



# City of Peterborough

## Media Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2007  
Peterborough, ON --

### Strategy Report from the Mayor's Task Force on Poverty Reduction

Mayor Paul Ayotte released the report from the Mayor's Task Force on Poverty Reduction today, and it will be presented to Council at the March 12, 2007 Committee of the Whole meeting.

The report sets out a multi-sectoral, multi-year, multi-phase strategy with short-term actions to assist in alleviating the ravages of poverty on those in greatest need. A one-page summary setting out the Task Force's overall poverty reduction strategy is appended to this release. The Strategy developed by the Mayor's Task Force includes the various community activities already underway and involves all sectors working together to develop a better coordination of those community endeavours.

Poverty is a complex issue and an all-encompassing condition defined by many characteristics. In addition to the shortage of food, clothing, shelter or health care, poverty also includes a lack of opportunities to improve one's life. Poverty limits access to resources such as jobs, education, health care, childcare, transportation, etc.

Mayor Ayotte said, "we need to get every sector involved in developing comprehensive local plans for reducing poverty."

The strategy will also include leveraging support of all levels of government, specifically the federal and provincial governments and strenuously promoting employment and retraining programs.

Additional details of the strategy are outlined in a Working Paper, entitled ***Phase 2 Work Plan – Building the Conditions for Success***. Copies of the Working Paper can be obtained by contacting the Mayor's Office.

This information is also available on our City of Peterborough website at [www.city.peterborough.on.ca](http://www.city.peterborough.on.ca)

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## **Strategy Report from The Mayor's Task Force on Poverty Reduction**

**Poverty** is a reality in Peterborough. It is time, then, to put in place a long term, local Strategy that attempts to reduce the impact of poverty on our overall social and economic health.

The Mayor's Task Force has identified Tamarack\*, An Institute for Community Engagement as providing a model to guide the work on poverty reduction in Peterborough. We acknowledge the valuable work of Tamarack and cities in the Vibrant Communities network.

### **Vision**

The vision includes a comprehensive effort to mobilize the entire community in which all members and all levels of government are active players in one common purpose: creating opportunities to help reduce the number of people in Peterborough that live in poverty. The Strategy will be a multi-sectoral, multi-year effort. To implement this vision, action will proceed in two ways:

- i) short-term actions that assist in alleviating the ravages of poverty on those in greatest need;
- ii) multi-year actions that reduce the incidence of poverty overall by focusing on root causes of poverty

<b>Priorities based on informed understanding of poverty in Peterborough</b>	<b>Recommended Action (for discussion in Phase 2)</b>
Hunger Security	Support current hunger relief programs and search for further opportunities
Housing Security	Develop a coordinated liaison effort with senior levels of government
Income Security	Coordinate and build a network of collaboration between employment and job training programs
Basic Needs Such As Transportation And Childcare	Support, as needed, people living in poverty with bus passes, and support the end of the claw back of the National Child Tax Benefit.

### **Strategic Principles**

1. listen to and involve people living in poverty is integral to the process of reducing poverty
2. listen to and involve people interested in reducing poverty
3. emphasize economic and social partnerships
4. research, analyze, plan, act and measure
5. act as a catalyst for whole community participation
6. commit to specific actions that make a difference
7. focus on longer-term "break the cycle" solutions
8. use sustainable, comprehensive and holistic approaches
9. develop a multi-phase framework based on work in other Canadian communities

### **Strategies based on the above principles**

1. Links with provincial and federal governments will be formally established through this Strategy accompanied by ongoing non-partisan lobbying;
2. Establish and maintain a sustainable, multi-sectoral organizational structure of key partners;
3. Set short and long term concrete targets to measure successes and gaps with special attention to the root causes of poverty;
4. Establish a regular ongoing education, research, and communication plan.

### **Initial Actions**

Once the Report of the Mayor's Task Force is received by Council, the Phase 2 Work Plan will begin in April 2007 with a series of community consultations to confirm local interest in reducing poverty and build conditions for success. Copies of the Working Paper outlining further details of the strategy can be obtained from the Mayor's Office.

\* printed with permission from The Tamarack Institute has been working with the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, one of Canada's leading social research organizations, and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation. These partners have sponsored a network of 15 Canadian cities called Vibrant Communities to help these communities reduce poverty.