February. Retrieved from:

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/publications/reports/cmoh\\_19/default.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/publications/reports/cmoh_19/default.aspx).

<sup>55</sup> SPCO, 2018.

across Ottawa neighbourhoods. In some neighbourhoods, residents are more likely to feel unsafe, particularly in Central East and East neighbourhoods of the city<sup>56</sup>.

Hate crimes have been increasing locally and across Canada. Ottawa has the second highest rate of reported criminal incidents motivated by hate among major Canadian cities (second only to Hamilton, Ontario). From 2014-2015, the rate of hate crime in Ottawa increased to 9.5 hate crimes per 100,000 people, compared to 3.9 hate crimes per 100,000 nationally<sup>57</sup>.

Ottawa experienced the third highest growth rate (23%) of immigrant population amongst Canadian cities from 2006 to 2011. A significant number of immigrants who move to Ottawa will leave for other Canadian cities or return to their home countries. This is mainly due to a lack of employment opportunities and fewer business growth opportunities compared to larger city centres. Other contributing factors to this trend include<sup>58</sup>:

- a lack of access to public services;
- a lack of affordable housing;
- negative social experiences; and
- lingering systemic discrimination against racialized groups.

Social isolation has negative impacts on individuals, their families and their communities. Research has found that social isolation and exclusion are associated with increased chance of premature death, lower general well-being, more depression, more disability from chronic diseases, poor mental health, increased use of health and support services, reduced quality of life, caregiver burden, and poor general health.

Social well-being, including social connections, is strongly related to positive physical and mental health outcomes. A sense of belonging within the community is one measure of social well-being. Over the past 10 years, Ottawa residents aged 20 to 44 years reported the lowest levels of strong community belonging and youth aged 12 to 19 years reported the highest levels of strong community belonging. Residents who

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<sup>56</sup> The Council on Aging of Ottawa. (2017). How Age Friendly is Ottawa? An Evaluation Framework to Measure the Age-Friendliness of Ottawa. Retrieved from: <https://coaottawa.ca/wp-content/uploads/documents/Age-Friendly-Ottawa-Evaluation-Framework-PUBLIC-FINAL-2017-03.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup> SPCO, 2018.

<sup>58</sup> City of Ottawa, 2019.

lived alone reported lower levels of strong community belonging, compared to those who lived with others, with or without children<sup>59</sup>.

Living alone is a risk factor for social isolation and vulnerability. According to the 2016 census, for the first time in the country's history, the number of one-person households has surpassed all other types of living situations. They accounted for 28.2% of all households in 2016, more than the percentage of couples with children, couples without children, single-parent families, multiple family households and all other combinations of people living together<sup>60</sup>. In particular, the prevalence of women living alone on a low income increased from 9.3% in 1995 to 28.2% in 2015.

The senior population (aged 65 and over) in Ottawa is expected to increase to 22% of the total population, by 2031. While most seniors in Ottawa live in urban or suburban areas, in 2011, seniors made up 12.3% of the total population in rural areas of Ottawa, a group at particularly high risk of isolation. Projections indicate this rural group will grow faster than the general senior population, with an estimated growth rate of 183% between 2011 and 2031.

According to the National Seniors Council's 2014 Report on the Social Isolation of Seniors, "the social isolation of seniors can cause communities to suffer a lack of social cohesion, higher social costs, and the loss of an unquantifiable wealth of experience that older adults bring to our families, neighbourhoods and communities"<sup>61</sup>.

## **Civic Engagement**

Community involvement through social participation and civic engagement can decrease exclusion and isolation. According to Ottawa Public Health, community involvement is a social determinant of health; it has "a positive effect on mental health, likely because of the relationship with social contact and self-efficacy"<sup>62</sup>.

Lower civic engagement is pronounced in rural and suburban communities where access to health, social and community services is limited. Canadians with higher levels of education and income were more likely to report being a group member or

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<sup>59</sup> OPH, 2018a.

<sup>60</sup> Galloway, G. (2017). "Census 2016: More Canadians than ever living alone, and other takeaways." The Globe and Mail. At: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/census-2016-statscan/article35861448/>.

<sup>61</sup> At: <https://www.canada.ca/en/national-seniors-council/programs/publications-reports/2014/social-isolation-seniors/page05.html>.

<sup>62</sup> OPH, 2018a

participant. Recent immigrants were less likely to report being a group member or participant overall, particularly with sports and recreational organizations. However, participation with religious-affiliated groups was higher for immigrants compared to non-immigrants<sup>63</sup>.

Voter participation can reflect broader dynamics of social exclusion and alienation felt by some voters. Although voter turnout declined below 40% in 2014, in the most recent municipal election, turnout increased to 42%; this is the highest turnout among the five largest municipalities in Ontario. This increase can be partially attributed to the fact that community non-profit agencies in Ottawa are using a variety of strategies to reach people who are at risk of not voting.

Community agencies have engaged residents to form coalitions working together to increase voter turnout as one vehicle to meaningful civic engagement in which residents feel the positive impact of their involvement<sup>64</sup>.

### **Affordable housing**

Affordable housing continues to be one of the most pressing concerns in Ottawa. Agencies surveyed listed this as one of the most important challenges being faced by their clients, particularly clients with more complex needs<sup>65</sup>. The overall vacancy rate in Ottawa fell from 3% in October 2016 to 1.7% in October 2017<sup>66</sup>. Currently, over 40% of Ottawa households spend more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities, while 20% spend half of their income on rent and utilities<sup>67</sup>.

Lack of affordable housing is a barrier to newcomers integrating into the community<sup>68</sup>. Suitable and affordable housing that does not force newcomers to divert income from essentials such as food and educational material to pay rent is becoming more and more rare in Ottawa as the vacancy rate decreases. Additionally, the rise in cost of housing inside the greenbelt and pace of gentrification of urban neighbourhoods have begun to push residents to the suburban areas in search of more affordable housing<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> OPH, 2018b.

<sup>64</sup> SPCO, 2018.

<sup>65</sup> EKOS, 2019.

<sup>66</sup> City of Ottawa, 2018.

<sup>67</sup> Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa. (2018). Homelessness in Ottawa: A Roadmap for Change. Progress Report Review 2014-2017. Retrieved from: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a4d46cdb1ffb6b826e6d6aa/t/5b2120fb70a6ad360c735687/1528897791429/AllianceProgressReport2017Web\\_EN.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a4d46cdb1ffb6b826e6d6aa/t/5b2120fb70a6ad360c735687/1528897791429/AllianceProgressReport2017Web_EN.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> City of Ottawa, 2019.

<sup>69</sup> EKOS, 2019.

This in turn has led to an increased sense of isolation, transportation challenges and barriers to accessing services.

While Indigenous peoples account for 2.5% of Ottawa's population, the 2018 Homelessness Point-In-Time Count found that 24% of respondents experiencing homelessness identified as Indigenous. Furthermore, an estimated 10% of the general population identify as LGBTQ+, yet 21% of youth (16-24 years of age) experiencing homelessness identified as LGBTQ+<sup>70</sup>.

It has been demonstrated that early interventions that provide social supports to vulnerable individuals and families can prevent homelessness, which is why many communities across Canada have shifted to this prevention-based approach. The City of Ottawa's 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan supports the approach of working together with the social sector to help residents access or maintain housing<sup>71</sup>. The Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa mentions that a working system of coordinated social systems can prevent homelessness by providing effective outreach, coordinated intake and assessment, client-centered case management and policy, resource and service alignment<sup>72</sup>.

Non-profit agencies mentioned in CFFR consultations that they feel that they are a "symptom of the fact that there is no affordable housing available" and that they have had to turn people away due to the fact that the "shelters are always full, and they stay fuller longer because there is nowhere to go"<sup>73</sup>.

Not being housed creates multiple problems for individuals and families, and can deepen poverty, create barriers to accessing services and employment, and exacerbate mental health and addictions problems.

## **Conclusion: Opportunities and Considerations for the CFF**

The following table provides considerations for moving forward based on the key findings from the Community Funding Framework Review Environmental Scan as presented in this report, organized under three categories: the City's role in supporting

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<sup>70</sup> City of Ottawa. Retrieved from: [https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/PiT\\_Infogr\\_EN.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/PiT_Infogr_EN.pdf).

<sup>71</sup> City of Ottawa, 2018.

<sup>72</sup> Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, 2018.

<sup>73</sup> EKOS, 2019,

social infrastructure, structural changes to the Community Funding Framework, and CFF funding streams

## 1. The City's Role in Supporting Social Infrastructure

	Key findings – The City's Role	Recommended Approach
1.1	<p>The social service sector shows clear signs of weakening due to significant financial pressures, decrease/limits in funding environment, changing demographics, increase in overall number of clients and increase in number of clients with complex needs/dual diagnoses.</p> <p>Deepening poverty and growing inequality have adverse social, economic and political effects that are difficult and costly to address once entrenched<sup>74</sup>.</p> <p>A strong and sustainable social infrastructure protects the city and prevents erosion of social well-being and cohesion, and the non-profit sector is a fundamental element of this social infrastructure.</p> <p>City investment in the non-profit sector is essential to promoting well-being and the strength and</p>	<p>Maintain the City's commitment to and investment in Ottawa's social infrastructure.</p> <p>Revisions to the CFF must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- take into account the well-being and sustainability of the sector as a whole, and</li> <li>- allow time and support for agencies transitioning to the new CFF.</li> </ul> <p>Address the growing pressures currently weakening the social services sector.</p> <p>Increase the overall funding investment to address growing complex needs and agency pressures, foster equitable funding among agencies and promote sustainability (e.g. collaboration, partnerships, address duplication, etc.).</p>

<sup>74</sup> See Poverty section above. Green et al., 2017; Ontario Association of Food Banks, 2008.



	sustainability of the social infrastructure in Ottawa.	
1.2	Sustained investment in the Community Hub model of Community Health and Resource Centres and Community Houses has led to a high performing sector and is a key strength of the city's social infrastructure.	Maintain the investment in community-based hubs and continue to work with the sector to enhance service offerings across all equity-seeking/city priority groups.
1.3	The City of Ottawa does not have an overall strategic document and vision for social well-being / sustainability.	Align the new vision of Community Funding with the CSSD vision to promote community well-being and sustain a healthy social infrastructure of community services.  Also align with Council priorities and broader corporate visions, e.g. towards becoming the most livable mid-sized city in North America <sup>75</sup> .
1.4	Multiple funding requirements and priorities put pressure on agencies.	The City should collaborate with other funders, internally and externally.  Meetings with other City funders, the Grantmakers forum, the Community Foundation of Ottawa and United Way to discuss their priority areas for investment and to identify and eliminate overlaps would be beneficial to the community and potentially allow for more agencies to access funding.
1.5	New agencies are entering the non-profit sector, which reflects	Convene regular meetings and forums for the sector to work together on complex

<sup>75</sup> City of Ottawa, 2019.

	<p>growing needs. All agencies are in competition with each other for reduced funding.</p> <p>The City is in a unique position to foster sector collaboration, and agencies are looking for City leadership in this.</p>	<p>issues, share best practices, reduce duplication of services and programs, and identify and address emerging needs. This will also provide an important networking opportunity for agencies.</p> <p>Bring back the annual Community Conversations and align to Community Funding and other CSSD service objectives.</p>
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## 2. Structural Changes to the Community Funding Framework

	Key findings – Structural changes	Recommended Approach
2.1	<p>The current vision of the Community Funding Framework (“access to basics”) is unclear. Focus should be on most vulnerable residents and equity seeking groups.</p>	<p>Clarify the vision of the Community Funding Framework and validate it with the community.</p> <p>Recommended overall changes to the CFF, which should inform the revised vision, mission and priorities<sup>76</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on vulnerable and marginalized individuals facing multiple barriers and/or complex needs (homeless/at risk of homelessness, those living in poverty, youth at risk, women and children experiencing violence, rural residents)</li> <li>- Focus on services/activities that address the root causes of poverty; increase access to mental health supports, addiction</li> </ul>

<sup>76</sup> EKOS, 2019.

		<p>services and affordable housing; increase food security; and increase social inclusion and civic engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that the specific needs of all City-identified equity-seeking groups are highlighted, prioritized and addressed throughout</li> </ul>
2.2	<p>The mission and priorities of the Community Funding Framework need to be revised to meet restated vision.</p>	<p>Align the CFF mission and priorities with the restated vision and with key City of Ottawa plans and strategies.</p> <p>Considerations to inform the revisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthening sector</li> <li>- Furthering collaboration</li> <li>- Building capacity</li> <li>- Reducing duplication of services</li> <li>- Demonstrating impact</li> </ul>
2.3	<p>The CFF vision, mission and priorities should be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that they are responding to the greatest need within the community and to relevant demographic shifts.</p>	<p>Institute a review cycle as part of the revised CFF to validate how the vision, mission, mandate and priorities resonate with community needs and relevant demographic shifts.</p>
2.4	<p>Evaluation criteria are unclear.</p> <p>Funding decisions need to be tied directly, and more clearly, to the provision of value-added services to the most vulnerable residents, with useful measures</p>	<p>Enhance transparency and accountability by establishing clear criteria for funding decisions and clear measures of progress towards the stated objectives.</p> <p>Establish clear outcomes and outcome measurement tools tied to priorities and</p>

	<p>of demonstrated impact and track record<sup>77</sup>.</p> <p>There is a need for regular review of funding decisions.</p>	<p>to the role of the not-for-profit sector in building and sustaining social infrastructure.</p> <p>Develop an evaluation framework that measures and reports annually on outcomes and the impact of the funding investments in relation to the restated vision, mission, mandate and priorities.</p>
2.5	<p>Community non-profit agencies need to align with restated vision, mandate, priorities.</p>	<p>Conduct an analysis of agencies currently funded on how they meet the revised CFF vision, mission, mandate and priorities (see also 1.1 above).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify gaps – review what aspects of the revised CFF vision, mission, mandate and priorities are not addressed by services under current CFF funding;</li> <li>- Identify overlaps - some agencies with similar mandates may be asked to amalgamate to address duplication of service and increase efficiencies;</li> <li>- Identify misalignments - some agencies may have to transition off renewable funding if their mandate is misaligned with the revised mandate and priorities of the CFF.</li> </ul>

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

2.6	Greater emphasis should be placed on addressing root causes of poverty, food insecurity, homelessness and other systems level issues as identified by community.	<p>Establish this as a long-term goal of the CFF and reflect it in the restated vision and mission.</p> <p>Work collaboratively with internal and external partners to identify strategies to address systemic issues and root causes.</p>
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### 3. CFF Funding Streams

	Key findings – Funding streams	Recommended Approach
3.1	Funding streams need to be clearly defined and geared to addressing greatest need.	<p>All funding streams should have clear descriptions, entry criteria and desired outcomes.</p> <p>Identify the percentage of total CFF funding allocated to each stream, based on revised vision, mission, mandate and priorities (see also 1.1 above).</p> <p>Fund agencies that can meet the greatest/most complex needs where they are most pronounced.</p>
3.2	Renewable core and program funding constitute a unique and vital source of revenue for agencies and contribute to agency and sector sustainability.	<p>The City should continue to prioritize and offer renewable core and program funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maintain a renewable core funding stream.</li> <li>- invest in efforts that address systemic issues, align with funding priorities, and have an intersectoral approach to addressing equity and inclusion.</li> </ul>

3.3	Agencies not receiving renewable funding are increasingly frustrated that they do not have an equitable opportunity to receive funding.	<p>Offer an equitable opportunity for agencies to be considered for renewable funding.</p> <p>Regularly consider sustainability of CFF investments in addressing community needs and create a regular review cycle (see 2.3) for agencies receiving renewable funding.</p>
3.4	A short-term/project fund offers flexibility and the ability to respond more quickly to emergent needs, both in the community and in the sector.	<p>Maintain a project funding stream.</p> <p>Re-examine, clarify and align with revised CFF.</p> <p>The priorities for the project stream have been identified as agency capacity building, sector collaboration, and responding to community emergent needs.</p>

## Appendix A: CFFR Environmental Scan Highlights

### Municipal Scan

- Most municipalities have a community funding portfolio, a project funding stream and a renewable core funding stream.
- All comparable municipalities have a closed/renewable core funding stream
- Project funding streams in other municipalities are much larger than Ottawa's; many are cost-shared with the province
- Some municipalities have an overarching social well-being/sustainability strategy (which includes community funding as a component) with a common purpose of building stronger, more resilient and inclusive communities
- These municipal strategies have outcomes tied to priorities

- General acknowledgement that non-profits contribute to increased social inclusion (particularly among equity seeking groups), civic participation and community well-being

## **Ottawa Community Needs and Challenges**

- Shifting demographics: aging population (seniors), more newcomers, youth, all experiencing more complex needs
- Deepening poverty, particularly intersectional (gender and race-based)
- Growing social isolation, exclusion and discrimination
- Growing unemployment among youth and immigrants
- Increasing food insecurity, particularly among equity seeking groups
- Increased mental health challenges and addictions, creating complex needs (barriers, deepening poverty, unstable employment)
- Rural and suburban challenges including lack of service(s), isolation and connectivity barriers
- Lack of affordable housing and a low vacancy rate in Ottawa
- Equity seeking groups are disproportionately affected

## **Agency Needs and Pressures**

- Increasingly competitive environment for funding. Less available funding, and more of it short-term and project-based – distraction from service delivery to seek out more funding
- Growth in number of agencies in the sector, an indicator that overall need is increasing
- Need is growing due to a combination of more clients requesting service and more complex needs
- As a result, agencies have adapted by introducing fees, introducing and/or increasing waitlists, restricting hours and programs
- Non-funded agencies are frustrated that there is no on-ramp to renewable funding

- While volunteerism is increasing, the quality and consistency of volunteer hours are changing
- Staffing challenges - attraction, retention and burnout

## **Considerations for CFF**

- Predictable, renewable funding for core services is highly valued and unique in the funding landscape. It is critical for the sustainability of the sector and should be maintained
- Clarify the CFF vision, mission, mandate and priorities. Shift focus from access to basics to assisting the most vulnerable residents and those facing the most barriers to accessing service
- Clarify funding streams
- Create on-ramp to renewable funding
- Increase transparency and clarity of funding decisions and tie them to demonstrated impact.
- Define eligibility and evaluation criteria
- Capital funding could be redistributed
- Institute a review cycle for CFF vision, mission, priorities, and funding decisions
- Assist the sector with building capacity, making connections, collaboration and reducing costs where possible
- Address systemic issues and root causes

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