



The Corporation of the County of Wellington
Social Services Committee
Agenda

April 13, 2016

1:00 pm

County Administration Centre
Guthrie Room

Members: Warden Bridge; Councillors Anderson (Chair), Black, Davidson, L. White

	Pages
1. Call to Order	
2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest	
3. Presentation:	
3.1 Mr. Mark Paoli, Manager of Policy Planning, County of Wellington Optimal Deployment of Emergency Services Study - Verbal	
4. Delegation:	
4.1 Ms. Adrienne Crowder, Manager, Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy Annual Update	2 - 7
5. Social Services Financial Statements as of March 31, 2016	8 - 13
6. Child Care	
6.1 Phase Two Regulatory Proposals - Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014	14 - 15
7. Housing	
7.1 Maryborough Township Housing Corporation	16 - 21
8. Ontario Works	
8.1 Market Bucks Pilot Evaluation	22 - 40
8.2 Ontario Works Statistics	41 - 42
9. Closed Meeting	
10. Rise and Report	
11. Adjournment	
Next meeting date May 11, 2016 or at the call of the Chair.	



WGDs

WELLINGTON GUELPH DRUG STRATEGY

Spring, 2016

Agenda

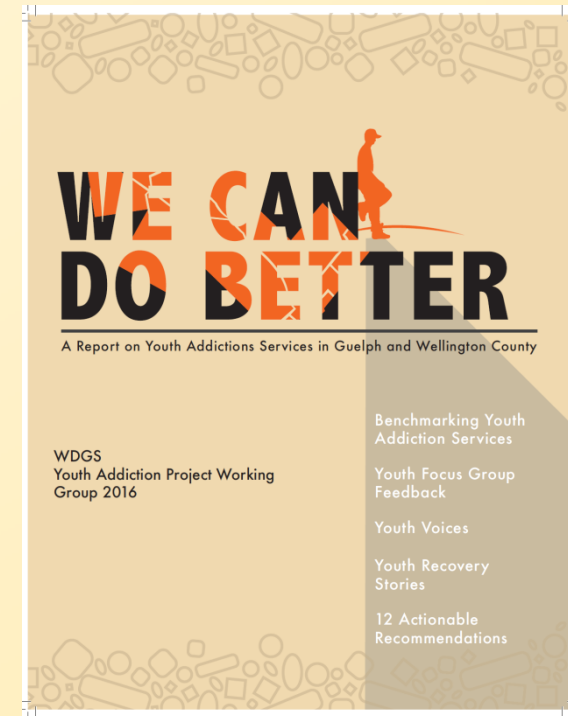
- Update re. Community Response to Crystal Meth
- WGDS Youth Addiction Project Update
- WGDS 2016 Workplan

Community Response to Crystal Meth

- \$100,000 grant from Proceeds of Crime, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services provided from Aug 2015 – May 2016
- Partners in operationalizing the grant: Guelph Police Services, Stonehenge Therapeutic Community and WGDS
- Multi-layered, multi-sector approach
- Key Activities
 - 1) Addiction Support Worker in Bail Court
 - 2) Meth Watch
 - 3) Training Health and Social Service Providers

Youth Addiction Project

- Review of Youth (12-24) Addiction and Youth Addiction Services in Guelph and Wellington County
- “We Can Do Better” report was released in January, 2016
- Key Findings: Benchmarking Services, Point in Time Count regarding Youth Substance Use, Youth Focus Groups
- 12 Actionable Recommendations
- We Are Doing Better – updates resulting from the report



WGDS 2016 Workplan

2016 Projects:

1. Community Response to Crystal Meth
2. Rapid Response Addiction Medicine Clinic
3. Youth Forum
4. Youth Addiction Project
5. Alcohol Harm Reduction Working Group
6. Prescription Drug Working Group
7. Ad hoc projects

Questions?

Thank you!



County of Wellington
Ontario Works
Statement of Operations as of
31 Mar 2016

	Annual Budget	March Actual \$	YTD Actual \$	YTD Actual %	Remaining Budget
Revenue					
Grants and Subsidies	\$21,082,100	\$1,868,057	\$5,284,549	25%	\$15,797,551
Municipal Recoveries	\$3,387,300	\$266,865	\$810,915	24%	\$2,576,385
Other Revenue	\$49,000	\$0	\$41,593	85%	\$7,407
Internal Recoveries	\$10,100	\$250	\$5,981	59%	\$4,119
Total Revenue	\$24,528,500	\$2,135,172	\$6,143,037	25%	\$18,385,463
Expenditures					
Salaries, Wages and Benefits	\$6,281,400	\$532,146	\$1,511,489	24%	\$4,769,911
Supplies, Material & Equipment	\$185,000	\$14,186	\$22,220	12%	\$162,780
Purchased Services	\$419,800	\$31,868	\$79,513	19%	\$340,287
Social Assistance	\$17,973,000	\$1,672,699	\$4,575,032	25%	\$13,397,968
Transfer Payments	\$24,800	\$0	\$0	0%	\$24,800
Insurance & Financial	\$0	\$0	\$568	0%	\$(568)
Internal Charges	\$1,245,600	\$103,197	\$314,939	25%	\$930,661
Total Expenditures	\$26,129,600	\$2,354,095	\$6,503,762	25%	\$19,625,838
NET OPERATING COST / (REVENUE)	\$1,601,100	\$218,923	\$360,724	23%	\$1,240,376
NET COST (REVENUE)	\$1,601,100	\$218,923	\$360,724	23%	\$1,240,376



County of Wellington
Child Care Services
Statement of Operations as of
31 Mar 2016

	Annual Budget	March Actual \$	YTD Actual \$	YTD Actual %	Remaining Budget
Revenue					
Grants and Subsidies	\$13,144,800	\$675,617	\$2,721,339	21%	\$10,423,461
Municipal Recoveries	\$2,882,400	\$(6,478)	\$703,029	24%	\$2,179,371
User Fees & Charges	\$278,100	\$35,606	\$107,126	39%	\$170,974
Internal Recoveries	\$354,900	\$86,176	\$86,176	24%	\$268,724
Total Revenue	\$16,660,200	\$790,921	\$3,617,670	22%	\$13,042,530
Expenditures					
Salaries, Wages and Benefits	\$4,123,100	\$348,187	\$982,526	24%	\$3,140,574
Supplies, Material & Equipment	\$226,300	\$21,786	\$34,815	15%	\$191,485
Purchased Services	\$485,000	\$36,593	\$97,988	20%	\$387,012
Social Assistance	\$11,632,900	\$303,385	\$2,494,127	21%	\$9,138,773
Insurance & Financial	\$3,200	\$0	\$1,996	62%	\$1,204
Minor Capital Expenses	\$154,800	\$0	\$0	0%	\$154,800
Internal Charges	\$985,000	\$135,422	\$233,527	24%	\$751,473
Total Expenditures	\$17,610,300	\$845,373	\$3,844,980	22%	\$13,765,320
NET OPERATING COST / (REVENUE)	\$950,100	\$54,452	\$227,310	24%	\$722,790
NET COST (REVENUE)	\$950,100	\$54,452	\$227,310	24%	\$722,790



County of Wellington
Social Housing
Statement of Operations as of
31 Mar 2016

	Annual Budget	March Actual \$	YTD Actual \$	YTD Actual %	Remaining Budget
Revenue					
Grants and Subsidies	\$7,425,500	\$530,433	\$1,868,790	25%	\$5,556,710
Municipal Recoveries	\$15,249,700	\$1,050,896	\$3,414,055	22%	\$11,835,645
Licenses, Permits and Rents	\$5,200,000	\$443,201	\$1,326,221	26%	\$3,873,779
User Fees & Charges	\$49,200	\$5,349	\$12,427	25%	\$36,773
Total Revenue	\$27,924,400	\$2,029,879	\$6,621,495	24%	\$21,302,905
Expenditures					
Salaries, Wages and Benefits	\$3,658,500	\$319,930	\$901,859	25%	\$2,756,641
Supplies, Material & Equipment	\$366,400	\$42,549	\$59,459	16%	\$306,941
Purchased Services	\$7,025,800	\$456,808	\$1,552,826	22%	\$5,472,974
Social Assistance	\$17,962,000	\$1,416,232	\$4,193,798	23%	\$13,768,202
Transfer Payments	\$1,015,100	\$0	\$253,767	25%	\$761,333
Insurance & Financial	\$243,000	\$3,480	\$163,592	67%	\$79,408
Internal Charges	\$668,500	\$54,829	\$165,097	25%	\$503,403
Total Expenditures	\$30,939,300	\$2,293,828	\$7,290,398	24%	\$23,648,902
NET OPERATING COST / (REVENUE)	\$3,014,900	\$263,950	\$668,903	22%	\$2,345,997
Transfers					
Transfer to Reserves	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	0%	\$1,500,000
Total Transfers	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	0%	\$1,500,000
NET COST (REVENUE)	\$4,514,900	\$263,950	\$668,903	15%	\$3,845,997



County of Wellington
County Affordable Housing
Statement of Operations as of
31 Mar 2016

	Annual Budget	March Actual \$	YTD Actual \$	YTD Actual %	Remaining Budget
Revenue					
Grants and Subsidies	\$205,700	\$0	\$0	0%	\$205,700
Licenses, Permits and Rents	\$582,900	\$48,760	\$145,724	25%	\$437,176
User Fees & Charges	\$0	\$0	\$75	0%	\$(75)
Total Revenue	\$788,600	\$48,760	\$145,799	18%	\$642,801
Expenditures					
Salaries, Wages and Benefits	\$3,800	\$0	\$0	0%	\$3,800
Supplies, Material & Equipment	\$42,700	\$7,691	\$9,098	21%	\$33,602
Purchased Services	\$403,200	\$40,584	\$83,917	21%	\$319,283
Insurance & Financial	\$14,100	\$0	\$11,264	80%	\$2,836
Debt Charges	\$302,000	\$0	\$(8,864)	(3%)	\$310,864
Total Expenditures	\$765,800	\$48,275	\$95,415	12%	\$670,385
NET OPERATING COST / (REVENUE)	\$(22,800)	\$(485)	\$(50,384)	221%	\$27,584
Transfers					
Transfer to Reserves	\$522,800	\$0	\$0	0%	\$522,800
Total Transfers	\$522,800	\$0	\$0	0%	\$522,800
NET COST (REVENUE)	\$500,000	\$(485)	\$(50,384)	(10%)	\$550,384



County of Wellington

04-April-2016

Social Services

Capital Work-in-Progress Expenditures By Departments

All Open Projects For The Period Ending March 31, 2016

	Approved Budget	March Actual	Current Year	Previous Years	LIFE-TO-DATE ACTUALS		Remaining Budget
					Total	% of Budget	
Ontario Works							
129 Wyndham, Lobby Renovations	\$150,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$150,000
Fergus OW Exterior Cladding	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$30,000
Subtotal Ontario Works	\$180,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$180,000
Child Care Services							
15 Douglas St: Int Renovation	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$75,000
21 Douglas St Front Entrance	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$50,000
Subtotal Child Care Services	\$125,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$125,000
Social Housing							
261-263 Speedvale Addition/Ele	\$1,812,000	\$110,667	\$260,338	\$449,523	\$709,862	39%	\$1,102,138
51 John St Make up Air Unit	\$70,000	\$0	\$2,544	\$76,152	\$78,696	112%	-\$8,696
229 Dublin Roof	\$487,000	\$0	\$0	\$21,875	\$21,875	4%	\$465,125
212 Whites Rd Make up Air Unit	\$50,000	\$0	\$2,544	\$54,864	\$57,408	115%	-\$7,408
Fire System Upg City Locations	\$550,700	\$0	\$52,754	\$394,391	\$447,145	81%	\$103,555
Fire System Upg County Locatn	\$225,000	\$0	\$0	\$56,713	\$56,713	25%	\$168,287
229 Dublin Make Up Air Unit	\$150,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$150,000
32 Hadati Roof Design/Replace	\$363,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$363,000
Vancouver Dr Major Upgrade	\$70,000	\$0	\$24,736	\$38,160	\$62,896	90%	\$7,104
Mt. Forest Proprrty Acquisition	\$1,300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$1,300,000
Delhi Marl Air Make up Unit	\$332,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$332,000
32 Hadati Site Improvements	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$10,000
Edinburgh Window And Siding	\$199,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$199,000
Elizabeth St Site Improvements	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$10,000
City Building Retrofits 2016	\$668,000	\$29,295	\$70,250	\$0	\$70,250	11%	\$597,750
County Building Retrofits 2016	\$441,000	-\$9,561	\$5,400	\$0	\$5,400	1%	\$435,600
Affd Hsng and Non Profit BCA	\$110,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$110,000
Subtotal Social Housing	\$6,847,700	\$130,402	\$418,566	\$1,091,678	\$1,510,244	22%	\$5,337,456



County of Wellington

04-April-2016

Social Services

Capital Work-in-Progress Expenditures By Departments

All Open Projects For The Period Ending March 31, 2016

	Approved Budget	March Actual	Current Year	Previous Years	LIFE-TO-DATE ACTUALS		Remaining Budget
					Total	% of Budget	
Affordable Housing							
Webster Place 55 Units Affd Hs	\$13,940,000	\$77,336	\$216,834	\$391,582	\$608,416	4 %	\$13,331,584
165 Gordon Generator	\$320,000	\$0	\$0	\$172,959	\$172,959	54 %	\$147,041
182 George St Capital Works	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$13,886	\$13,886	28 %	\$36,114
Affd Hsng Blding Retrofits 16	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0 %	\$30,000
Webster Place Co-Generation	\$350,000	\$10,143	\$20,319	\$0	\$20,319	6 %	\$329,681
Subtotal Affordable Housing	\$14,690,000	\$87,479	\$237,153	\$578,427	\$815,579	6%	\$13,874,421
Total Social Services	\$21,842,700	\$217,881	\$655,719	\$1,670,105	\$2,325,823	11 %	\$19,516,877



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Luisa Artuso, Director of Child Care Services CC-16-03
Date: Wednesday, April 13, 2016
Subject: **Phase Two Regulatory Proposals - Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014**

Background:

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) repealed and replaced the *Day Nurseries Act* on August 31, 2015. This new legislation has been carefully designed to better align with the child care needs of today's families. It also strengthens the oversight of the child care sector and helps to establish the child care and early years system as a continuum of high quality programmes and services, all with a common goal of contributing to the healthy development of children.

Update:

Given the transformative scope of the new legislative framework, the Ministry of Education is introducing regulatory changes under the CCEYA in three phases over a three year period. Each phase of regulatory changes is comprehensively reviewed and amended to align with contemporary research as well as recommendations from stakeholders and experts. They must also receive consent of the legislative assembly.

The first phase of regulatory changes occurred in 2015 when the CCEYA came into effect. These changes primarily focused on licensing clarity; enforcement; licensing standards; and children with special needs.

The second phase of regulatory changes relates to service system management and funding; licensing clarity (authorized recreation and exemptions); enforcement (administrative penalties, offences); tiered licensing; licensing standards (ratios, health and safety, home child care, serious occurrences); licensing fees; before and after school programmes (changes to the *Education Act*). As required, the Ministry posted the regulatory proposals for public consultation which closed on April 1, 2016.

The submission from Child Care Services stated that we are, overall, in support of the monumental changes the Ministry of Education is taking to support a high quality licensed early years system along with the following recommendations:

1. That the Province takes steps to support effective local community systems planning tables through that is legislatively required membership and participation.
2. That the Ministry re-evaluate areas in the proposed regulations that could have an the impact of increased costs without negatively impacting aspects of quality. That said, one cannot ignore that the real cost of high quality child care programme operation is much higher than public funding and parent fees have been able to cover which is why we implore the Province to invest more funds into the early years system.
3. For any new funding allocations to be directed to General Operating Grants with guidelines prioritizing infant spaces and better wages for early childhood educators.

In summary, we would like to see a viable new Early Years and Child Care System that is high quality, is supported by strong principled regulations, and where Registered Early Childhood Educators earn fair wages and have good working conditions.

Recommendation:

That Committee receive the report, Phase Two Regulatory Proposals under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Luisa Artuso". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Luisa Artuso
Director of Child Care Services



To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Heather Burke, Manager of Special Projects
Date: Wednesday, April 13, 2016
Subject: **Maryborough Township Housing Corporation**

Background:

Staff have reviewed and recommend an option to maintain affordable and rent-geared-to-income rents for tenants by Maryborough Township Housing Corporation ("MTHC") for 11 Caroline Street, Moorefield after MTHC's Municipal Non-Profit Housing Agreement expires as of June 30, 2016.

The social housing project known as "Maryborough Terrace" and owned by the Maryborough Township Housing Corporation is part of the social housing portfolio that the County as Service Manager assumed financial and programme administrative responsibility in 1998 and 2002 under housing legislation. It consists of 15 apartment units in a one storey building, with 14 one-bedroom units and 1 two-bedroom unit for low-income seniors age 60 +. Many seniors have resided in this housing community location, and many local residents, tenants and municipal councillors have participated on the non-profit board. MTHC has two agreements:

- A Municipal Non-Profit Housing Agreement between MTHC, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Ministry of Housing (tripartite operating agreement) signed on September 6, 1979, with requirements under Section 95.1 (formerly Section 56.1) of the National Housing Act. This agreement expires as of June 30, 2016, along with the repayment of a 35-year NHA insured mortgage. MTHC is receiving an operating subsidy of approximately \$42,500 per year from the Service Manager in exchange for providing housing in accordance with its mandate to provide low-cost housing to seniors.
- A Social Housing Renovation and Retrofit Programme (SHRRP) Agreement dated March 11, 2010 between MTHC and The Corporation of the County of Wellington as service manager. This agreement expires on February 17, 2021. MTHC received capital repair funding from the Service Manager in the amount of \$63,790.00, in exchange for providing affordable rents for 10 years at 80% of the average market rent or less. In 2014, the rents were 68% of the average market rent for the area, with a weighted average of \$580.00 for all units.

In addition, MTHC can undertake a building condition audit which will include a capital reserve fund review to be completed in 2016. The cost of this assessment is provided by the County for MTHC and all participating social housing non-profit and cooperative housing providers to support their capital asset planning and priorities to maintain housing in good condition.

As this project is one of 6 municipal and private non-profit projects known as "social housing EOA - end of operating agreement", the County has no further legislative responsibility, with the possible exception for Service Level Standards component, to continue programme administration or funding to

it once the Municipal Non-Profit Housing Agreement expires under the Housing Services Act, 2011. However, MTHC has ongoing obligations with the County under the SHRRP agreement and its programme to ensure that the rents remain affordable for another 5 years.

On May 21, 2015, the Board of MTHC passed a motion to request ongoing support from the County to continue operating the social housing project, similar to the existing arrangement, under its non-profit's mandate to own and operate a housing project for low-income seniors. The Board indicated that there is no other such housing available in their community and a need exists to provide this housing for existing and future seniors living in the area.

Staff met with the staff of MTHC to consider options between the County and MTHC for the benefit of low-to-moderate income senior tenants living in this well-run housing project. A review of the financial status after repayment of the mortgage confirms that the operation of the project is not viable, would experience a cash flow deficit and is at risk. It would not be financially viable for MTHC to operate the housing project without government assistance. However, any ongoing financial assistance was estimated to be less than existing.

Discussions ensued on the provision of ongoing assistance. General operating considerations were discussed along with no impact to the residents, retention of rent-geared-to-income and low-end of market rents, legal responsibilities, financial assistance and building condition of the project. Due to interest by MTHC in a possible future addition of two-bedroom units, a representative from MTHC attended the County's affordable housing development workshops held in 2015/ 2016. Additional information was shared via County representation on the OMSSA EOA task group and from other Service Managers. It is noted that all levels of government are in the early stages of potential tools and approaches for municipal and private non-profit EOAs. Lastly, County staff reviewed requirements for municipal and education property tax exemptions as a grant and/or bylaw.

County staff recommend provision of ongoing financial assistance as of July 1, 2016, and an approach similar to MTHC's current operations to extend MTHC mandate for low to moderate income seniors housing to include the following:

- i) Designating the housing project as a Municipal Housing Capital Facility with property tax exemptions;
- ii) Entering into a project specific Municipal Housing Capital Facility Agreement under the Municipal Act, 2001 which shall include:
 - a. Loan incentives for five years with an option for a five year renewal, commencing July 1, 2016, such loan to be forgiven at the end of the term, including all renewals;
 - b. Exemption of municipal and education property tax as a grant and/or by-law;
 - c. Financial assistance for rent-geared-to-income and affordable rents equal to break-even operating and revenue requirements, as well as a capital contribution under approved budgets;
 - d. One-time funding for legal costs for all legal agreements and documents related hereto;
 - e. Project operating requirements similar to the existing operating agreement. General requirements for final negotiation are listed in Appendix A.

This approach is consistent with SHRRP agreement obligations to maintain affordable rents (or less) until 2021, plus recognizes MTHC mandate to provide lower cost housing to seniors within the community on an ongoing basis. Due to the economies of scale and rural nature of this project, the

County's response to MTHC is unique, however it will inform the planning for the other EOA housing providers with expiring agreements.

The recommendations in this report provide a viable option for the Board of MTHC to continue its mandate. A Board resolution from MTHC accepting this option in principle subject to final negotiation and execution of the agreement is required. The Board has a future option to consider development of additional two-bedroom units on the property. Provision of funding to continue the viability of social housing projects after agreements expire is supported through the goals of the Service Manager's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan for Guelph-Wellington 2014.

Future influences may occur with legislative, regulatory and funding changes such as the March 2016 Federal Budget (new funding to assist some EOA social housing providers to maintain rent-geared to income assistance), recent 2016 Provincial regulatory changes announcement in its Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update, and any new affordable or post-EOA funding opportunities.

Financial Impact

The expiry of the existing operating agreement and proposed extended relationship requires new agreements and bylaws detailed in this report to be put into place. The incentives will have no impact on the County budget as funds are available through reserves. Estimated assistance will be less than the existing subsidy due to changes with the mortgage payment, property tax exemptions, federal subsidy, and adjusted costs, or approximately \$33,000 per year beginning July 1, 2016 for the next 5 years, subject to renewal for another five years.

Attachment:

Appendix A: General Operating requirements for Maryborough Township Housing Corporation, subject to final negotiation and approval by County solicitor

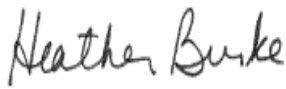
Recommendations

That the Social Services Committee approves the recommendations outlined in Report HS 16-07 dated April 13, 2016, as follows:

- a) That County staff negotiates a Municipal Housing Capital Facility Agreement with Maryborough Township Housing Corporation (MTHC) to ensure affordable and rent-geared-to-income rents on such terms and conditions listed in Appendix A as the County considers appropriate and in such form satisfactory to the County Solicitor;
- b) That County Council pass a by-law pursuant to By-Law 4548-03 as amended providing authority to:
 - i. Enter into a municipal housing capital facility agreement effective July 1, 2016 with MTHC for the property at 11 Caroline Street , Moorefield ("the project") on such terms as have been negotiated pursuant to Recommendation a); and
 - ii. Exempt the project from municipal and education property taxation, which tax exemption is to be effective from July 1, 2016 as a grant and/or a property tax exemption bylaw;

- c) Direct the County Clerk to give written notice of the property tax by-law when enacted to the Ministers for Finance, Education and Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, the Upper Grand District School Board, the Wellington Catholic District School Board and other such appropriate parties;
- d) That staff report back to the County on any future amendments to the Municipal Housing Capital Facility Agreement;
- e) That authority be granted for the introduction of all necessary bylaws to give effect to these recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,



Heather Burke
Manager of Special Projects



Ryan Pettipiere
Director of Housing

Appendix A: General operating requirements for Maryborough Township Housing Corporation, subject to final negotiation and approval by County solicitor

Maryborough is requested to confirm by Board resolution of its acceptance, in principle, of the terms and conditions of this County of Wellington financial assistance option, and negotiation for purposes of execution of a project-specific Municipal Housing Capital Facility agreement with the County, as outlined in this report. The agreement will contain an accountability framework structured as a five-year loan, subject to a five-year renewal, for the property tax exemption and financial assistance, and registered on title. Terms and conditions may include but not limited to:

- A five (5) year term, commencing on July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2021, subject to a five year renewal to June 30, 2026;
- A property tax exemption as designated in all grants and/ or necessary by-laws and agreements;
- Monthly financial assistance for affordable and rent-geared-to-income rent subsidies determined from County-approved annual budgets as submitted by Maryborough for operating and capital, based on break-even gross operating and revenue requirements in addition to a capital contribution for a fiscal year-end December 31;
- One-time legal costs included in the monthly payments for the transition to the new and/or amended agreement, such as non-profit corporation status requirements, legal review of agreements and registration on title, and option for potential additional development on the property, and related costs;
- Financial assistance provided as a forgivable loan over a five-year period, subject to forgiveness at the end of the term by the County to ensure compliance with the project;
- Retention of any operating surplus for purposes of extraordinary operating expenditures, or annual investment in capital reserves;
- Eligibility for emergency operating or capital funds according to the County's policy for social housing providers;
- Adherence to county social and affordable housing directives (subject to amended funding requirements), best practices and operating standards, including but not limited to conflict of interest, confidentiality, non-profit housing corporation status, purchasing, day-to-day operations, asset management and planning and capital reserves, building condition assessments, financial and other reporting to the board and County, acceptable insurance to the County;
- Adherence of the provider to local Property Standards By-law(s) for unit, building and property maintenance and capital standards;
- Process for tenant selection and eligibility of new and existing tenants, in accordance with the existing and/or approved amended mandate of the non-profit housing corporation;
- Rent-geared-to-income and affordable rents – conditions under which operating funding would be targeted.
- Social and Affordable housing considerations – the rents must remain at or below the prescribed level, including rents that are geared-to-income and affordable as part of an operating subsidy, with future possible inclusion in Service Level Standards reporting , possible rent supplement incentive and or agreement, or any possible future post-EOA funding opportunities;
- An annual financial audited statement by a qualified auditor;
- Annual Occupancy, and other Reporting – information required from Maryborough to ensure compliance;
- Regular compliance and audited financial statement reviews by the County of Wellington.

- Limitations on Maryborough to acquire any new mortgage financing without prior written approval from the County;
- Consequences of Sale or Default – the steps to be followed should the property be sold or should default occur, including first right of refusal upon sale of project to the County of Wellington;
- Active non-profit housing corporation status and similar mandate of Maryborough Township Housing Corporation, and any amendments thereof, subject to County approval;
- General clauses for the County administration to amend through directives/ communications any operational changes to the affordable, rent-gear-to-income rent and capital contribution subsidies and operating requirements as required based on similar approved directions with other existing social and affordable housing providers.
- Indemnification clauses.
- Potential for renegotiation, amendment or termination of the agreement, subject to future province-wide changes for social housing providers with Section 95.1 expiring operating agreements.



COMMITTEE REPORT

OW-16-04

To: Chair and Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Stuart Beumer, Director of Ontario Works
Date: Wednesday, April 13, 2016
Subject: Market Bucks Pilot Evaluation

Background:

In June of 2015 County Council approved participation of the Ontario Works office in a pilot project that provided Ontario Works clients in the Mount Forest area with vouchers to access the Wellington North Farmers' Market. The project was a partnership effort between the Ontario Works office, the Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination (PTF), the Township of Wellington North and Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health.

The role of the Ontario Works office in the pilot project was to serve as a distributing organization for the Market Bucks to clients. In this role Ontario Works Caseworkers identified clients who reside in the Mount Forest area and provided them with no cost vouchers to purchase items at the Farmers' Market over the summer and fall period of 2015. The Ontario Works office, under the guidance of the PTF, also supported evaluation efforts of the pilot project.

Evaluation of the Market Bucks Pilot:

As part of the Market Bucks Pilot an evaluation was built into the service delivery plan. The PTF led the evaluation effort through its Research and Knowledge Mobilization Committee. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine if the Market Bucks pilot met the programme objectives that were identified at the time that the programme was developed and to inform decisions about the continued direction of the programme following the completion of the 2015 pilot.

Overall, the evaluation clearly demonstrated that the overall goals of the project were met, including:

- Increasing access to healthy, nutritious food in a manner that maintains dignity, builds health and community, and challenges inequalities
- Creating opportunities for residents on low or fixed incomes to establish self--reliance, and empowerment over their own food procurement
- Increasing connection to community by some of our most vulnerable residents
- Increasing awareness, knowledge and comfort/familiarity with farmers' market
- Increasing exposure and revenue for local farmers/vendors.

The full evaluation of the pilot is attached, including recommendations to continue the project with the Wellington North Farmers' Market and to explore opportunities to expand the project to additional clients and/or locations in the County.

Financial Implications:

The Ontario Works office administers a number of municipally funded discretionary benefits to individuals and families in the community. This pilot project was approved as an extension of these services and was funded through the approved budget for these services. A maximum of \$5000 to fund vouchers on behalf of participating OW clients was established as part of the pilot project.

The actual cost of vouchers for clients as part of the 2015 pilot was \$1195 and was accommodated within the approved municipally funded discretionary benefits budget.

Recommendation:

That the County Ontario Works office continue to work with Market Bucks partnering agencies to implement the recommendations of the Market Bucks Pilot Evaluation.

That the County discretionary funding to support OW clients as part of this project not exceed \$5000 for 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Beumer'.

Stuart Beumer
Director of Ontario Works



Evaluation Report: 2015 Market Bucks Pilot Project

March 2016

Evaluation Report: 2015 Market Bucks Pilot Project

Lead Author

- Randalin Ellery, Coordinator, Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination

Acknowledgements

The Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination would like to extend a special thank you to members of the Poverty Task Force Research & Knowledge Mobilization Committee for their support and feedback during the course of this project. These members include:

- Arnold Bethune, Community Member
- Ashley Coleman, Social Planning and Policy Analyst, Ontario Works, County of Wellington
- Auburn Larose, Health Promotion Specialist, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
- Diane Tan, Social Planning and Policy Analyst, Ontario Works, County of Wellington
- Jennifer MacLeod, Manager, Health Analytics and Health Promotion, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
- Mark Poste, Housing Planning and Policy Analyst, Housing Services, County of Wellington
- Shakiba Shayani, Director, Community Investment, United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin
- Warren Dodd, PhD Candidate, Department of Population Medicine, University of Guelph

Special acknowledgement is extended to the following people for supporting the Market Bucks Pilot Project and evaluation at different stages of its development:

- April Marshall, Tourism, Marketing & Promotion Manager, Township of Wellington North
- Colleen Brunelle, Fergus Programme Manager, County of Wellington Social Services
- Lisa Needham, Public Health Nutritionist, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
- Ryan Pettipiere, Director of Housing, County of Wellington Social Services
- Stuart Beumer, Director, Ontario Works, County of Wellington Social Services

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Appendix 1: Market Bucks Recipients Demographic Information Collection Sheet

Appendix 2: Market Bucks Recipients Survey

Appendix 3: Wellington North Farmers Market Vendor Survey

Appendix 4: Ontario Works Caseworker Survey

Appendix 5: Ontario Works Manager and Market Facilitator Survey



MARKET BUCKS PILOT PROJECT

GUELPH & WELLINGTON TASK FORCE FOR POVERTY ELIMINATION / MARCH 2016

MARKET BUCKS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO
32 ONTARIO WORKS RECIPIENTS



WITH HOUSEHOLDS THAT INCLUDED:
37 ADULTS & 27 DEPENDENTS

FAMILY COMPOSITION



3%
COUPLE WITH
NO CHILDREN



41%
SINGLE
(NO CHILDREN)



13%
TWO PARENT
FAMILY



43%
SOLE SUPPORT
PARENT

62%
FEMALE



35
YEARS
AVERAGE
AGE

68% REDEMPTION RATE

MARKET BUCKS REDEEMED
DURING 3-MONTH PILOT (JULY
TO OCTOBER 2015)

75% PARTICIPATION RATE

RECIPIENTS THAT REDEEMED AT
LEAST SOME OF THEIR MARKET
BUCKS

100% VENDOR PARTICIPATION

ALL VENDORS AT THE NORTH
WELLINGTON FARMERS MARKET
ACCEPTED MARKET BUCKS

INCREASED ACCESS TO HEALTHIER FOOD

ACCORDING TO 100% OF
SURVEY PARTICIPANTS



DECREASED RELIANCE ON OTHER FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS



USE OF TRADITIONAL
CHARITABLE FOOD ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS DECREASED 50%
AMONG SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

INCREASED COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



57% OF SURVEY
PARTICIPANTS TALKED TO
COMMUNITY MEMBERS THEY
HADN'T MET BEFORE WHILE AT
THE MARKET



INCREASED MARKET SALES

50% OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS
PURCHASED ITEMS WITH THEIR
OWN MONEY AT THE MARKET



INCREASED MARKET TRAFFIC

68% OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS HAD
NOT BEEN TO THE MARKET BEFORE
RECEIVING MARKET BUCKS

Background

From 2010 – 2013, the Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination worked in partnership with emergency food providers and clients, as well as key community stakeholders, to address challenges within the local emergency food system. This involved two extensive research projects with the support of the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute/Research Shop at the University of Guelph^{1, 2}.

In 2013, the Poverty Task Force (PTF) endorsed a set of recommendations based on this research, which aimed to tackle the significant barriers that exist for those accessing and providing emergency food assistance. Included were a series of short-term recommendations that largely reflected the main areas that people felt needed improvement, including stigma, consistency and transparency of eligibility criteria, accessibility, and food quality³. Over the next two years, considerable work was invested in ensuring these recommendations were implemented. However, much of this work focused on efforts within the geographical boundaries of Guelph.

In late 2014, Lisa Needham (Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health), Ryan Pettipiere (County of Wellington), and Randalin Ellery (PTF), began meeting to discuss strategies that could be implemented in Wellington County to improve food security. In particular, discussions focused on reducing stigma, which was identified as the biggest barrier to accessing service in the County in earlier research⁴, as well as increasing access to fresh, healthy food.

Based on lessons from two existing farmers' market voucher programs, *Harvest Bucks* in London-Middlesex, and *Market Dollars* in Windsor, the group focused efforts on developing a local Market Bucks (MB) Pilot Project.

Market Bucks Pilot Project

The MB Pilot Project allowed consumers to purchase products from farmers' market vendors using vouchers. MB were distributed to Ontario Works clients in Wellington North through funding from the County of Wellington. To reduce the possibility of stigma attached to the use of the MB, they were also sold at full price to any interested party or individual.

¹ (Nelson et al., 2011)

² (Dodd et al., 2013)

³ (Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination, 2013)

⁴ (Dodd et al., 2013)

Program Objectives

- Increase access to healthy, nutritious food in a manner that maintains dignity, builds health and community, and challenges inequalities
- Create opportunities for residents on low or fixed incomes to establish self-reliance, and empowerment over their own food procurement
- Increase connection to community by some of our most vulnerable residents
- Increase awareness, knowledge and comfort/familiarity with the farmers' market
- Increase exposure and revenue for local farmers/vendors

Target population

Residents of Wellington North who struggle with food security and access to affordable, fresh, healthy local food⁵. In particular, the program focuses on recipients of Ontario Works, with opportunities to support other low-income community members and include those in other income brackets through direct-purchase.

Description of the Evaluation

The purpose of MB Pilot Project evaluation is to determine if the program objectives were achieved and to inform decisions about the direction of the project now that the pilot stage is complete. The evaluation was designed to collect data and feedback from MB recipients, and other key stakeholders, including Ontario Works (OW) Caseworkers, the OW Manager (Fergus office), the Farmers Market Manager/Facilitator, and the farmers market vendors.

Initial demographic information (Appendix 1) was collected by OW Caseworkers when they distributed MB to clients. Caseworkers coded each demographic profile so the information could later be matched with feedback collected through one-on-one phone interviews with the MB recipients (Appendix 2). Additionally, each voucher was provided a unique number which was tracked by the OW caseworkers as they were distributed to clients. When vouchers were later collected from the vendors, the information was used to understand which clients were redeeming the vouchers.

⁵ Wellington North was selected based on data provided by the County of Wellington, *2014 Ontario Works Caseload Profile*, and Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health, *Addressing Social Determinants of Health in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph*. Both reports identify Wellington North as an area of the Wellington County with higher rates of low income and Ontario Works caseloads. It was also identified as an area that is often underserved in terms of available resources and programs that support those in low income. Finally, a newly established farmers' market in Mount Forest presented the opportunity to try something new and innovative.

Feedback was collected for this evaluation from a variety of other key stakeholders. An online survey was provided to all Wellington North Farmers Market Vendors (Appendix 3), and one-on-one phone interviews were completed with Ontario Works (OW) Caseworkers (Appendix 4) and the OW Manager that participated in the project, as well as the Farmers Market Manager/Facilitator (Appendix 5).

All of the data and information collected was analyzed by PTF staff, with the support of the PTF Research & Knowledge Mobilization Committee.

Results

Market Bucks Recipients

OW Caseworkers made significant efforts to inform all OW clients in Mount Forest about the the MB Pilot Project. In total, 32 clients were provided with MB, which represented households that included 37 adults and 27 dependents, for a total of 64 individuals.

Demographic Profile

Initial demographic information was collected by OW caseworkers when they distributed MB's to their clients. Based on this information, it is understood that the MB participants represented a number of different age categories (Figure 1), with the average recipient 35 years old. Recipients were predominately female (62%), and had been receiving OW assistance for an average of 13-24 months.

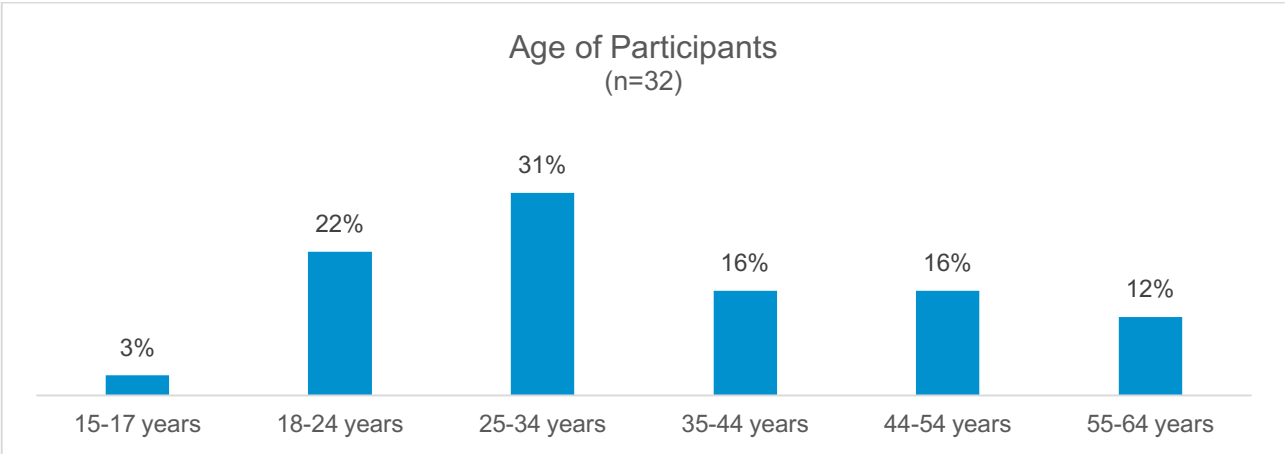


Figure 1: Age of MB Participants

Most of the participants were single (41%) or sole-support parents (43%), while a smaller number were from a two-parent family (13%) or a couple with no children (3%) (Figure 2). This is reflective of overall caseload data from Wellington North, where 52% of clients are single with no children and 38% are sole support parents.

Of the households with dependents (56%), the vast majority (85%) of children were 0-6 years (Figure 3).

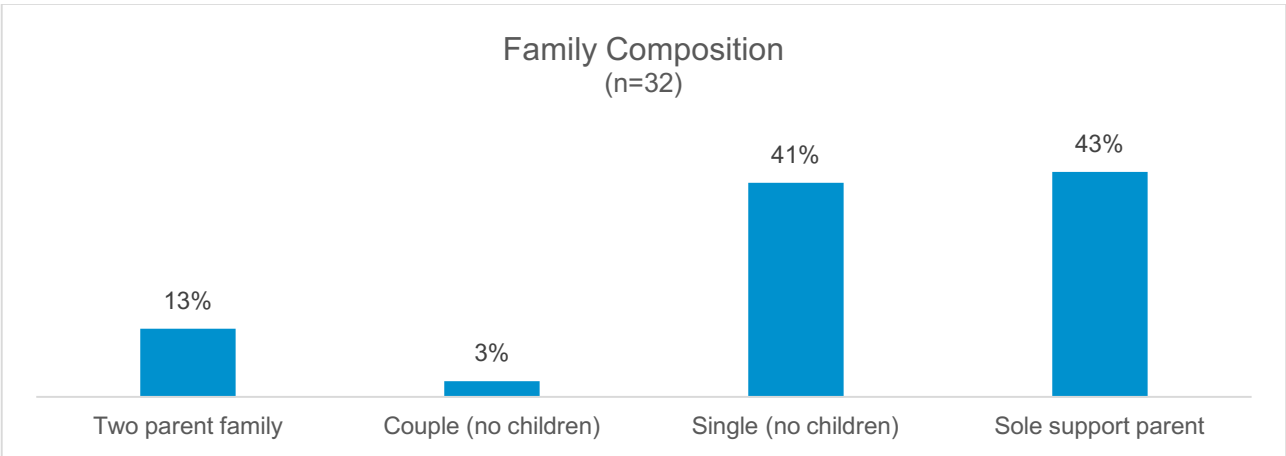


Figure 2: Family Composition of MB Participants

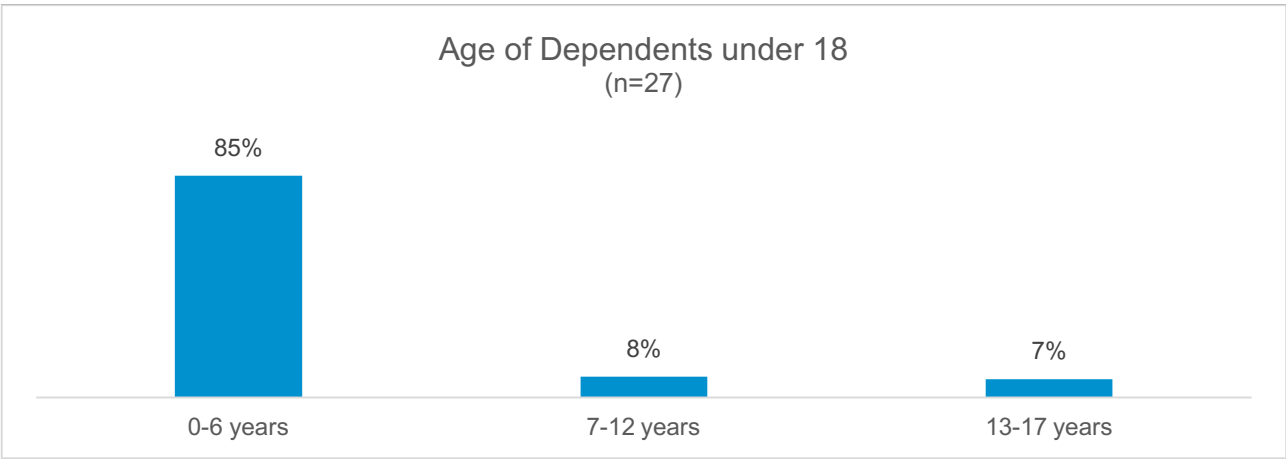


Figure 3: Age of Dependents of MB Participants

Redemption of Market Bucks

Market Bucks equivalent to a monetary value of \$5 were printed and 350 (\$1750) were distributed. A total of 239 (\$1195) vouchers were redeemed over a three-month period from early July to early October, representing a redemption rate of 68%. The MB were distributed to 32 OW clients and redeemed by 24, meaning there was an

overall participation rate of 75%. The vast majority of MB recipients (72%) redeemed more than half of their MB (Figure 4).

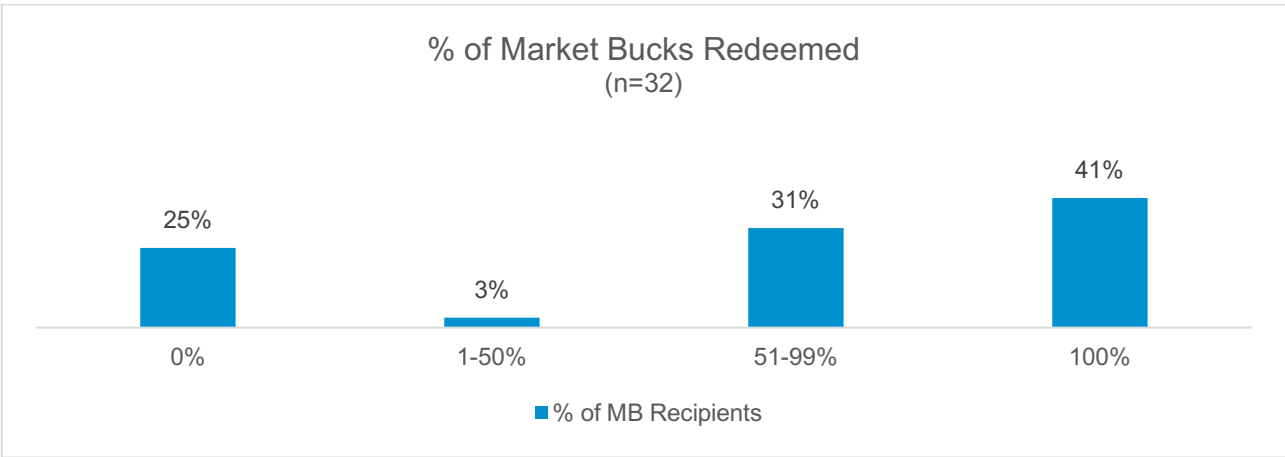


Figure 4: % of Market Bucks Redeemed by Recipients

Survey responses

A total of 19 surveys were completed over the phone with MB recipients, representing a 59% survey participation rate (Figure 5).

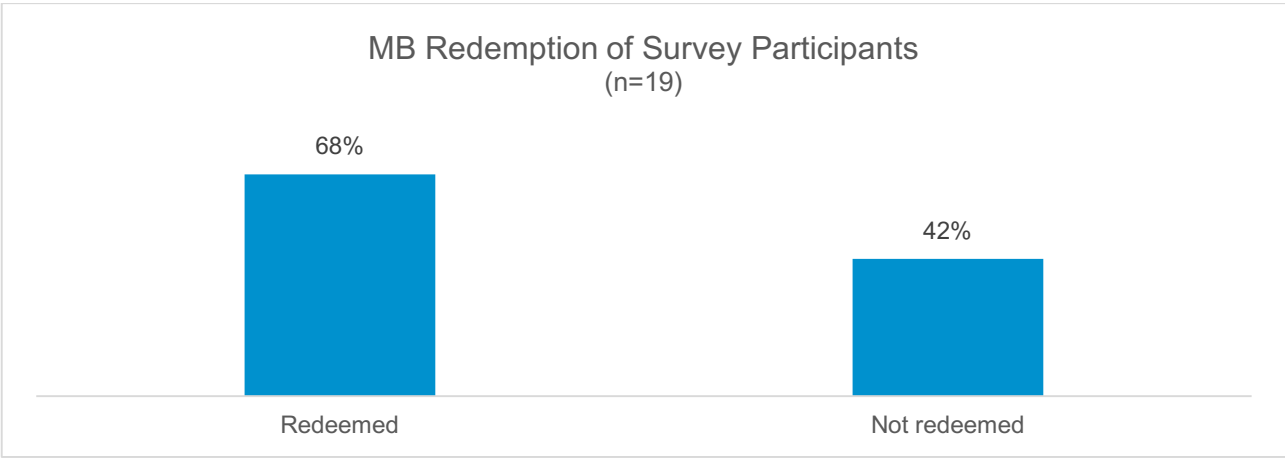


Figure 5: MB Redemption of Survey Participants

A total of 68% of the survey participants redeemed at least some of their MB. These participants were asked a number of questions about the food they purchased. All of the participants reported that they ate most (38%) or all (62%) of the food that they purchased with the MB. All of the participants reported that they purchased fruits and

vegetables. Other purchased items include meats (15%) and baked goods (31%). This is largely reflective of the types of food that is available at the Wellington North Farmers Market, which sells predominately fresh produce. Finally, all of the survey participants that redeemed MB reported that the MB allowed them to eat healthier food compared to their typical diet.

While most of the survey participants redeemed at least some of their MB, 42% did not redeem any. Half (50%) of these survey participants suggested that they did not use their MB because they ran out of time. Other reasons included inconvenient location of farmer's market (38%), and a dislike for the food that was available (13%) (Figure 6). Other options provided that were not selected included: didn't know how to use the MB, child care issues, kids that wouldn't eat the food available, lost MB, and issues with storage and preparation.

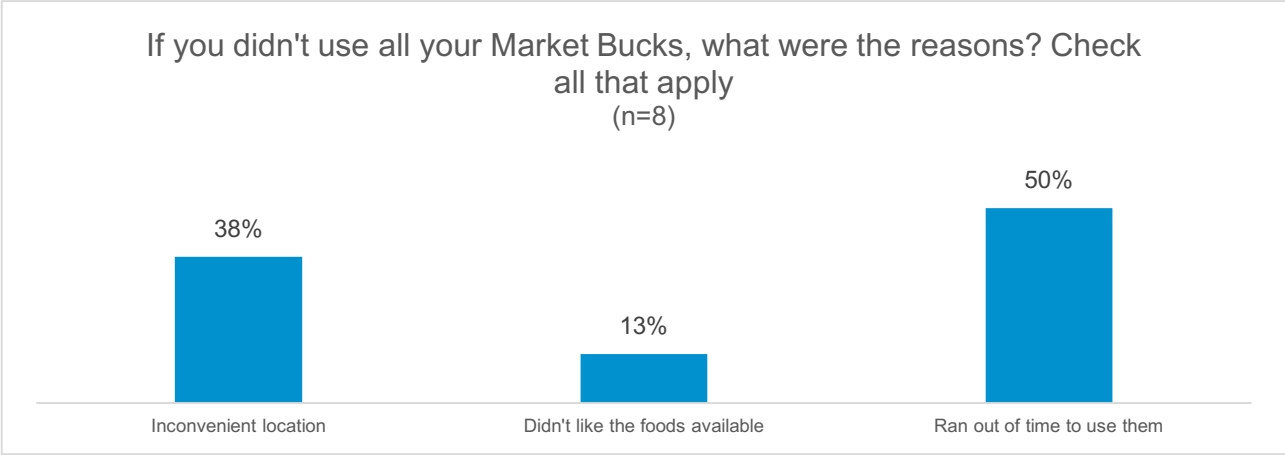


Figure 6: Reasons MB were not redeemed

In total, 68% of survey participants indicated that they had received food from at least one other food assistance program prior to receiving MB. Nearly all (92%) of survey participants reported that they used a food bank or pantry. Other programs used included school snack programs (15%), and community gardens (8%). After they received the MB, less than half (46%) of previous food bank or pantry users continued to use these services, while other food assistance programs were not used at all.

Survey participants were asked a number of questions about their experience at the Wellington North Farmer's Market (the Market). The majority (68%) reported that they had not been to the Market before receiving MB. Over half (56%) of the survey participants that answered this question claimed that they visited the Market more than 2 times over the course of the summer (Figure 7).

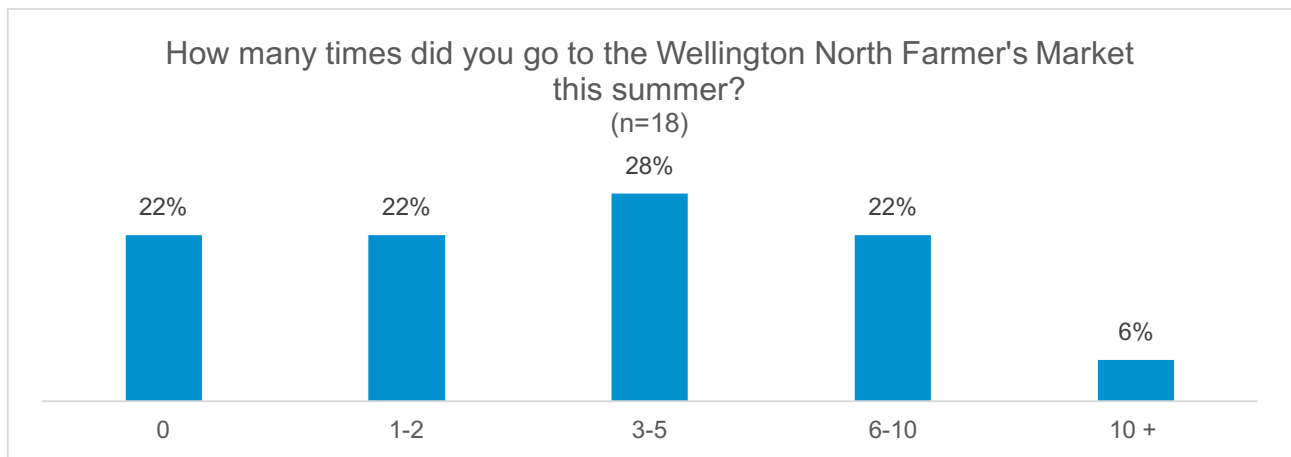


Figure 7: Number of times MB participants went to the Market

The MB survey participants that visited the Market were also asked about their activities and interactions while there. Half (50%) reported that they purchased goods at the Market with their own money, 79% talked to the Market vendors about the food they were purchasing (e.g. how it was grown, how to cook it, etc.), and 57% talked to other community members that they had not met before (Figure 8).

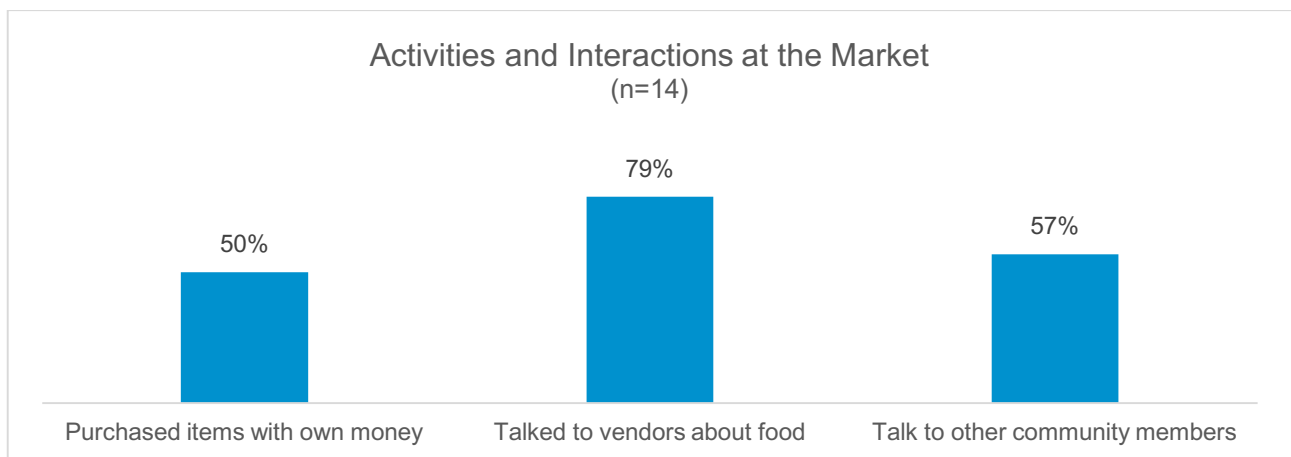


Figure 8: Activities and interactions at the Market

Finally, survey participants were asked if they will return to the Market next summer. Nearly half (47%) said they would, but only if they received Market Bucks. A smaller number (32%) said they would, regardless of whether or not they received Market Bucks, and 12% said they would not.

Key Stakeholders: Ontario Works (OW) Caseworkers & OW Manager

Four caseworkers from the County of Wellington Ontario Works office in Fergus were involved with the distribution of MB and completed a one-on-one interview over the phone. To begin, the caseworkers were asked to share the perceived impacts of the MB on their clients. All of the caseworkers indicated that it allowed clients to purchase healthier food, particularly fresh produce and items that are typically more expensive. When asked to share feedback that their clients shared with them about the MB, caseworkers noted that the overwhelming majority of comments were very positive. Caseworkers noted that some clients returned regularly for additional vouchers, and suggested that the vouchers were allowing them to purchase more fresh produce. One caseworker said the following:

“Clients said it really helped financially because they were able to go to the [farmers] market and provide fresh vegetables for their families as opposed to spending more money at the supermarket.”

Other client feedback shared by the caseworkers related to the limited number of vendors at the Market. It was noted that there was one large produce vendor and they would sometimes run out of food, further limiting the availability of choices. Some clients suggested to their caseworkers that having the MB at other markets, particularly the Fergus market, would increase choice for participants.

Caseworkers were asked if distributing the MB had any impact on the relationship with their clients. All of the caseworkers agreed that providing a “no strings attached” benefit to client had a very positive impact. One caseworker noted:

“[MB] strengthened the relationship between client and caseworker because clients may come to know that caseworkers recognize the need for extra financial help with purchasing food.”

Finally, one caseworker commented meeting clients in Mount Forest provided a unique opportunity to connect. The caseworker noted that they met clients to give them MB at the Mount Forest library, rather than the OW office in Fergus. Clients seemed to appreciate caseworkers making the extra effort to meet them closer to their homes and felt that the library provided a less formal environment which allowed the caseworker and clients the opportunity to see one another as peers.

As part of the administration of the program, caseworkers were provided flexibility to determine how many Market Bucks to distribute to each client. When asked what factors they considered when distributing MB, caseworkers noted that the primary consideration was the number of people in the household. Other considerations included the age of dependents (e.g. more MB provided for households with teenagers) and shelter expenses. Caseworkers noted that they made efforts to ensure that there would be enough to go around, but were increasingly generous once they had a sense of who was actually using them.

Caseworkers were asked to identify any challenges they experienced when trying to distribute the MB to clients. The caseworkers reported that, overall, challenges were very minimal. There was some extra work involved with determining which of their clients were located in Mount Forest, as well as organizing a time to meet and provide the MB. It was also mentioned that there was a tight timeline to distribute the MB, and more time to prepare for the program would have been helpful.

When asked for additional comments about MB, a few caseworkers suggested that the program be extended to other communities in the County, particularly Fergus. A couple of caseworkers also commented that they were surprised that clients outside of Mount Forest did not complain that they did not receive the benefit.

Key Stakeholders: Market Facilitator

April Marshall, Tourism, Marketing & Promotion Manager for the Township of Wellington North, took on the role of Market Facilitator for the purposes of the MB Pilot Project. The Market Facilitator was the main point of contact for the vendors, and took on the responsibility of collecting redeemed vendors from vendors, submitting them to the County, and returning the monetary value back to the vendors. A one-on-one interview was conducted with Marshall to better understand how the MB program functioned on the ground.

When asked about the perceived impacts of the program, Marshall shared the following:

“I could visually see the impact when I went to the market. There was a new demographic coming and the vendors thought it was a great way to bring new customers to the market and help the community.”

Marshall noted that, overall, the vendors were very supportive of the program. The program provided vendors with an opportunity to increase business and offered a promotional opportunity for the Market.

From an administrative perspective, Marshall shared that there was added work of tracking for the vendors and completing the monthly reconciliation process, but that it was manageable. She noted that the reconciliation periods were time intensive, but that adequate time was provided to complete it.

Moving forward, Marshall suggested that increased promotion of the program would be beneficial and could increase sales to the general public. Marshall also noted that she is very supportive of continuing the program during the 2016 season.

Key Stakeholders: Market Vendors

During the 2015 season at the Wellington North Farmer's Market, there were a total of 10 vendors. Of those vendors, 6 were regular vendors and the remaining 4 were inconsistent. All vendors were invited to complete an online survey for this evaluation. A total of 4 vendors completed the survey, representing a participation rate of 40%. However, all the participating vendors noted that they were at the Market 7 or more times, indicating they were regular vendors. Therefore, the survey participation rate among regular vendors was 67%.

Vendors were asked to indicate the types of products they sold at the Market during the 2015 season. The main products sold were fruits and vegetables, grains, meat, baked goods, and other (coffee, plants, flowers, honey and crafts) (Figure 9). Other options that were not selected by survey participants included nuts, milk/dairy, and fish/seafood.

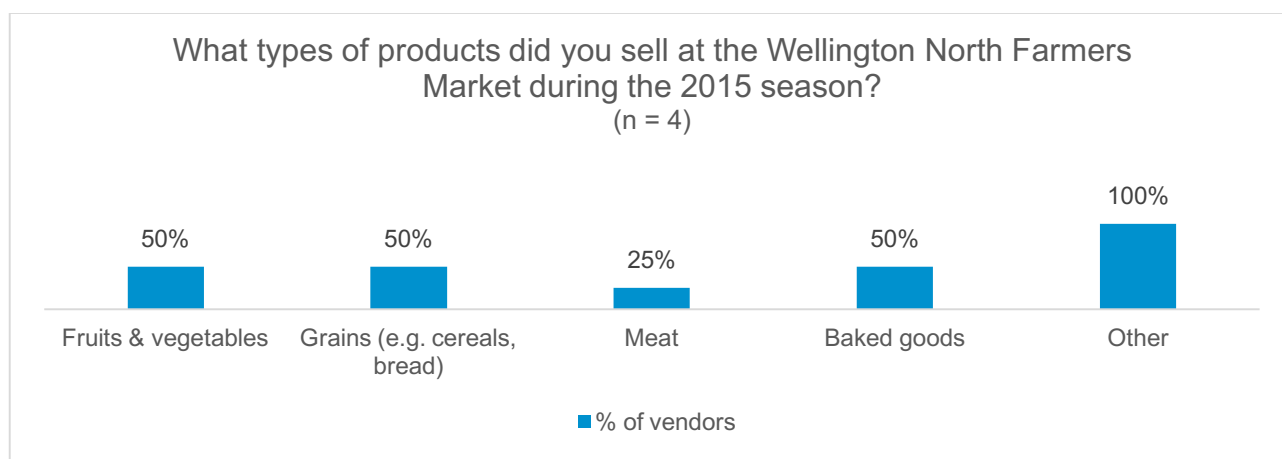


Figure 9: Products sold at the Market

All of the survey participants agreed that the MB program is an important strategy for increasing access to healthy, nutritious food in a manner that maintains dignity, builds health and community, and challenges inequity. When asked to indicate on a scale of 1 (a lot) to 5 (not at all) how much they thought the MB project increased their connection with some of the community's most vulnerable residents, the average score was 3.

In terms of impact on sales, half of the vendors (50%) were unsure if the MB program increased sales over the course of the season, while 25% stated sales did increase and 25% stated sales did not increase.

Overall, vendors were very supportive of the program and did not indicate any challenges with participating. All of the respondents indicated that they would support having MB at the Market during the 2016 season and 75% indicated that they would recommend having MB in other communities in 2016 (25% were not sure).

In terms of possible improvements to the MB program, vendors suggested it is important to increase awareness with general public that anyone can buy and use MB. When asked to rate the overall promotion of the program on a scale of 1 (very well) to 5 (not well), vendors gave an average score of 2.

Discussion

The MB Pilot Project aimed to achieve a number of objectives. Perhaps the most critical to the success of the program, was whether the MB would increase access to nutritious food in a manner that maintains dignity, builds health and community, and challenges inequalities. The evaluation clearly demonstrates that all those that participated by redeeming MB (75%), indicated that it allowed them to eat healthier food compared to their typical diet.

Having choice over the foods MB participants purchased created opportunities for participants to establish self-reliance, and empowerment over their own food procurement. While similar programs in other communities restrict the redemption of vouchers to healthier foods, the evaluation results show that all MB participants used the MB to purchase fresh produce, while some also purchased meats and baked goods. This suggests that restrictions to encourage healthier choices were unnecessary. However, MB participants were also restricted to what was available at the Market and it is unknown whether having additional choices would have resulted in different purchases.

The project itself was designed to ensure that vendors were unaware of how the MB were received, whether it was through OW, as a gift, or purchased dollar-for-dollar. This removed the stigma associated with other charitable food programs where clients receive food solely because of their low-income status. The evaluation suggests that the MB program was more appealing to participants, since less than half continued to use charitable food assistance programs while they were receiving MB. The fact that fresh produce is not typically provided through charitable food assistance programs was also likely a contributing factor to this finding.

The MB project also aimed to increase connection to community for some of its most vulnerable residents. The evaluation results clearly demonstrate that MB participants forged new relationships with the Market vendors, as well as through conversations with community members they had not met before. The feedback from vendors about this was less conclusive. However, it should be noted that the evaluation also notes that not all vendors were accessed equally, due to the types of products they sold, as well as the volume available. Vendors that redeemed higher amounts of vouchers may have had more opportunities to develop connections with MB participants.

Overall, the evaluation results show that the project increased awareness, knowledge and comfort/familiarity with the Market. The majority (68%) reported that they had never been to the Market before receiving MB, and many participants noted that they visited several times over the course of the summer. This finding was confirmed by the Market Facilitator, who observed a new demographic of people from the community visiting the market.

The last objective set out by the project was to increase exposure and revenue for local farmers. While this should be considered less critical than objectives aimed at increasing access to food, the evaluation results demonstrate positive results. Based on the redemption rate alone, the project brought \$1195 in new revenue to the Market. In addition, half of the MB participants reported that they purchased goods at the Market with their own money. Vendors were less confident with only 25% of vendor survey participants stating that they noticed an increase in sales. However, this could again be attributed to the fact that some vendors redeemed a higher number of vouchers than others.

In addition to meeting the stated objectives of the project, there was one important unexpected outcome that is worth noting. The feedback from OW caseworkers clearly suggested that distributing the MB resulted in improved relationships with clients. Providing a “no strings attached” benefit, as well as making the effort to meet clients in their own community, gave caseworkers and clients an opportunity to connect in a positive way.

While the overall evaluation results are encouraging, an important limitation to the extent of the projects success should be noted. Despite efforts to promote the MB to the general public and offers of reduced rates for health and social service providers with low-income clients, the MB were still predominately distributed to OW recipients.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The Market Bucks Pilot Project was developed to improve food security in Wellington County by increasing access to fresh, healthy food for low-income families and individuals. This pilot project was designed to respond to earlier research, which identified stigma as the biggest barrier to accessing charitable food assistance programs in the County. Overall, the evaluation clearly demonstrates that these overall goals were met, while also achieving the following objectives:

- Created opportunities for residents on low or fixed incomes to establish self-reliance, and empowerment over their own food procurement;
- Increased connection to community by some of our most vulnerable residents;
- Increased awareness, knowledge and comfort/familiarity with farmers’ market; and
- Increased exposure and revenue for local farmers/vendors.

Based on the findings from this evaluation, it is recommended:

- THAT the MB project be offered for a second season at the Wellington North Farmers Market.
- THAT funding opportunities be explored to offer 100% funded MB to more low-income families and individuals. In particular, opportunities to offer MB to recipients of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) should be prioritized.

- THAT opportunities to replicate the project in other communities in Wellington County be identified for the 2016 season.
 - THAT initial efforts to replicate the project within Wellington County focus on communities that have:
 - a relatively high OW caseload and/or a relatively high percentage of people living below the Low-Income Measure to ensure the project is supporting those who need it most;
 - a centrally located market that limits barriers to access created by lack of transportation; and
 - direct involvement from the town or township to ensure there is capacity to support the program through staff.
- THAT additional efforts be made to promote the MB to the general public as a dollar-for-dollar purchase.
- THAT additional efforts be made to encourage health and social service providers to purchase the MB at 50% of the cost to distribute at no-cost to their low-income clients.
- THAT additional efforts are made to ensure the MB are distributed as early as possible, and that notice is provided to recipients about when the Market is closing.
- THAT the PTF, County of Wellington, and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health continue to work in partnership to move the above recommendations forward.

Works Cited

- Dodd, W. N. E. C. K. C. J. C. A., 2013. *Using emergency food services in Guelph-Wellington*, Guelph: The Research Shop.
- Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination, 2013. *Recommendation report: Using emergency food services in Guelph-Wellington*, Guelph: Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination.
- Nelson, E. A. P. D.-O. F. S. E., 2011. *Emergency food services in Guelph-Wellington: A scan of the current system and thoughts on the future*, Guelph: The Research Shop.

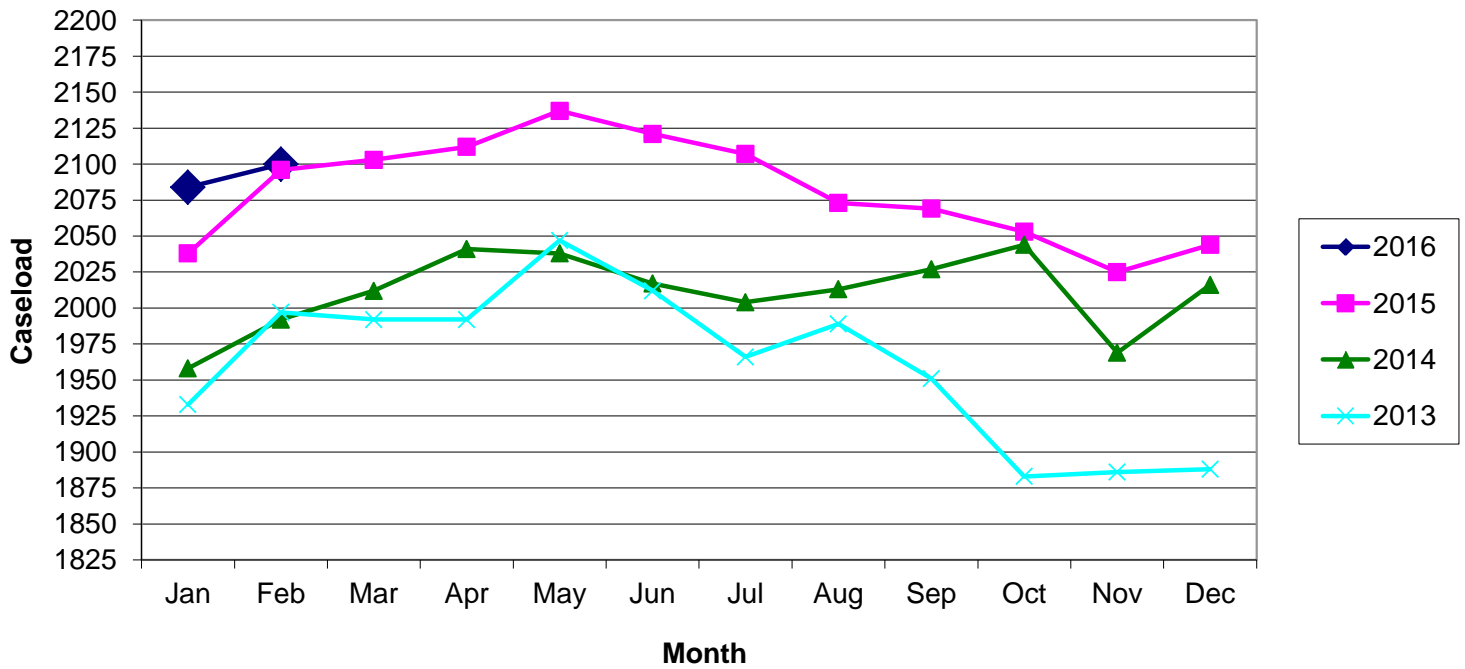
County of Wellington - Ontario Works



2013-16 County / City Caseload

Total caseload					Change From Previous Month		Change From Previous Year	
	2013	2014	2015	2016	Cases	%	Cases	%
January	1,933	1,958	2,038	2,084	40	2.0%	46	2.3%
February	1,997	1,992	2,096	2,100	16	0.8%	4	0.2%
March	1,992	2,012	2,103					
April	1,992	2,041	2,112					
May	2,047	2,038	2,137					
June	2,012	2,017	2,121					
July	1,966	2,004	2,107					
August	1,989	2,013	2,073					
September	1,951	2,027	2,069					
October	1,883	2,044	2,053					
November	1,886	1,969	2,025					
December	1,888	2,016	2,044					
Total	23,536	24,131	24,978	4,184				
Average	1,961	2,011	2,082	2,092			11	0.5%

Total County and City Ontario Works Caseload - January 2013 to February 2016



Total County and City Ontario Works Caseload Budget/Actual Comparison

