



Library Board

Meeting Date: April 28, 2015

Submitted by: Cindy Howard, Director of Social Services and Bill Rayburn, CAO

Subject: A Collaborative and Innovative Approach to Delivering Services in a Rural Ontario Setting – Collective Impact Grant

BACKGROUND:

In 2012, the United Way of London & Middlesex was funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to review the impact on social and economic changes on human service needs in Middlesex County. The report issued in May 2013, confirmed that residents found that there was a lack of services, information and/or access to services. The report also highlighted the fact that access to the internet is positively correlated with income and therefore is not easily available to all residents. The report highlighted the following gaps:

- Child Care;
- Recreation programs;
- Children's mental health;
- Services for children with disabilities;
- Lack of post-secondary education;
- Adult education and training;
- Mental health and addiction services;
- Housing pressures, especially affordable housing; and
- Transportation.

The United Way report had four recommendations which included service integration and development, access to service, development of social capital and community leadership and investment.

ANALYSIS:

In order to address these challenges and respond to the recommendations from the United Way report, the County of Middlesex and community partners are currently involved in a number of initiatives. The following are examples:

- Middlesex County – Transforming the Delivery of Services to Our Residents
- Middlesex Children’s Services Network – Integrated Service Delivery
- Middlesex County Library - Comprehensive Library Strategy
- Middlesex County - Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Women’s Rural Resource Centre – Circles Program and Bridges Out of Poverty Training

The scope, challenges and solutions of the above initiatives demonstrates that there is a natural connection between the MCSN Pilots, Comprehensive Libraries, Transforming the Delivery of Services to Our Residents Initiative and Ministry Initiatives such as Child Care Modernization, Best Start Family and Children Centres, Ontario Special Needs Strategy, Moving on Mental Healthy Strategy and the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy. In order to successfully respond to the identified gaps and achieve meaningful and lasting change, the community will have to work together. This will include attracting new partners, funding and leveraging existing resources. In addition, there is an opportunity to use technology to make this happen in a cost effective and sustainable manner. The evolution of technology will now enable us to use technology to create a seamless interactive face-to-face experience to deliver services.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) provides a number of grants in community-based initiatives that help build healthy and vibrant communities throughout Ontario. The Collective Impact grant is one of the available grants. The OTF Collective Impact grants require the co-creation or co-design of solutions, the development of evaluation strategies and shared measurement, in possible addition to professional facilitation, convening and research. These grants are available for amounts up to \$500,000 per year and terms can be up to 5 years.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an important partner for this initiative and attached is a copy of the draft concept paper. In order for this project to be successful, it will need to use the collective impact framework. These gaps in program and service delivery are found in each community across Middlesex County. The partners have come together under a common agenda and agree that measurement is important. The community has been working on the development of a strategy to address the service delivery issues. The project ties into the Connected People and Promising Young People Action

Areas outlined by OTF and are listed OTF's new Investment Strategy. There has been a great deal of interest and momentum for this project. This project will benefit from the expertise that the OTF can bring and the funding will allow the community to take the next steps forward. Improvements to service delivery using the multiple approaches including hubs will make a difference for children, youth and families in the County of Middlesex.

The initiative of building a collaborative and innovative approach to delivering services in a rural Ontario setting fits within the strategic direction being taken by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The goal of the initiative is to bring community members together, to provide residents with services they need to improve their lives and/or the lives of their children, provide children and youth with recreation and employment opportunities and skills, offer a place for adults to obtain additional training and/or post-secondary education opportunities, and to strengthen community partnerships.

The proposed plan for an integrated system of services includes the following components:

- Children and Family Hubs
 - The place to go for children, youth, families and service providers.
 - To access and receive services, supports and resources
 - To connect with each other in their community
 - Potential pilots (Thorndale, Parkhill or Lucan and Glencoe) (Strathroy for a Youth Innovation Hub)

- The pilot hubs will link with existing services and be built from “natural,” existing community hubs and each will have a different model:
 - Parkhill or Lucan (goal to situate in a comprehensive library)
 - Glencoe
 - Thorndale (pop up hub)
 - Strathroy (Youth Innovation Hub with a Community Campus approach).

The “Made in Middlesex” model of service delivery makes use of innovative and multiple components and will ensure that all families in Middlesex County have access to services in a variety of ways:

- Community Connector Position
- 1-800 Centralized Information and Referral Line
- Website/Mobile App
- Hubs (main hubs, campus and “pop up” hubs)
- Technology-enabled access to services
- Volunteer drivers.

The following communication methods would be enhanced using technology:

Maintain Face to Face Experience

- Video Conferencing technology

Interactive Face to Face Experience

- Where forms are required to be filled out and signed
- Documents to be passed back and forth between the client and delivery agent

Voice Only Experience

- Leverage a traditional phone system.

All of these communication methods can be achieved through the same technology platforms.

The first phase is for a period of 5 years. This will allow for the following:

- research and development
 - designing and launching the pilots through a Collective Impact Framework
 - design and implementation of youth innovation hub
 - design and development and/or implementation of technology that will be adoptable and scalable
- project evaluation
 - link to Canadian Index of Wellbeing
- community consultation and engagement
- current and long term funding
- creation of partnerships and project sustainability
- implementation plan of full roll out
- developing a community of practice with other rural communities
- sharing learning with other rural communities
- creating a link to economic development and community vitality

The second phase will build on the first 5 years and will move from pilot projects to service and program integration and development.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Middlesex County Library Board be the designated agency and that the concept paper for a Collective Impact Grant be submitted to the Ontario Trillium Foundation noting that the Middlesex County Library Board has experience and expertise with developing strong partnerships and relationships with the purpose of improving programs and services in the community.

Attachment

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

A COLLABORATIVE AND INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO DELIVERING SERVICES IN A RURAL ONTARIO SETTING

CONCEPT PAPER TO THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION

COLLECTIVE IMPACT GRANT

APRIL 20, 2015

Middlesex County - A collaborative and innovative approach to delivering services in a rural Ontario setting

Middlesex County has prepared this concept paper to show that the initiative of building a collaborative and innovative approach to delivering services in a rural Ontario setting fits within the strategic direction being taken by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The goal of the initiative is to bring community members together, to provide residents with services they need to improve their lives and/or the lives of their children, provide children and youth with recreation and employment opportunities and skills, offer a place for adults to obtain additional training and/or post-secondary education opportunities, and to strengthen community partnerships.

Middlesex County is a predominantly rural community in Southwestern Ontario. The County has a land area of 2,824.09 square kilometers, and an almost semi-circle configuration. Middlesex County is made up of 8 lower tier municipalities.

The unique geography and large physical size of Middlesex County can create challenges for program and service delivery, transportation, information sharing, and community connectedness.

Over the past number of years, Middlesex County has experienced the decline and retrenchment of a number of key programs and services in its communities. Programs and services range from social services to health services. The recent economic downturn and budget restrictions on service delivery agents especially those funded by the Provincial and/or Federal Governments, continues to put pressures on the programs and services that remain.

In 2012, the United Way of London & Middlesex was funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to review the impact of social and economic changes on human service needs in Middlesex County. The report confirmed that residents found that there was a lack of services, information and/or access to services. The report identified that the physical and mental health of residents and their need for services was affected by the social determinants of health. "Rurality can negatively affect the recognition, experience and manifestation of numerous social and economic issues and subsequent service provision and access (Middlesex County: Impact of Social & Economic Changes on Human Service Needs, Pg.1). The report also highlighted the fact that access to the internet is positively correlated with income and therefore is not easily available to all residents. The report highlighted the following gaps:

- Child care;
- Recreation programs;
- Children's mental health;
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- Lack of post-secondary education;
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Middlesex County - A collaborative and innovative approach to delivering services in a rural Ontario setting

The United Way report had four recommendations which included service integration and development, access to service, development of social capital and community leadership and investment.

In order to address these challenges and respond to the recommendations from the United Way report, the County of Middlesex and community partners are currently involved in a number of initiatives. The following are examples:

- Middlesex County – Transforming the Delivery of Services to Our Residents
- Middlesex Children’s Services Network – Integrated Service Delivery
- Middlesex County Library - Comprehensive Library Strategy
- Middlesex County - Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Women’s Rural Resource Centre – Circles Program and Bridges Out of Poverty Training.

The scope, challenges and solutions of the above initiatives shows that there is a natural connection between the MCSN Pilots, Comprehensive Libraries, Transforming the Delivery of Services to Our Residents Initiative and Ministry Initiatives such as Child Care Modernization, Best Start Family and Children Centres, Ontario Special Needs Strategy, Moving on Mental Healthy Strategy and the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy. In order to successfully respond to the identified gaps and achieve meaningful and lasting change, the community will have to work together. This will include attracting new partners, funding and leveraging existing resources. In addition, there is an opportunity to use technology to make this happen in a cost effective and sustainable manner. The evolution of technology will now enable us to use technology to create a seamless interactive face-to-face experience to deliver services.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an important partner for this initiative. In order for this project to be successful, it will need to use the collective impact framework. These gaps in program and service delivery are found in each community across Middlesex County. The partners have come together under a common agenda and agree that measurement is important. The community has been working on the development of a strategy to address the service delivery issues. The project ties into the Connected People and Promising Young People Action Areas that are listed in the new Investment Strategy. There has been a great deal of interest and momentum for this project. This project will benefit from the expertise that the Ontario Trillium Foundation can bring and the funding will allow the community to take the next steps forward. Improvements to service delivery using the multiple approaches including hubs will make a difference for children, youth and families in the County of Middlesex.

The communities overall well-being will benefit greatly from this project. As an example, the Youth Innovation Hub would be a great tool to begin to address youth poverty and youth homelessness by training youth for employment opportunities. It will also provide a healthy and interactive place for youth to connect.

Middlesex County - A collaborative and innovative approach to delivering services in a rural Ontario setting

The County of Middlesex, County of Middlesex Library, Middlesex Services Children's Network (over 40 agencies) have committed to this project and process and discussions are underway with agencies such Post-Secondary Institutions and Private businesses. Additional meetings and partnerships with community organizations and businesses including both public and private will need to be clarified and established.

The submission for this concept paper is from the Middlesex County Library Board which is a non-profit agency. Middlesex County Library Board has experience and expertise with developing strong partnerships and relationships with the purpose of improving programs and services in the community. Middlesex County Library is an active member of the MCSN. The network meets on a monthly basis and in addition to having co-chairs it has been using a highly qualified and experienced facilitator to assist with the project planning. The Director of Social Services is also a member of the MCSN and has experience with strategic planning, measurement and community development. The project would also be leveraging the expertise of the technology department at the County. Middlesex County is known for its collaboration, robust partnerships and ability to mobilize to get projects completed.

The inclusion of technology is important for the success on this initiative. Through a Request for Information by the County of Middlesex that was released in June of 2014, CISCO was the vendor that could supply a fully integrated technology solution that could deliver the services through a seamless platform.

The MCSN network has developed a draft plan and strategy to create an integrated system of services for children and families in the community:

- Children and Family Hubs
 - The place to go for children, youth, families and service providers.
 - To access and receive services, supports and resources
 - To connect with each other in their community
 - Potential pilots (Thorndale, Parkhill or Lucan and Glencoe) (Strathroy for a Youth Innovation Hub)
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Middlesex County - A collaborative and innovative approach to delivering services in a rural Ontario setting

The “Made in Middlesex” model of service delivery makes use of innovative and multiple components and will ensure that all families in Middlesex County have access to services in a variety of ways (pages 5 to 8 in final project report):

- Community Connector Position
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The second phase will build on the first 5 years and will move from pilot projects to service and program integration and development.

Middlesex County - A collaborative and innovative approach to delivering services in a rural Ontario setting**BACKGROUND****Middlesex County and Middlesex County Library**

Middlesex County Council has a commitment to enriching the lives of County residents and visitors through the provision of exceptional library and social services and a strong emphasis on economic development. The Library Board and County Council have encouraged the expansion of Comprehensive Library Services in designated locations throughout the County (Strathroy, Parkhill, Glencoe, Dorchester and Lucan).

Comprehensive Community Libraries are an important addition to the community. They are places where people connect, not just with books and computers, but also with other people, groups and Government. Middlesex County Council is very supportive of improving services in the community using a collaborative and community minded approach.

Middlesex Children's Services Network (MCSN)

MCSN is a committee that consists of a diverse group of over 40 community partners involved in children's services who support young families with children prenatally to 12 years of age. The Vision of the MCSN is: "Middlesex County, where children and families reach their full potential within their own unique, rural community." MCSN grew out of a request from the Rural Issues Group of the Early Years Council; to organize a network to enable all children's services of Middlesex County to come together to work in an integrated fashion. Secondary interests were to react and collaborate to prepare for the "fallout" of Full Day Learning on the County child care programs as well as to prepare to respond and organize for the rollout of Best Start Child & Family Centres.