

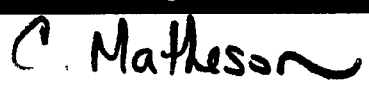
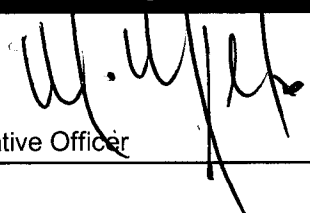
Request for Decision City Council





Type of Decision									
Meeting	February 7, 2007				Report Date	December 13 th , 2006			
Decision Requested	X	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
	Direction Only				Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed

Report Title
National Child Benefit Reinvestment Workplan 2007

Budget Impact / Policy Implication	Recommendation
<p>X This report has been reviewed by the Finance Division and the funding source has been identified.</p> <p>This report explains the recommendations of the 2007 NCB Workplan which follow the direction set in 2003, based on recommendations made in the community consultation completed in November 2002. The workplan continues a shift in direction from program funding to direct supports for individual families. Although this means that fewer City dollars will be available to fund targeted programs, families will have more resources available to them to meet their basic needs. At the same time, programs will become less reliant on this unstable funding source.</p> <p>NCB funding is an annual fund received from the Province, targeted to children and families at risk. This report carries no budget impact</p>	<p>WHEREAS the National Child Benefit (NCB) reinvestment fund was created with municipal savings from the "clawback" of the National Child Benefit allowance from families receiving Ontario Works and ODSP benefits; and</p> <p>WHEREAS the 2007 fund is projected to be approximately \$800,000; and</p> <p>WHEREAS National Child Benefit funding is a dedicated fund which must be spent on child and family support programs in accordance with Provincial and Federal objectives and directives; and</p> <p>WHEREAS the National Child Benefit Plan for 2007 has responded to the key recommendations put forth in the community consultation and outlines a plan for allocations for NCB dollars;</p>
<p>X Background Attached</p>	<p>X Recommendation Continued</p>

Recommended by the Department	Recommended by the C.A.O.
<p></p> <p>Catherine Matheson General Manager, Community Development</p>	<p></p> <p>Mark Mieto Chief Administrative Officer</p>

Report Prepared By	Division Review
 Kate Barber Children Services Planner	 Ron Henderson Director, Citizen Services Division

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the attached 2007 National Child Benefit Workplan be accepted as submitted and that the appropriate by-law be passed in order to allocate funding as outlined in the Workplan.

Background

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the attached "2007 National Child Benefit Workplan" which outlines the spending priorities for the National Child Benefit (NCB) reinvestment fund for 2007 estimated at \$800,000.

2007 marks the ninth year for the National Child Benefit (NCB) reinvestment initiative in Greater Sudbury. Dollars are generated from the municipal portion (20%) of the savings resulting from a Provincially mandated reduction of benefits for each family in receipt of Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Service Program (ODSP) who receives the Federal - National Child Benefit Supplement allowance. Given that the amount of savings is dependent on the number of families on social assistance, the annual fund varies from one year to the next. Savings from this program must be reinvested and spent on child and family support initiatives in accordance with Provincial and Federal objectives and directives.

The City of Greater Sudbury, through the commitment and dedication of many community agencies, has been successful in developing and funding initiatives that respond to the following Provincial objectives:

- to help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty; and
- to promote attachment to the workforce

The National Child Benefit (NCB) Advisory Committee, made up of City staff and community partners makes recommendations about the allocation of the City's NCB Reinvestment Fund.

In 2002 the City undertook a community consultation to determine which priorities should be highlighted for future NCB distribution. The consultation heard from both the "consumer" groups made up of parents in receipt of OW/ODSP and "service provider" groups made up of directors and staff of agencies who work with low income families (including those agencies who currently receive NCB dollars to provide expanded services). The researchers gathered information on the views of all stakeholders regarding direct monetary support for clients as well as other strategies for spending on children's programs.

Based on the key recommendations made in the 2002 report entitled "NCB Community

Consultation: Community Priorities for NCB Allocations”, the NCB Advisory Committee responded by setting a series of targets which would gradually increase the percentage of NCB Dollars to be flowed directly to families, through the NCB Emergency Trust Fund and supports provided directly through the Ontario Works program.

The 2007 Workplan continues to follow the direction set in 2002 by once more allocating an increased amount to direct supports for families and making corresponding reductions to community program funding.

Proposed Workplan 2007

The 2007 Workplan is based on an estimate for NCB funding of \$800,000. Following through on the recommendations and responses of the community consultation the Workplan for 2007 includes an increase in direct monetary support to 85% of the fund. Allocations under this heading include \$115,000 for direct support programs administered by Ontario Works and \$565,000 for the Emergency Trust Fund, to be distributed directly to families.

A reduction of approximately 30% has been made to existing programs funded under NCB in order to make funding available to direct supports.

The following Community Projects have been renewed with a corresponding reduction in funding levels.

- **Infant Food Bank:**
a program operated by Our Children Our Future/ Nos enfants notre avenir that meets the emergency needs of parents with very young children.
- **Healthy Eating: Good Food Program:**
through this funding, Our Children Our Future/ Nos enfants notre avenir makes healthy food available to pregnant women and families with young children through a “Good Food Bag” program in partnership with local grocery stores.
- **Positive Leisure Activities for Youth (PLAY) Program:**
managed by the Human League Association, this program assists low income children with registration and equipment costs for sports, arts, culture and recreation programs.
- **Send-a-Kid-to-Camp Program:**
Sudbury Manitoulin Children’s Foundation manages this program which sends over 600 disadvantaged children to summer camp each year.
- **Breakfast Clubs:**
the Human League Association coordinates many volunteer-run Breakfast Clubs in many area schools and community centres.

Please see the attached Workplan Report for proposed 2007 Allocations.

In the 2007 Workplan, the City’s allocation of \$65,000 for administration has been discontinued due to decreased expenses related to the administration of this fund.

NCB- Future Funding Issues

In the 2003 Provincial Election Campaign, the Liberal Party made a promise to stop “clawing back” the NCB amount from Ontario Works and ODSP clients, a move that would eliminate the City’s NCB fund entirely. The Provincial Government has been studying the issue and may release a plan to reduce or eliminate the NCB clawback at any time. The City of Greater Sudbury’s ongoing efforts to increase direct supports to clients and reduce funding to programs was designed to gradually prepare programs for the eventual discontinuation of the NCB Fund.

Attachments:

2007 National Child Benefit Workplan

2007 National Child Benefit Workplan

Children Services Section

City of Greater Sudbury

January 2007

Background

2007 marks the ninth year for the National Child Benefit (NCB) reinvestment initiative in Greater Sudbury. Dollars are generated from the municipal portion (20%) of the savings resulting from a Provincially mandated reduction of benefits for each family in receipt of Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Service Program (ODSP) that receives the Federal - National Child Benefit Supplement allowance. Given that the amount of savings is dependent on the number of families on social assistance, the annual fund varies from one year to the next. Savings from this program must be reinvested and spent on child and family support programs in accordance with Provincial and Federal objectives and directives.

The City of Greater Sudbury, through the commitment and dedication of many community agencies, has been successful in developing and funding programs that respond to the following Provincial objectives:

- to help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty; and
- to promote attachment to the workforce

The National Child Benefit (NCB) Advisory Committee, made up of City staff and community partners, makes recommendations about the allocation of the City's NCB Reinvestment Fund. The following are some of the issues considered in the planning for 2007's NCB allocations, as well as an outline of the proposed allocations for 2007.

History of the Shift to Direct Supports

In 2002 the City undertook a community consultation to determine which priorities should be highlighted for future NCB distribution. The consultation heard from both the "consumer" groups made up of parents in receipt of Ontario Works and "service provider" groups made up of directors and staff of agencies who work with low income families (including those agencies who currently receive NCB dollars to provide expanded services). The researchers gathered information on the views of all stakeholders regarding direct monetary support for clients as well as other strategies for spending on children's programs.

Based on the key recommendations made in the 2002 report entitled "NCB Community Consultation: Community Priorities for NCB Allocations", the NCB Advisory Committee responded by setting a series of targets which would gradually increase the percentage of NCB Dollars to be flowed directly to families, through the NCB Emergency Trust Fund and supports provided directly through the Ontario Works program.

In 2003, the Advisory Committee recommended that each year a target be set outlining the percentage of NCB dollars to go to direct supports to families through the NCB Emergency Trust Fund. It was recommended that the shift of allocations be done in a timely and orderly fashion, as follows:

2003	25% of the NCB Allocation
2004	40% of the NCB Allocation
2005	60% of the NCB Allocation
2006	75% of the NCB Allocation

Under this plan, internal programs which directly benefit OW/ODSP clients were to be maintained, and funding for community programs would be reduced gradually as the proportion of direct support increases.

In 2006, 75% of the annual NCB budget was set aside for direct supports for families including the NCB Emergency Trust Fund held by the Social Planning Council. Through this, direct monetary support was given to families. This initiative alone saw over 1500 families receive a Winter Supplement. The remaining 25% of the funding was provided to community agencies to offer services and programs to benefit low income families.

Principles Guiding NCB Planning (2003 to present)

The decision to direct monetary support for families on Ontario Works/ODSP is difficult as it requires that funding to current NCB-funded programs be reduced accordingly. In order to assist in making funding decisions, the NCB Advisory Committee developed the following set of principles for the allocation of NCB dollars which guided how the required reductions were to be administered from 2003 to 2006. These principles were informed by recommendations provided in the report "NCB Community Consultation: Community Priorities for NCB Allocations" and by the NCB Advisory Committee's experience administering the fund.

The following principles were developed as a basis for making decisions about the allocation of NCB dollars for 2003 and beyond:

- New projects should not be approved.
- Programs should not receive an increase over last year's allocation.
- Internal programs, which are direct supports, which serve only OW/ODSP clients should be reduced only if demand decreases.
- Programs funded should contribute to fulfilling clients' basic needs, including food, shelter, medical and household needs, recreation and transportation.
- Programs funded should be available for all/most OW/ODSP recipients.
- Reductions to core programs should be gradual and predictable.
- Some programs' funding may need to be discontinued if the program does not fit within the criteria.
- Programs that have a more stable funding base or better fundraising capacity may be reduced first.

The NCB Advisory Committee recognizes that this will continue to be a difficult transition for programs who have been receiving NCB dollars since before 2000. However, the NCB Advisory Committee felt that it was important to listen to the feedback provided in the

community consultation. There is also a recognition that it is necessary to plan for the discontinuation of the NCB reinvestment funding program by the Provincial and/or Federal governments, which is likely to happen in the near future.

Current Status of NCB Funding

Late in 2006 all indications were that NCB funding to the Municipality would continue in 2007. The NCB Advisory Committee met in November 2006 and recommended to continue the strategy started in 2003 with the proportion of funding going to direct supports shifting to 85%. The NCB Advisory Committee also recommended that in 2008, 100% of funding, if still available, should be allocated to direct supports to families.

Allocation Strategies for 2007

This increase to direct supports requires a further reduction in program funding which is expected by community programs who have received gradually decreasing grants since 2003. The proposed allocations show the reduced contributions to community programs and the increase to the Emergency Fund which will be able to distribute increased monetary aid to all families in receipt of OW/ODSP.

New in 2007, in keeping with the strategic shift to increase direct supports and to decrease dependence by agencies on this funding, the City will not be receiving the \$65,000.00 in administration fees that have been historically allocated. As this funding source is slated to be discontinued in 2008 and the administration funding is no longer required to offset the work involved in monitoring programs and planning for allocations, there will be minimal financial impact for the City.

In keeping with the priorities identified in the NCB Community Consultation of November 2002 for the allocation of NCB dollars, the Children Services Section's 2007 National Child Benefit Workplan continues to reflect its key recommendation: to provide more direct monetary support to OW/ODSP clients.

The following are the proposed allocations for NCB 2007.

Proposed 2007 NCB Allocations

NCB 2007 Total Funding

\$800,000

The 2007 Workplan proposes an allocation of \$800,000, based on a conservative estimate of revenues to this fund for 2007. If revenues exceed than \$800,000, any additional monies would be directed to the Emergency Trust Fund.

Direct Supports

\$680,000

To meet the target of allocating at least 85% to direct supports for families, \$565,000 will be allocated to the Emergency Trust Fund held by the Social Planning Council and \$115,000 will be used by the Ontario Works Division to pay directly for supports for families on OW or ODSP.

The Emergency Trust funding will be distributed directly by the Social Planning Council to families through a direct mailout. The workplan also allocates a reduced amount of funding of \$26,253 to the Social Planning Council to cover the administration and staffing costs of distributing the funding.

Ontario Works internally-funded programs include direct payment for cribs, washing machines, children's beds, medical items, infant supplies, prenatal vitamins, orthodontic work for children, supports for young parents, and dental benefits for families in receipt of OW/ODSP. A separate allocation for medically necessary orthodontic needs has been discontinued as previous history has shown these costs were able to be covered through the allocation of \$10,000 for dental benefits.

Direct Supports administered by Ontario Works/ ODSP

Internal Programs	2004	2005	2006	2007
LEAP/ Opportunities for Parents (supports for young parents to complete secondary school)	\$32,000	\$32,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Dental benefits to youth not currently included in dental plans and medically necessary orthodontic work for children	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
An additional amount will be earmarked to pay the 20% portion for children with the most serious medically necessary orthodontic needs	no allocation	\$5,000	no allocation	no allocation
Discretionary Items (Cribs, children's beds, infant layette, prenatal vitamins, medical items, washing machine, stove)	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
	\$92,000	\$97,000	\$115,000	\$115,000

Community Programs

\$120,000*

*This total includes the programs amounts below as well as the \$26,253 allocated for the administration of the direct supplements through the Emergency Trust Fund.

In order to meet the 85% target, funding reductions have been made to programs currently funded by NCB according to the principles set out above.

The following existing programs will see reductions of approximately 30% to their funding for 2007:

Program	2005	2006	2007
Infant Food Bank: a program operated by Our Children Our Future that meets the emergency needs of parents with very young children.	\$7,800	\$6,600	\$4,500
Healthy Eating: Good Food Program, Our Children Our Future. Through this funding, Our Children Our Future makes healthy food available to pregnant women and families with young children through a "Good Food Bag" program in partnership with a local grocery store.	\$15,600	\$13,240	\$9,028
Positive Leisure Activities for Youth (PLAY) Program, Human League Association. This program assists low income children with registration and equipment costs for sports, arts, culture and recreation programs.	\$58,400	\$49,550	\$33,788
Send-a-Kid-to-Camp Program, Sudbury Manitoulin Children's Foundation. This program sends around 700 disadvantaged children to summer camp each year.	\$29,600	\$25,130	\$17,136
Rideshare GEODE. This program provides low income families with transportation to medical appointments and child development programs using a combination of bus tickets, volunteer drivers and taxis.	\$54,500	\$46,270	0 (program has been discontinued)
A Morning Start- Breakfast Clubs, Human League Association. This program supports volunteer-run Breakfast Clubs in many area schools and community centres.	\$50,600	\$42,960	\$29,294
TOTAL	\$216,500	\$183,750	\$93,746

Program funding is paid out in quarterly installments and is dependent on the submission of regular progress reports by the community agency.