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REMARKS FOR SHIRLEY HOY
AT 2005 PUBLIC SECTOR QUALITY FAIR
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Introduction

I'd like to thank you for inviting me here to speak today and to be among so many distinguished guests. I'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome all of the participants and attendees to the 2005 Public Sector Quality Fair which is celebrating its eighth year of recognizing service excellence in the public sector.

As you know this year's theme is the Power of Partnership and I must commend you on the outstanding collaboration and partnership that goes into organizing and hosting the Fair itself. Part of the Fair's success stems from the wonderful opportunities it provides for participants to attend workshops, showcase their outstanding achievements, learn from each other, and celebrate public service excellence in general. And so I'd like to thank all of you for making this such a resounding success.

This is the second year that the City of Toronto has participated at the Fair and we have been very impressed with the quality, innovation and leadership demonstrated by all of the participants.

Being able to participate in the Public Sector Quality Fair and other similar programs is extremely beneficial from a number of view points. It allows us to step back and thoroughly analyze the objectives and outcomes of our programs, compare experiences with our colleagues in the public sector, and even more importantly to review them through the eyes of the public.

Public Service

So I'd like to share with you today my thoughts on the nature of public service, public service excellence and the power of partnership.

As we can all attest, managing in the public eye has many unique challenges. City Hall is always under the glare of the spotlight and I know that is true for many of your organizations as well.

Recently, Madam Justice Denise Bellamy tabled a very well publicized report to the City on some of the failings that arose during the early days of amalgamation. And one of the sentiments she expressed was the nobility of purpose in public service. For most of us it is a vocation, a higher calling, and ultimately a cornerstone of democracy.

The public sector's role and mandate differ from the private sector's role. The two sectors share a strong drive for good value, but for government, customers are far more than simply consumers. They are also residents, taxpayers, parents, and citizens – all with valid needs and expectations. While governments must make every effort to spend taxpayers' money fairly and judiciously, they also have a mandate to protect the public interest.

Governments, by their nature, must stand for more than private business. They embody concepts, ideals, values and freedoms that are associated with the fundamental principles of democracy.

Public service integrity, the impartiality of the courts, and respect for the rule of law are cornerstones of Canadian social life, and also benefit Canada's economic life.

The Power of Partnership

This year's theme the *Power of Partnership* is especially appropriate as many of the winning submissions demonstrate innovative, seamless and successful collaboration. The partnerships have worked well because

they enable us to capitalize on each other's strengths for maximum impact.

This is important because we are all confronted with rising expectations and pressures in the face of increasingly scarce resources. Our rapidly changing world requires government to constantly reinvent itself. For example youngsters start school in need of more family supports and child care than previous generations, neighbourhoods that are growing need social infrastructure but then mature and have excess capacity. Economic competitiveness and success in the knowledge economy requires us to be on the cutting edge of technology, while demographics are warning us that we will soon face unprecedented demand to accommodate an aging population.

In order to meet these challenges, government, and the civic service, must become more nimble, more responsive, and more open to partnerships and alliances. Certainly the horrors in Hurricane Katrina point to the disasters that can befall us if we don't work together on behalf of the public. And yet ironically the experiences in Louisiana also showed us how much could be accomplished when all of the agencies started to collaborate for the greater good.

Public Service Excellence

So I would say that we have two prime directives, that of serving the public good – the other to do it with excellence. And if we think we have achieved excellence, would the public necessarily agree?

Organizations that evaluate excellence in the public sector look for:

- cooperation, teamwork and partnering
- leadership through involvement and by example
- focus on clients and stakeholders
- reinforcing the role staff play in serving the public and
- adopting long-term planning and improvements with a mindset of prevention of problems rather than correction.

In looking around at the Fair today and the winning exhibits I believe we are demonstrating excellence on all of these counts. And there are other areas where we are getting it right:

- At the City, we have used community grants, strategic alliances, marketing partnerships and community investment partners to leverage the best use of the public's tax dollars.
- This past April, Canada, Ontario and municipalities agreed to an affordable housing accord that increases the total investment to \$734 million by 2009. This means assistance to some 20,000 households in total, including housing allowances/rent supplements for more than 5,000 lower-income families in Ontario.
- Toronto Mayor David Miller's Community Safety Plan brings together civic and community leaders to respond to gun related violence. By jointly targeting resources to neighbourhoods in need, the plan is creating opportunities for young people who might otherwise be at risk for frustration and despair.
- Another major initiative will be the introduction of 3-1-1 service in Toronto and other municipalities. This program is being implemented from the perspective of the public trying to access government services. The intent of 3-1-1 is one-stop shopping – it provides the public with one simple easy to access number which will be answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Recently the Province and the City undertook joint public consultations to gain input into the redrafting the City of Toronto Act. The consultations were greeted with great enthusiasm by the public and were enormously successful. We also learned that the public wants to be included in our decision making processes and

they want more open, accessible and transparent government. They want government partners to work together in the public interest.

Conclusion

So in conclusion, I would put it to you that this year's Public Sector Quality Fair is tangible proof that together we are a powerful force in supporting our communities, protecting the environment and ultimately in serving the people of Ontario.

If we are to sustain the public's trust and confidence, public sector partnership and excellence has to be the motto we live by. An effective and accountable public service, working in partnership, is fundamental to our future success as cities, a province and as a nation.

Thank you.