



## **2020 Fourth Quarter Activity Report February 25, 2021**

The following is the most recent consolidated Quarterly Report that the DSB will be sending to member municipalities and posting on the public website. Expect Quarterly Reports in February, May, September, and November of each year.

The program statistics are provided separately and updated monthly. They are available on the website by clicking the following link: [Monthly Program Statistics](#)

### **CAO Overview**

The DSB 2020 Fourth Quarter (Unaudited) Financial Report was presented to the Board and projects a year-end municipal **surplus of \$342,293**. Children's Services is forecasted to be on budget. This surplus includes Ontario Works forecasted to be on over budget by \$250,909. Community Housing is forecasted to be under budget by \$347,373. Paramedic Services is forecasted to be under budget by \$224,120. Interest revenue on non-reserve accounts is forecasted to be \$21,709 more than budgeted.

The DSB quarterly financial reports are available on the DSB website by clicking the following link: [Quarterly Financial Reports](#)

### **Paramedic Services**

#### **COVID-19 Pandemic Response**

Paramedics continue to play an integral role in COVID-19 across our service area. The service was successful in securing one time funding to assist with High Intensity Supports at Home Program by Ontario Health. Our proposed model's overarching purpose fosters in home assessments, future influenza/COVID-19 vaccinations and on-going care for our marginalized and vulnerable populations. The goal is to avoid Emergency Department overcrowding and Hospital admissions by bringing health care to those who otherwise cannot have reasonable access or who are vulnerable to community spread infections. This goal can be achieved through dedicated resources and collaborative defined coordinated care plans with community stakeholders and Primary Health Care Providers.

#### **Education & Training**

This fall marked the return of face-to-face education sessions for all of our active Paramedics. This was a needed event as the spring sessions were cancelled due to the pandemic and the service needed to complete mandatory regulatory compliance training such as N95 fit testing and CPR re-certifications. Overall, there were 10 total face to face training sessions attended by 135 Paramedics over the span of 2 weeks.

## **Recruitment**

Paramedics Services held a fall recruitment process and successfully onboarded 6 Primary Care Paramedics. These 6 new recruits are a welcome addition as we had experienced some unanticipated departures as well as staffing pressures for the COVID-19 Paramedic Response Team. Paramedic Services also put an internal posting out for Relief Superintendents which closed on the second week of December.

## **Community Naloxone Program**

Paramedic Services have now received approval from the Government of Ontario to participate in the Harm Reduction – Naloxone program. Work on logistics, referrals, education and dispensing are on going and we are anticipating a full roll out of the program commencing in second quarter of 2021.

## **Children's Services**

### **Licensed Child Care Data Profiles**

On October 2, 2020 MEDU released the [2020 Annual Report](#) and [Licenced Child Care Data](#). The annual report is a snapshot of the childcare and early years sector and is based on reports submitted to MEDU directly from providers. The data specific to Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB may be accessed [here](#).

Most of the data presented in these reports was collected between March 2019-March 2020. The numbers reflect the period immediately prior to the emergency closure of child care due to Covid-19. Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, Ontario's early years and child care system continued to grow. The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in temporary closures of child care across the province.

As of September 30, 2020, 93% of the child care centres reopened in Ontario. 100% of centres have reopened in Manitoulin-Sudbury district, while 50% of homes have reopened, the other 50% have elected to close their home.

In the Manitoulin-Sudbury district, the number of spaces has increased by 52% since 2010-11, the number of centres has increased by 33%, all of which are not for profit.

### **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) Review**

The CCEYA came into effect on August 31, 2015. The CCEYA requires a review of the legislation within five years of its coming into effect and a public report on the outcome of the review. The Ministry of Education confirmed the review of the act by [memo](#) on October 1, 2020. The proposed regulatory amendments were posted on the [Ontario Regulatory Registry](#) for public consultation until November 20, 2020.

## **Child Care Screening**

Staff received a communication on October 2, 2020 regarding the development of a new Covid-19 [screening tool](#) for children attending school and child care. Children must be screened daily either virtually or in person.

## **Child Care Worker Appreciation Day**

October 22nd, 2020 marked the 20th annual *Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day*. The sector is facing an unprecedented challenge as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the October Board meeting, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB recognized October 22, 2020 as the 20th annual “Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day” in recognition of the education, dedication and commitment of child care workers to children, their families and quality of life of the community.

## **Operational Guidance Updates**

Throughout the fall both [child care](#) and [EarlyON](#) Operational Guidance documents were updated by MEDU to support the safe reopening of child care and EarlyON.

## **MEDU Funding Approach 2021**

Staff received [confirmation](#) that funding approach for Child Care and EarlyON for 2021 would align with the 2020 funding approach communicated in the fall of 2019. This is welcome news and will support continued planning in our community.

## **Targeted Emergency Child Care**

On December 21<sup>st</sup>, the Premier of Ontario announced Safer at Home Restrictions to help curb the spread of COVID-19. Students enrolled in publicly funded schools moved to virtual learning for the week of January 4 to January 8. As a result of this announcement, staff worked quickly with providers and school board partners to open targeted emergency child care programs for eligible school age children impacted by the order. Programs were opened throughout the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB to provide service to [eligible workers](#). Operational [guidance](#) was developed by MEDU to support programs.

## **Ontario Works**

### **Ontario Works Caseload**

In the fourth quarter of 2020, the Ontario Works/Temporary Care caseload average is 510. Compared to last year at this time, the percentage of caseload remained the same.

## **Building a Strong Foundation for Success**

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services announced the release of [Building a Strong Foundation for Success: Reducing Poverty in Ontario](#) (2020-2025). In this new five year strategy, a vision for Ontario where everyone can participate in their communities and achieve greater independence, stability and long-term job success to support themselves and their families.

The Key principles of the strategy include:

- Person-centred: help individuals overcome barriers
- Outcomes-focused: measure and report on progress and focus investments on achieving outcomes
- Partnership-driven: work collaboratively and share responsibility
- Integrated: take a whole of government and cross-sectoral approach to create a better coordinated and digitally enabled service system
- Place-based: focus on locally designed and community-led solutions

## **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**

As you know, organizations across Ontario are required to comply with accessibility standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

The DSB staff received a [memo](#) on October 5, 2020 containing important information about filing our accessibility compliance report to self-certify and verify that we are in compliance with accessibility standards.

Websites must be compliant by January 1, 2021. The DSB did add a AODA compatibility tool, however, this only made the 80% compliant and the cost to convert our website would be too expensive. In order to keep our conversion costs down, the DSB has created a new website with current year and additional year history. A quote to convert the entire website to French is also being explored.

## **Employment Ontario**

We continue to work hard in promoting Employment Services, Youth Job Connect and Youth Job Connect Summer programs. This year was more challenging due to COVID.

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development has taken first steps to [Redesign the Second Career Program](#). The design will:

- Prioritize and give faster access to Second Career for laid-off workers from low-skill occupations in sectors most impacted by COVID-19 in 2020;

- Focus on short-duration training up to 52 weeks, including micro-credentials that lead to in-demand jobs in order to be more responsive to labour market conditions;
- Help clients to train in occupations that are in demand within local communities and in priority sectors;
- Begin to digitize the application process in a more user-centred and efficient way.

The ministry will continue to review the program to make sure it is providing the right supports and will plan to make further improvements to modernize the program in Spring 2021.

### **Food Banks Statistics across the District**

On April 1, 2020, as a result of COVID-19, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB received Social Services Relief Funding (Phase 1), totalling \$938,400. A portion of this allocation was used to support existing Food Banks across the District as well as create 2 additional ones. A total of 9,196 families were served in 2020 through the Food Banks which is an additional 19% more than the number of families served in 2019.

## **Community Housing**

### **Waiting list (Applicants)**

As of December 31, 2020, the number of waiting applicants decreased by 1%. The applicant breakdown is as follows: Total applications to end of quarter is 514.

1 Bedroom	410	(-11)	2 Bedroom	48	(-2)
3 Bedroom	35	(0)	4 bedroom	21	(-1)

### **Direct Shelter Subsidy (DSS)**

Staff continue to identify and complete the application process with eligible applicants for the DSS program. All applicants receiving the benefit are deemed housed. As of the end of this quarter there were 222 active DSS recipients.

### **Income Mixing**

Per DSB Policy, every effort is being made where the waitlist allows, to mix the Community Housing Buildings with RGI, Affordable and Market Rent Tenants. At the end of the Quarter in 2019, we had secured 10 full market rent tenants and 38 affordable rent tenants throughout the portfolio. As of the end of this quarter we have successfully secured 10 market rent tenants and 63 affordable rent tenants.

## **Smoke Free Housing – Unit Count-down**

As of the end of the 4th quarter of 2020, 172/275 of the portfolio's units are designated as Smoke-free. This represents **63%** of the full portfolio currently. Units are designated as turn-over occurs.

### **[Bill 204 - Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act, 2020](#)**

On October 1, 2020, Bill 204 received Royal Assent, to freeze rent at 2020 levels. The Act amends the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 (RTA) to freeze residential rent increases in 2021. This means that rents will not increase in 2021 for the vast majority of rented units covered under the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

- The 2021 rent increase guideline, as determined through legislation, was previously set at 1.5% for increases in rent-controlled units between January 1 and December 31, 2021. This was published in the Ontario Gazette on August 29, 2020.

**Bill 204 freezes increases** that would have happened in the 2021 calendar year. While the rent freeze will end on December 31, 2021, landlords can give 90 days' notice in 2021, for a rent increase that takes effect in 2022.

The actual financial impact of this RGI change is difficult to predict, as the RGI calculation is based on the tenant's income. In any year, there would normally be tenants whose income increases, resulting in an increase in rent paid by them for the year. This is somewhat offset by tenants whose income decreases, resulting in a lower rent paid by them for the coming year. The number of rents impacted by this change has been decreased because of Income-Mixing-by-Building. The compared results from 2019 to 2020 are indicative that the ongoing impacts of the decrease in rental revenue loss due to the rent freeze are offset as a result of the increase in Affordable units.

### **[Social Services Relief Fund \(SSRF\) – Phase 2](#)**

The DSB received additional funds in the SSRF Phase 2 in the amount of \$897,838. SSRF Phase 2 funding will allow the Manitoulin Family Resources agency to expand their current Violence Against Women's shelter, and to build a new food bank/thrift store as their client needs have expanded a great deal. The funding would also include the purchase of a cargo van which would allow for the expanded delivery of needed household good, clothing and food into the communities throughout our service region, to access points such as already existing Food Banks throughout the district.

The Ministry has now completed its review of our business case, has confirmed that they have approved our plan with follow up direction in accordance with a total planning allocation of \$897,838 for the fiscal year 2020-21.

On December 15, 2020, the Board chair received a [letter](#) from the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing advising that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB was approved additional SSRF hold back funding in the amount of **\$176,100**. The DSB submitted an investment plan that indicated the intention to use the additional \$176,100 to fund part of the \$290,650 shortfall for the Manitoulin Family Resources new build which was approved by the Board in the September 2020 [Issue Report](#). This would leave a shortfall of \$114,550 for the new build which Manitoulin Family Resources will be responsible to cover and/or reduce the scope of work.

### **Canada Ontario Housing Benefit**

On December 23, 2020, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs sent a letter to Service Managers. At this time, the Ministry is forecasting the COHB program funding for 2020-21 to be fully committed. Accordingly, no new application to household will be distributed. Applicants will be able to re-apply when new annual planning allocations become available in April 2021.

## **Infrastructure and Asset Management**

### **COVID-19**

During this period staff were busy trying to continue with catch up of outstanding work orders as a result of the first lockdown, but much progress was made in this regard. We continued with daily disinfection of common areas throughout the district and Custodian Staff also assist with Administration Office daily disinfection.

### **Work Orders**

During the quarter (October - December 2020) a total of 251 Work Orders were generated: 183 for Community Housing; 16 for Administration Offices, and 52 for Paramedic Services. There was a total of 169 Work Orders closed during that time.

### **Building Condition Assessments - Full Portfolio**

The Building Condition Assessments (BCAs) [Issue Report](#) was presented to the Board at the October 2020 meeting from the completed reports procured from Housing Services Corporation (HSC). The report highlights the critical items for immediate consideration and estimated costs. Additionally, the report breaks down a recommended schedule of required capital work over the next 10-years. The DSB has entered into Contract with HSC to assist with the rollout of the 2021 Capital Recommendations using capital budget and reserves as necessary to complete projects.

## **Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI)**

On November 13, staff received a [letter](#) from the Assistant Deputy Minister, Josh Paul advising that our business case request to SWAP our Year 2 OPHI monies to Year 3 was approved. With all 3 years now swapped to year 3, there is \$656,700 of OPHI funding. With the net proceeds of our property sales, the DSB will have over \$1.2M to reinvest into affordable housing in the District. Staff are actively reviewing an appropriate site location to build, that satisfies the demand indicated on the housing waiting list.

### **Summary**

The DSB had a very busy quarter. If municipal Councils have any questions or would like DSB staff to attend a municipal Council meeting, please feel free to contact me at the address below.

#### **Fern Dominelli**

Chief Administrative Officer

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board

Phone: 705-222-7777

E mail: [fern.dominelli@msdsb.net](mailto:fern.dominelli@msdsb.net)

Website: [www.msdsb.net](http://www.msdsb.net)