

Futures Letter To Employees

May 24, 2001

To: All OPAC Employees

From: Robert A. Richards
President and Chief Administrative Officer

Subject: Futures Implementation

For some time now, we have been providing you with periodic updates on activities surrounding our Futures Project. Our work on Futures has now progressed to the point where we are ready to move forward with implementation.

The Futures Project is a very extensive undertaking that has required a thorough review and analysis of all of our activities and business processes. It started as a grassroots, employee-driven initiative to look at how we could improve the way we do business. For OPAC, as for other businesses, the availability of new technologies, a more demanding marketplace and the changing needs of our customer base means that standing still is not an option. Faster response to customers, better value for money and a higher, more consistent level of accuracy are necessary changes identified by both internal practitioners and external customers.

The need for significant change that we identified was reinforced by the findings and recommendations made by Mr. Marcel Beaubien, MPP, in the review of OPAC that he carried out for the Minister of Finance. The recommendations in Mr. Beaubien's report and the actions subsequently taken by the Minister of Finance in the 2001 Budget are consistent with the Futures objectives. This is especially true in the vital areas of improved customer service and the quest for more consistent and accurate property value assessments.

From OPAC's inception we have stressed the need for us to be financially accountable to the taxpayers and to the municipalities of Ontario. We must continue to ensure that the products and services we provide to them are not only accurate but affordable. The changes in our business processes must allow us to reduce costs while increasing customer service and valuation quality.

The first steps to implement Futures were taken last fall with the appointment of Carl Isenburg as Vice President of Customer Relations and Larry Hummel as Vice President of Property Values. We will now begin to build the departments under Larry and Carl and implement the new business processes. We will also begin to put in place the other organizations and processes required to support, measure and monitor our customer and property valuation services. Changes will inevitably continue over the next year or so as we work through the process.

Changing the organization to focus on new priorities, implementing new technologies and streamlining business processes will introduce a measure of uncertainty. As we fully realize the efficiencies available through improved business processes, fewer positions will likely be required in areas such as data entry, clerical services and administrative support. Over time, fewer positions will be needed in valuation and data collection due to specialization and automation. At the same time, new resources and skills will be required to meet increased demands in the area of customer service, and to respond to increases in the number of properties and the municipalities' demands for our services.

Management will be making every effort to manage whatever changes do occur in the number and type of positions with the minimum negative impact on employees. We will be investing in technology and developmental support to help employees succeed in their new roles. While we will make every effort to redeploy employees and take advantage of normal attrition, there may still be a need - due to skill mismatches or geographic considerations for example - to declare some employees surplus. For those whom we cannot accommodate, services will be made available to assist them in their job search and to help manage the personal aspects of career change.

Senior managers and the executive have recently met to review the changes and discuss the implementation process. Your managers will be meeting with you over the next few days to discuss the changes and try to address your issues. More detail on the goals, activities and structure of the new organization is available in the Futures section on our Intranet site. As we move through the implementation process, additional information will be shared with you and posted to the Intranet site as it becomes available. I encourage you to review this material and discuss it with your manager.

Our employees, the taxpaying public and municipalities have challenged us to improve. I believe, as an organization, we can and will move forward confidently in implementing a new direction. Building a new corporation will present many new challenges for all employees. I believe that all of our efforts over the past two years have positioned us well - both on a corporate and personal level - to meet these challenges.

Yours truly,

"Original signed by"

Robert A. Richards
President and Chief Administrative Officer

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