



The Corporation of the City of Stratford
Social Services Sub-committee
Open Session
AGENDA

Date: Tuesday, March 9, 2021
Time: 3:30 P.M.
Location: Electronic Meeting
Sub-committee Present: Councillor Henderson - Chair Presiding, Councillor Bunting - Vice Chair, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Ritsma, Councillor Vassilakos
Staff Present: Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, Alex Burgess - Manager of Ontario Works, Jodi Akins - Council Clerk Secretary

To watch the Sub-committee meeting live, click the following link: <https://stratford-ca.zoom.us/j/82188003279?pwd=eDJGOU5yZXU4NEw0dFZwZ09mYzNsZz09>
A video recording of the meeting will also be available through a link on the City's website at <https://www.stratford.ca/en/index.aspx> following the meeting.

Pages

1. Call to Order

The Chair to call the Meeting to Order.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

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3. Delegations

None scheduled.

4. Report of the Director of Social Services

4.1. A New Provincial-Municipal Vision for Social Assistance (SOC21-001)

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Motion by _____

Staff Recommendation: THAT "A New Provincial-Municipal Vision for Social Assistance (SOC21-001)" be received for information by the City Council.

5. Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes

There are no Advisory Committee/Outside Board minutes to be provided to Sub-committee at this time.

6. Next Sub-committee Meeting

The next Social Services Sub-committee meeting is April 13, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

7. Adjournment

Meeting Start Time:

Meeting End Time:

Motion by _____

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Social Services Sub-committee meeting adjourn.



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: March 9, 2021
To: Social Services Sub-committee
From: Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services
Report#: SOC21-001
Attachments: "A Working Vision for Social Assistance" map

Title: A New Provincial-Municipal Vision for Social Assistance

Objective: To provide Council with an overview of the Province of Ontario's new vision for social assistance that aims to create an efficient, effective, and streamlined social services system that focuses on people by connecting them with a range of local services and supports that respond to their unique needs and address barriers.

Background: As Ontario continues to struggle through the impacts of COVID-19, hundreds of thousands of Ontarians are still unable to return to the labour market. As such, Ontario's social assistance system must be ready to support increased numbers of people back towards employment independence and stability. The Province's goal is that once life stabilization is achieved more people will also succeed in employment, contributing to better outcomes in all areas of their lives.

Analysis: The premise of the vision is for the Province to automate, streamline and realign functions that are largely administrative (e.g. provision of financial assistance), making it quick and easy for people to access the system while ensuring program integrity. At the same time, municipal partners will use our expertise in delivering person-centred casework and knowledge of local community supports to provide all the activities that support people on a pathway to greater independence and employment. This system will allow caseworkers to focus on results for people, rather than on paperwork, helping those people who can get back to work and support the Province's economic recovery. The changes will support the Province's vision by allowing the Province to leverage its ability to provide a cost-effective, technology-based administrative system. It will also allow municipalities to leverage their in-depth knowledge of local community resources to build a life stabilization framework that works at the local level.

These changes will take effect over the next several years in phases (see attached map). Years 2021 and 2022 will be largely the “learning and testing years,” as multiple projects are being prototyped, iterated, and evaluated starting with a small sample of local offices and gradually expanding into more offices. By the end of 2022, the Province hopes to have reached full consolidation of financial assistance and by 2024, they hope to begin rolling out the new human services model.

Financial Impact: As transformation of both employment services and social assistance delivery proceeds, the funding model will evolve alongside the shifts in roles and responsibilities. The co-designed system will include a new approach to funding and a new performance and accountability framework. The Province and municipalities will work collaboratively to develop the new funding model that addresses administrative costs to realign with any municipal and provincial savings.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

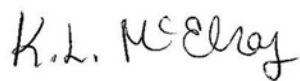
Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

Developing our Resources

Optimizing Stratford’s physical assets and digital resources. Planning a sustainable future for Stratford’s resources and environment.

Staff Recommendation: THAT “A New Provincial-Municipal Vision for Social Assistance (SOC21-001)” be received for information by the City Council.



Kim McElroy, Director of Social Services



Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer

A working vision for social assistance

Vision:

To create an efficient, effective and streamlined social services system that focuses on people, providing them with a range of services and supports to respond to their unique needs and address barriers to success so they can move towards employment and independence.

How we will realign:

Province

Delivers:

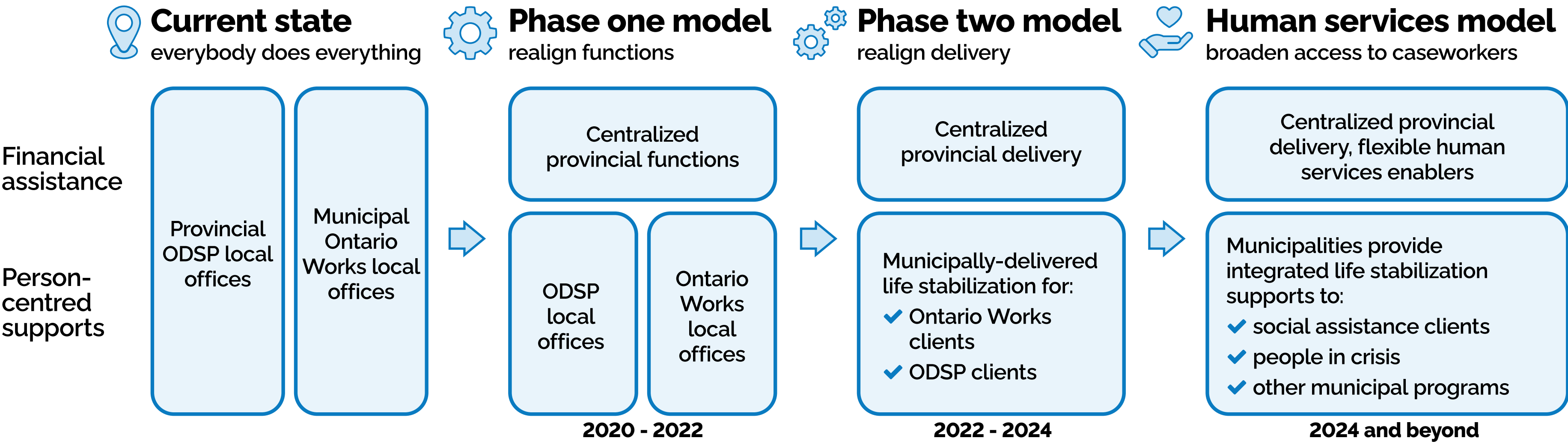
- ✓ Centralized financial assistance
- ✓ Financial controls and back-office functions suited to centralization or automation

Municipalities

Delivers:

- ✓ Life stabilization – including needs assessment, service planning, warm referrals, discretionary benefits
- ✓ Person-centred, connected supports, and navigation of broader system (e.g., housing, employment, mental health)

How we will evolve over time:



Integrated client services:

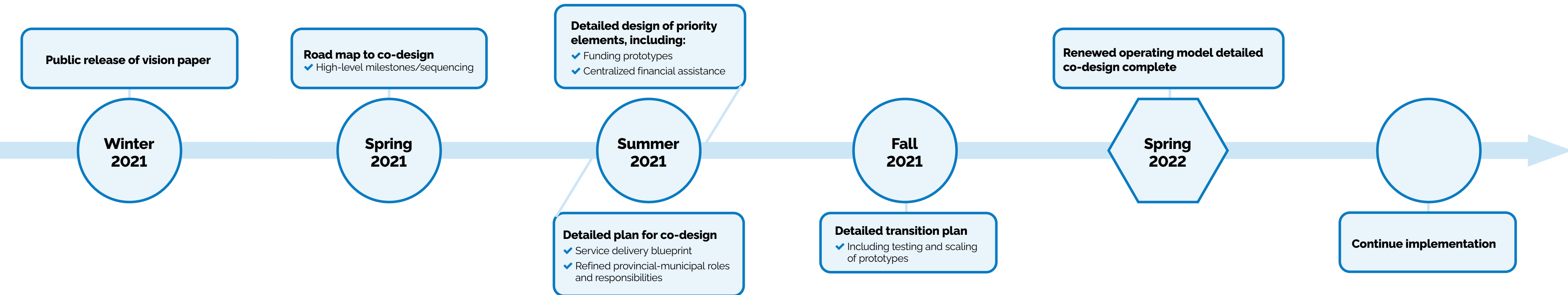


Social assistance: where we're headed

In the short term: co-designing a renewed operating model

Prototype and implement: developing centralized provincial functions, starting with intake, and tools and processes to support life stabilization

Co-design: engaging to design key operating model layers, provincial and municipal functions, principles and processes



In the long term: moving to a human services delivery model

- ✓ In the human services model, benefits like social assistance become “tools” in the caseworker toolbox, as opposed to the other way around
- ✓ Caseworkers are knowledgeable about the broader system of benefits and supports, and can guide people to the supports they need – whether Ontario Works or something else
- ✓ People seeking help are triaged by municipal caseworkers, supported as needed, and potentially diverted from social assistance

