



CITY OF HAMILTON
COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Neighbourhood and Community Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	February 23, 2015
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Neighbourhood Action Strategy Project Update (CES15009) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Suzanne Brown 905-546-2424 ext.4711
SUBMITTED BY:	Joe-Anne Priel General Manager Community & Emergency Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the General Manager of the Community and Emergency Services Department be authorized and directed to extend the temporary Neighbourhood Action Strategy Project Manager position through to December 2015; and,
- (b) That the temporary Neighbourhood Action Strategy Project Manager position be funded from the existing Employment and Income Support Division budget and/or the Neighbourhood Action Strategy Fund (20551255204) up to the amount of \$52,250.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hamilton's Neighbourhood Action Strategy was created in November 2010 to address health and well-being inequities in eleven Hamilton neighbourhoods (Report CM10007). Working with the Neighbourhood Action Strategy, residents in ten neighbourhoods have completed action plans which document actions that are implementable, achievable and have widespread resident support.

Nine of the ten completed, and Council endorsed, neighbourhood action plans identify employment, training and/or education as priority objectives for their neighbourhoods. Specific actions focus on employment and volunteer opportunities, skill training and development, job readiness, youth opportunities, increased high school completion rates, 'hire local' campaigns and matching employment skills with jobs. Creating comprehensive, multi-stakeholder solutions to education was also noted.

In February 2013, the Community and Emergency Services Department, Employment and Income Support Division, approved an 18 month secondment of one FTE to the

Neighbourhood Action Strategy to spearhead the development and implementation of activities to address the need for job opportunities, job skills building and training, and educational attainment in the identified neighbourhoods. To date, the project manager has been essential to the development, facilitation and implementation of the Neighbourhood Home Improvement Project (Report CES14015), the Canada Learning Bond multi-stakeholder project (Report CES14030) and the Learning Annex concept development. Additionally, the staff person facilitated placement of Ontario Works Job Developers and employment counsellors in neighbourhood hubs, the Kenilworth Opportunity Fair, the Barton Street/Kenilworth Corridor Study, and the McQuesten Youth Initiative.

The Neighbourhood Action Strategy requires the extension of this position through 2015 to continue to develop, implement and support the actions of the neighbourhood action plans that address education, employment, skill building and job creation.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The extension of the position at an annualized amount of \$104,500 gross/\$52,250 net, be funded from the existing Employment and Income Support Division budget, as this position is eligible for 50% cost sharing with the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and/or the Neighbourhood Action Strategy Fund (20551255204).

Staffing: This position has been on secondment from the Employment and Income Support Division since February 2013. CUPE 1041 is aware of and has approved the extension through 2015.

Legal: There are no legal implications associated with Report CES15009.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Employing an asset-based community development approach, the Neighbourhood Action Strategy utilizes the greatest resource in any neighbourhood, its residents, to intentionally focus dialogue around the positive things in the community. Working with the Neighbourhood Action Strategy, residents in ten neighbourhoods have completed action plans, with nine plans identifying complex issues and solutions around employment opportunities, job skills training and educational attainment.

Evidence shows that employment and working conditions have a significant effect on a person's physical and mental health and social well-being. The Neighbourhood Action Strategy, through the collaborative implementation of the neighbourhood action plans has begun to address these conditions.

Neighbourhood Home Improvement Project (NHIP)

A partnership between Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Threshold School of Building, the Hamilton Community Foundation and the Keith Neighbourhood Hub saw 51 people trained in exterior construction skills over a 26 week period in 2013 and 2014. Twenty-six of those trainees gained employment and two registered for a post-secondary education apprenticeship program since its inception in 2013. To date, 152 home renovations have been completed. The project manager has been responsible for designing the application, leading the assessment team and acting as the primary liaison between the City of Hamilton, Threshold School of Building and neighbourhood residents. Additionally, the staff person is responsible for ensuring the employment and education component of the project is co-ordinated between Employment Ontario agencies and Ontario Works Employment Services.

The NHIP addresses actions identified in several of the Council endorsed Neighbourhood Action Plans. Most notably, the job training component of this project addresses residents' desire for improved job skills and development and subsequently increased job opportunities. The exterior construction component of the project improved the quality of housing in neighbourhoods, which has a positive impact on the health and well-being of the individuals living in these homes and also addresses the desire for beautification of the neighbourhoods.

The funding applications to the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities and Hamilton Community Foundation have been submitted for 2015. Approval is expected in April 2015.

Canada Learning Bond (CLB)

There is considerable evidence that indicates higher levels of education result in improved health and well-being. The Neighbourhood Action Strategy came together with the Basic Needs Workgroup of the Best Start Network to discuss increasing uptake of the Canada Learning Bond by eligible families. A pilot project registration event was jointly led by staff from Neighbourhood Action Strategy, Public Health Services and Best Start Network held in April in the GALA neighbourhood. The success of the pilot led to the development of a registration event in each of the eleven identified neighbourhoods.

The CLB benefit provides an initial sum of \$500 to parents and caregivers to enable them to start saving for their child's post-secondary education. In addition, the child is eligible to receive an additional \$100 each year until the age of 15, to a maximum of \$2,000. The monies must be placed within a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) for each eligible child. Over the course of all registration events in Hamilton to-date, the parents of 286 children have been assisted in establishing RESP accounts with CLB deposits. If each child receives the maximum benefit, the potential value of this project will be \$572,000 in savings that can be used to support continuing education. The existence of education savings in any amount improves high school graduation rates by 50% (May Wong).

While other CLB events are being held in communities across Canada, the Hamilton project is unique in that it is a true “one stop shop” for registration, bringing together mobile bank teams to set up RESP accounts, Service Canada to issue SIN cards, Employment and Income Support Division staff to complete birth certificate applications, Learning Earning and Parenting staff to welcome and orient families, while recreation and culture staff signed families up for recreation subsidies and provided passes to cultural sites. As well, each neighbourhood has the opportunity to share with the community their neighbourhood action plan.

The staff person within NAS is responsible for co-chairing the internal working group, building relationships with various financial institutions to provide mobile teams to the neighbourhood CLB events and working with each neighbourhood to tailor the CLB event to their specific community needs.

Learning Annex

The Learning Annex concept was identified as a response to the NAPs to address employment and education for youth within our priority neighbourhoods. The first phase of the multi-stakeholder project produced the report “Working Together” which found an increasing need for people to have basic technical skills, and for programs to be directly linked to employment. The Learning Annex is focussed on addressing the education and job skills component for youth aged 18-26 within the City. The project manager is working to develop a vision to move forward on the learning annex concept, in partnership with Mohawk College and other key stakeholders. The relationship of this project to Ontario Works is important and will bring an understanding of the needs within our community related to education and employment.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

This report complies with the Budgeted Complement Control Policy.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Finance, Administration and Revenue Generation Division was consulted and have no concerns with this report.

Employment and Income Support Division agreed to and have no concerns with this report.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDATION

Fully 50% of the health of the population can be explained by socio-economic factors. The social and economic determinants of health are complex and intertwined. Education is closely tied to socio-economic status, and effective education for children and lifelong learning for adults are key contributors to health and prosperity for individuals and for the country. Education contributes to health and prosperity by

equipping people with knowledge and skills for problem solving, and helps provide a sense of control and mastery over life circumstances. It increases opportunities for job and income security, and job satisfaction. It improves people's ability to access and understand information to help keep them healthy. There is also strong and growing evidence that income and social status are positively associated with health. Evidence shows that employment and working conditions have a significant effect on a person's physical and mental health and social well-being. Earned income provides not only money, but also a sense of identity and purpose, social contacts and opportunities for personal growth. When someone loses these benefits, the results can be devastating to both the health of the individual and his or her family. (A HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE CANADA: A DETERMINANT OF HEALTH APPROACH. The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology Final Report of Senate Subcommittee on Population Health June 2009)

The importance of education and employment opportunities, as well as job skill building, cannot be understated in the creation of healthy neighbourhoods and residents. A dedicated staff resource, who understands the connections, is able to work with residents and key stakeholders on solutions, is necessary.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

None