

CITY OF HAMILTON

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

TO: Mayor and Members General Issues Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: May 9, 2011	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Neighbourhood Development Strategy (CM11007) (City Wide)	
SUBMITTED BY: Chris Murray City Manager	PREPARED BY: Paul Johnson (905) 546-2424 x5598
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the City of Hamilton's Neighbourhood Development Strategy as outlined in Report CM10007 be approved.
- (b) That the \$2,000,000 earmarked to support the City's Neighbourhood Development Strategy from the Unallocated Capital Levy Reserve - 108020 be utilized to support the implementation of the strategy outlined in this report (CM10007).
- (c) That in keeping with Council's reserve-use policy, staff be directed to seek Council's approval for the use of the Unallocated Capital Levy Reserve funds either through the Budget Process or through a specific report to Council.
- (d) That staff provide an information update to Council indicating which specific neighbourhoods will be engaged in neighbourhood development work in 2011.
- (e) That \$236,000 of Unallocated Capital Levy Reserve - 100820 be approved for use in 2011.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2010 Council approved a neighbourhood initiative that was focused on two key aspects, specifically: a) improving “Code Red” neighbourhoods and b) better integration and focus between the City and community actions at a neighbourhood level.

In October of 2010, to further support this direction, Council approved the earmarking of \$2,000,000 of the Unallocated Capital Levy to support the City’s Neighbourhood Development Strategy.

With the recruitment of a Director of Neighbourhood Development Strategies in November 2010, work began on the first phase of the initiative which was to create a strategy to guide the neighbourhood development work. Specific actions for 2011 were outlined in the Senior Management Team Work Plan approved by Council in April 2011.

Operationally, the neighbourhood development work will be a vehicle to ensure the better co-ordination of staff and financial resources across all departments. This “horizontal integration” will not only ensure effective and efficient delivery of service at a neighbourhood level but will assist the City in creating a stronger working relationship with residents and key stakeholders in neighbourhoods.

Key Activities:

The Neighbourhood Development Strategy in Hamilton will:

1. Develop an integrated team of community development workers across the priority area described below in partnership with the Hamilton Community Foundation.
2. Begin by engaging residents and key stakeholders in neighbourhood planning.
3. Increase investment in neighbourhoods to support the implementation of priority projects identified by residents and key stakeholders.
4. Explore the feasibility of aligning funding from senior levels of government through an Urban Development Agreement.

Where the Strategy Will be Implemented:

The City’s Neighbourhood Development Strategy will be implemented in the geographic regions exhibiting poorer health, social and economic outcomes based on the information reported in the “Code Red” series (cumulative scores map). This includes neighbourhoods across the lower and upper city specifically clustered in the following areas:

- **Lower City – Hwy 403 to Lake Avenue**
- **Upper City – Garth to Upper Gage, Fennell to the LINC**

Specific neighbourhoods within these geographical areas will be engaged to undertake development strategies supported by the City and community partners. Over time it is expected that all neighbourhoods in these areas will be engaged in development strategies. In 2011 at least two neighbourhoods will be engaged. When the specific neighbourhoods are confirmed, staff will provide an information update for Council indicating where neighbourhood development work will begin.

Research and Evaluation:

In partnership with McMaster University, neighbourhood changes will be tracked over time. These outcomes will be measured with a combination of primary survey data and secondary data that is routinely collected. The measurements will focus on people-based outcomes such as health, education, civic participation and place-based outcomes such as physical environment, safety and economic development.

Governance Structure:

The implementation of the strategy will be guided by two committees. One committee will focus on building alignment among the partners and identifying policy issues that require further exploration. The second committee will focus on operational issues and how to most effectively and efficiently work with residents and key stakeholders to implement neighbourhood based solutions.

Communications:

A comprehensive communication strategy will support the neighbourhood development work. This will include on-going updates to Council regarding where neighbourhood engagement is occurring and what new investments are supporting neighbourhood change. Regular reporting of outcomes will be provided to both Council and the community. In addition, options for residents and other stakeholders to “share the good news” that is happening in neighbourhoods will be implemented.

FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (for Recommendation(s) only)

Financial:

As highlighted above, Council has earmarked \$2,000,000 in the Capital Reserve for this initiative and staff anticipate using up to \$236,000 in 2011 to meet the strategic activities outlined in the Analysis section of this report. In particular:

- \$86,000 to support the collection of primary survey data across a number of neighbourhoods in support of the research and evaluation plan listed in the Analysis section of the report. It is expected that this investment will leverage matching funding to complete the work.
- Up to \$150,000 in direct neighbourhood investment for projects and initiatives that support priority items identified through neighbourhood planning processes. This funding would be accessed only when current resources are not available or cannot be reallocated.

Staffing:

None

Legal:

None

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Chronology of events)

In the spring of 2010, the Hamilton Spectator's series "Code Red", a comprehensive mapping project, highlighted the significant disparities in health, social and economic outcomes between various neighbourhoods in Hamilton. The Code Red series validated part of the City's Priority Plan which sought to better integrate and focus City and community actions in order to comprehensively address the broad social determinants of health. In response to the Code Red series, the City of Hamilton's Senior Management Team, along with several community collaboratives and other 'anchor' institutions such as our hospitals, school boards, post secondary institutions and other key Non Governmental Organizations, came together to identify potential areas of action.

In September 2010 an update to the City's Corporate Priority Plan (CM09021(a)/CS10091) was presented that outlined the steps being taken to build a neighbourhood/community development strategy for the City of Hamilton. While the work was to be led out of the City Manager's Office, responsibility for ensuring the successful development and implementation of the strategy was to be shared among all departments. This shared responsibility would help ensure a stronger linking and co-ordination of interdepartmental planning and service delivery efforts.

The first phase of the work was to develop a strategy and a staff person was recruited to lead that work. To financially support the implementation of the neighbourhood strategy, Council earmarked \$2,000,000 within the Unallocated Capital Levy Reserve.

In April, 2011 the Senior Management Team Work Plan highlighted a number of actions that would be completed as the implementation of the neighbourhood development strategy occurred.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

In developing this strategy, staff reviewed the work of other communities across Canada and the United States who are engaged in neighbourhood development work.

In addition, local conversations regarding the creation of a Neighbourhood Development Strategy occurred with a number of relevant stakeholders including:

- Neighbourhood groups/associations
- Service clubs
- Funding entities
- Non-profit organizations
- City staff across all departments
- Hamilton Police Services
- Hamilton Public Library
- Community collaboratives
- Faith communities

While these conversations were not exhaustive, they provided validation regarding the initial direction of the strategy. The true consultation and engagement will occur in neighbourhoods as the residents and stakeholders define how neighbourhood development will look in each geographical area.

ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

Neighbourhood Selection and Engagement:

The broad priority area (described in the Executive Summary) within the lower and upper City represents a large geographical area that encompasses nearly 50 neighbourhoods (based on existing neighbourhood boundaries). While the goal is to work on neighbourhood development plans in each neighbourhood, current resources require us to select certain neighbourhoods to begin with. In some other cities a “ranking” exercise has been undertaken to determine the order of neighbourhood engagement. While this creates a priority list, it also can label and stigmatize neighbourhoods further. To that end, rather than ranking each neighbourhood in the priority area, selection of neighbourhoods for engagement will include (but are not limited to) the following criteria:

- Desire by the residents in the neighbourhood to work in partnership with the City on neighbourhood development;
- Presence of existing networks or planning bodies within neighbourhood (BIA, Neighbourhood Associations, Neighbourhood Planning Teams etc.);
- Planned investment that could be leveraged for additional development;
- Current engagement (i.e. Secondary Planning) already scheduled and could therefore be expanded/augmented; and
- Existing assets – people, associations, organizations, infrastructure

Building on Best Practices From Other Communities:

Once neighbourhoods are selected for engagement, the planning and solution building process will follow best and promising practices from other communities that are currently undertaking neighbourhood development work. In reviewing neighbourhood development approaches across a number of Canadian and American cities, several key features emerge that will be addressed in Hamilton's Neighbourhood Development Strategy. They include:

- **Community Development Workers are critical human resources that support relationship building** – we will achieve this by working with the Hamilton Community Foundation and other community partners to enhance and better coordinate existing community development work. Deployment of the community development workers will occur in the priority areas listed in this report. The team will be coordinated and work from a common training platform based on Asset Based Community Development. In addition, we will support our community partners in the development of a community training institute to provide learning opportunities for staff, residents and community partners in an effort to build a community-wide understanding of the importance of community development.
- **Plans must be holistic and comprehensive** – we will achieve this by planning around the six domains of sustainable communities which include the physical, human, social, economic, cultural and environmental assets in a neighbourhood. In addition, the planning process used in this strategy will bring together a technical support team from across the departments of the City in order to ensure we are taking a comprehensive approach to neighbourhood development.
- **A multi-sector approach is key** – we will achieve this by ensuring that our planning processes bring together a cross-section of residents and key stakeholders. In addition, we will work with existing community collaboratives to align any work they may be occurring in the same geographical area.
- **Planning must be inclusive and resident led** – we will achieve this through a formal planning process that will place residents and key stakeholders in the leadership role. In addition to the residents and stakeholders that will lead the planning process, specific activities (and time) will be dedicated to ensuring that large numbers of residents in a neighbourhood have an opportunity to provide their input to the plan even if they are not involved in the on-going planning meetings.
- **Plans must focus on the long-term** – we will achieve this by ensuring that planning discussions balance the desire to move on “early action” items as well

as tackling longer-term changes that will truly build stronger and healthier neighbourhoods.

- **Measurement of outcomes is critical** – we will achieve this with a focussed approach to research and evaluation. In addition to the critically important efforts of staff and community partners in measuring change in our community, we are pleased that an emerging partnership with McMaster University will strengthen our measurement of results.

Research and Evaluation:

In the case of evaluating Hamilton's neighbourhood strategy, the main objective is to measure the impact of the intervention on target outcomes of interest. This analysis will be longitudinal as it will track change over time. Specifically, we will measure the impact of both 'place-based' and 'people-based' outcomes.

- People-based outcomes examples:
 - Education
 - Employment & income
 - Civic engagement & awareness
 - Health
- Place-based outcomes examples:
 - Housing & physical environment
 - Safety and security
 - Community
 - Economic development

These outcomes will be measured with a combination of primary survey data and secondary data that is routinely collected. For example, in the case of education, outcomes may be measured using answers to survey questions about completion of, or enrolment in, university/college education, which can be expressed as a percentage for the neighbourhood, but it can also be measured using the Early Development Instrument (EDI), which is collected by the School Boards and the City (the EDI is a measure of kindergarten children's readiness to learn), or high-school drop-out rates. Similarly, for place-based outcomes, housing and physical environment can be measured using responses to resident survey questions about satisfaction with the appearance of housing in the neighbourhood, or upkeep of public spaces, but it can also be measured using secondary data, such as building or fire code violations, by-law enforcement for property maintenance, etc. The precise questions to be asked and the secondary data to be used has not been determined, but there are numerous possibilities. The McMaster team will work closely with City staff to achieve a selection of metrics that gives the best data for decision-making for the City and also upholds the highest standard of research quality.

Use of Neighbourhood Development Reserve:

The reserve amount earmarked for Neighbourhood Development Strategies provides an opportunity to support neighbourhood development activities in the following areas:

- Funding for “early action” activities that are identified through neighbourhood planning processes by providing matching funds to support neighbourhood development;
- Funding for the implementation of priorities identified through the resident-led neighbourhood planning processes, and;
- Funding for research, evaluation and knowledge transfer activities that support the monitoring and communication of neighbourhood change.

It is important to note that the use of the reserve funds would come after exhausting all other options for re-allocating existing resources or bringing new resources from external partners. The goal of the neighbourhood investment strategy is not to duplicate existing funding options but to provide additional opportunities to move projects forward or more importantly, leverage additional funding to create a larger pool of resources to address neighbourhood issues.

Resident Engagement and Coordination of Staff and Financial Resources:

The Neighbourhood Development Strategy seeks to define a new way of working with residents at the neighbourhood level. Allowing residents to lead planning processes, supported by the technical knowledge of City staff and community partners, will ensure the building of more holistic plans with more ownership of the plans by the residents. The Neighbourhood Development Strategy will also provide a framework for stronger cross-departmental alignment. The fact that the City’s work in neighbourhoods will be done collectively and not department-by-department provides opportunities to further explore efficiencies in how we deliver services to residents and how we better address community concerns.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

One alternative for consideration is to expand the number of neighbourhoods involved in the initial phase of engagement. This report indicates that a minimum of two neighbourhoods will be engaged in the process listed above. The alternative of expanding the number of neighbourhoods significantly would require new staff resources to be hired to complete the work. This would have a financial and staffing implication.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN (Linkage to Desired End Results)

Focus Areas: 1. Skilled, Innovative and Respectful Organization, 2. Financial Sustainability, 3. Intergovernmental Relationships, 4. Growing Our Economy, 5. Social Development, 6. Environmental Stewardship, 7. Healthy Community

Skilled, Innovative & Respectful Organization

- The Neighbourhood Development Strategy will foster greater teamwork across departments and provide an opportunity for innovative solutions to be developed. Through the resident-led planning approach staff will become more client focussed and develop stronger capacities in working with residents.

Financial Sustainability

- The Neighbourhood Development Strategy provides a framework for conversations about how best to maximize investments and deliver services in a cost effective manner.

Intergovernmental Relationships

- The Neighbourhood Development Strategy provides an opportunity to explore an Urban Development Agreement in an effort to align Provincial and Federal funding with Municipal and community investments in neighbourhoods.

Social Development

- The Neighbourhood Development Strategy will focus on neighbourhoods where residents in need require support in accessing support services

Healthy Community

- The Neighbourhood Development Strategy takes a holistic approach to neighbourhood planning in an effort to ensure every neighbourhood in Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

None.