

For Information

DATE: May 5, 2011

REPORT TITLE: **NEIGHBOURHOOD CAPACITY SUPPORT STRATEGY: JOINT  
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUNDING BETWEEN UNITED WAY  
AND REGION OF PEEL**

FROM: Janet Menard, Commissioner of Human Services

**OBJECTIVE**

To provide Council with an overview of resident-led activities and the associated funding process for the Neighbourhood Capacity Support Strategy joint neighbourhood development between the United Way and Region of Peel.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Neighbourhood Capacity Support Strategy (NCSS) is a Council priority to ensure that communities within Peel are resilient and healthy environments for neighbourhoods and families. Together with the United Way, the Region of Peel is committed to the development of priority neighbourhoods throughout Peel, through Peel's Strategic Plan 2011-2014 and the Term of Council Priorities.
- Supports and services are facilitated through a number of methods involving Peel Region and United Way staff, arrangements with community partners and funding and purchase of services agreements with the not-for-profit/charitable sector.
- The NCSS model puts high priority on supporting resident-identified priorities through the facilitation of resident-led activities.
- In 2010, 14 resident-led projects were funded totalling \$275,000.
- The process used involved a call for proposals and a community review process with successful applications meeting specific selection criteria with outcome measurements.
- This process will be used to support neighbourhood development throughout Peel in 2011 in the amount of \$300,000 (50/50 share between the Region of Peel and United Way of Peel Region).

**DISCUSSION****1. Background**

In 2007, Council supported a growing need to support priority neighbourhoods in Peel through the Neighbourhood Capacity Support Strategy and investment in local neighbourhood development. This is in addition to the Community Grants provided to community organizations, client related purchase of service, and the services delivered directly by Region of Peel staff. Because neighbourhood development is also a priority for

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the United Way of Peel Region, staff from both organizations utilized the existing United Way process of supporting neighbourhood grants. As such, in 2010 the Region of Peel and United Way of Peel Region implemented a joint funding opportunity to support the engagement of residents, community-based organizations, grass roots organizations, associations and other stakeholders toward the creation of resident activities, plans and priorities for how their neighbourhoods can be strengthened. The funds strengthen resident-led leadership and actions through a series of quickly implemented projects addressing priority needs as identified by groups in individual neighbourhoods.

In 2010, a total of \$275,000 Neighbourhood Grant funds were distributed through this funding opportunity. United Way of Peel Region provided \$150,000 and the Region of Peel provided \$125,000 (approved in the 2010 Human Services budget). Individual project applications were solicited and held to a range of between \$500 to \$30,000.

### **2. Neighbourhood Development Objectives**

The goal of the Neighbourhood Development initiative is to strengthen complex neighbourhoods by engaging residents, communities, agencies and others to address social issues that residents identify as important and aims to empower residents to strengthen neighbourhoods in ways that create hope and opportunity. Experience has shown that a neighbourhood that works together is a safer, healthier and more productive one.

### **3. Outcomes**

Applicants must focus their initiative on one or more of the following priorities; in addition to #9:

1. Supporting seniors to be healthy and live independently
2. Supporting persons with disabilities to enable them to live independent lives
3. Supporting people who are vulnerable and susceptible to abuse, especially women and children
4. Supporting people affected by mental health issues
5. Supporting newcomers and immigrants to fully integrate into community life
6. Assisting families and children to have a high quality of life
7. Empowering children and youth to reach their full potential
8. Reducing poverty, eliminating hunger, and ensuring people have access to affordable housing
9. Strengthening neighbourhood development efforts so that people can become involved and engaged in their community

Staff will measure the success of the projects by:

- The number of residents engaged in each project
- The number of community leaders and animators
- The continued and increasing attendance and participation at community events
- Community engagement in the process, community feedback and observations
- Stakeholder feedback, observations and participation in activities

Successful applicants attend an evaluation workshop at the beginning of the project and will be provided with evaluation support during the year.

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**4. Selection Criteria**

The selection criteria for the funding are as follows:

- The extent to which residents are engaged in the project
- Does the project bring the neighbourhood together?
- Does the project empower residents to influence their future/the future of the neighbourhood?
- Does the project increase the sense of community?
- Is there potential for early wins and long term success
- Is there strong resident engagement in the development, planning and implementation of projects?
- Does the proposal include community based, grass roots or diverse groups?
- Is applicant willing to participate in a cross-site, peer learning process with other participating agencies to share new approaches and best practices?
- Does the budget balance and is it reasonable?

**5. Neighbourhood Development Committee and Review Process**

Neighbourhood Development Grants applications were reviewed by the following Neighbourhood Development Committee members: Carolyn Bailey (EcoSource), Charmayne Brown (Region of Peel, Supervisor, Community Development Human Services Department), Esa Para Esananda (UWPR South Asian Advisory Council member), Dipti Patel (UWPR South Asian Advisory Council Coordinator), Laureen Rennie (Director of PNSG), Michele Robinson (City of Brampton), and Bonnie Waterfield (UWPR Community Investment Cabinet Chair).

The projects were selected based on fit with selection criteria, alignment with neighbourhood and community development principles featuring strong visible resident engagement. In total, 30 project proposals, for the amount of \$732,432, were received. Of the 22 brought forward, 14 were accepted and eight projects were deemed not to meet the selection criteria.

The following 14 projects (3 in Brampton, 2 in Caledon and 9 in Mississauga) have been funded, totalling \$275,000:

**6. Projects Approved**

**Brampton**

- 1) Boys and Girls Club of Peel, McHardy Court and Fair Oaks, \$22,725

The Boys and Girls Club of Peel has been a service provider for this neighbourhood for over 15 years. Their application will allow for further community planning by training residents to become community facilitators and implementing community identified projects. The project will involve residents and community stakeholders. Project ideas include community identified projects and events which will be selected and developed by residents.

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- 2) The Village Keepers, c/o Midaynta Community Services, Goreway/Queen to Goreway/Mayfield, \$17,500

This project is a community garden which will act as a hub for the neighbourhood of Goreway/Queen to Goreway/Mayfield. The community garden will be created to support individuals residing in the community by building capacity and opportunities for social inclusion, with a particular focus on youth. Neighbourhood members have bonded together as the Village Keepers and have voiced a need for a neighbourhood space where there can be intergenerational opportunities for social inclusion.

- 3) University of Toronto in Mississauga (UTM), selected neighbourhoods in Brampton and Mississauga, \$27,000

UTM will describe the social and spatial patterning of crime and safety across Mississauga and Brampton. They will develop a neighbourhood environmental survey tool (NEST) that will draw on a collaboration of researchers, community partners and residents to enhance the understanding of the local-level community resources, needs and priorities. Once the NEST has been developed they will pilot the tool in one of the priority neighbourhoods identified in the primary analysis. The results of this pilot will be disseminated through two community-based forums.

**Caledon**

- 4) Caledon Seniors Group c/o Social Planning Council, Caledon East, \$10,900

The neighbourhood described in this proposal was one that was central to Caledon but lacked the same service provision as some areas of Caledon, such as Bolton. This resident group is a seniors group that was established 20 years ago and has been offering a social environment for all seniors within Caledon. Residents in the seniors group range from the ages of 55-95. Although their needs are different from one another, they welcome the opportunity to socialize and share in programs offered at one's own pace and level of activity. The residents of this group not only congregate as participants, but also oversee and operate the organization of the group. Project activities will include an exercise/dance program, a lunch program, recreation time, movie night, bingo and trips.

- 5) Palgrave United Church c/o Toronto Regional Conservation Authority, Palgrave, \$26,500

Palgrave United Church will create a community kitchen food garden pilot at the Albion Hills Community Farm. The church has recently opened a community kitchen and would like to see it evolve into a learning space or a food hub. In order to accomplish this they will: hire a community engagement worker, purchase a commercial stove, construct an herb garden at the church, and develop a community garden at the Albion Hills Community Farm.

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**Mississauga**

- 6) Multicultural Inter-Agency Group of Peel (MIAG), Bloor and Tomken, \$26,500

MIAG will facilitate the enhancement of the organizational and representational skills of the families who reside in the West Wood apartment building. Tenants of this building are concerned with the safety and comfort of their families and voiced concerns regarding various concerning activities in their building. Residents would like to form a Neighbourhood Council to facilitate more interaction and cohesion in the building.

- 7) Family Education Centre of Peel, Malton, \$14,500

The Malton Film & Digital Media Community Engagement Project will consist of the development, production and delivery of a film documentary of the Malton Community Building Project. The documentary will capture the essence of this project as seen through the lens of the leadership team and the community. There will also be a community engagement seminar series aimed towards youth and adults within the Black and South Asian communities in Malton. The documentary will explore stereotypes in the community and the media, and will identify the impact the project has had in reversing these negative perceptions and providing opportunities for change.

- 8) Lakeshore Community Corridor Team, Lakeview neighbourhood, \$3,000

Lakeshore Community Corridor team helps people who want to make a better life connect with resources in the neighbourhood they need to get started. The volunteer-led group will build their neighbourhood presence and bring together residents who would otherwise never to get to know each other, by hosting community barbeques with games to encourage interaction.

- 9) Boys and Girls Club of Peel, Sheridan Homelands/Roche Court, north of the QEW, adjacent to Sheridan Mall in Mississauga, \$22,725

The Sheridan neighbourhood is a neighbourhood requiring additional support due to the lack of access to community resources and a high newcomer population. The application is to continue working on some of the successes such as building better and stronger relationships with key stakeholders in the community.

- 10) Boys and Girls Club of Peel, Acorn Place, Hurontario and Eglinton, \$22,725

The Boys and Girls Club of Peel has been an instrumental part of this community since 2000. Much focus has been with youth in this community and the challenges in working with inconsistent methodologies. This neighbourhood has had a fair bit of resources and development invested. As a result, residents have been engaged and will continue in strengthening their neighbourhood. The ongoing work with partners in establishing a consistent process and implement youth identified projects and events.

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- 11) Boys and Girls Club of Peel, Glenway, Collegeway and Glen Erin, \$22,725

Glenway has a blended community including social housing (four Buildings and Peel Living townhouses surrounded by townhouses) and this project is needed to continue the neighbourhood development that has been started. The agency will continue to develop activities to facilitate youth involvement through community identified projects and events (for e.g. communication circles, after-school programs, community festivals). The agency will also support the parent and youth committees to continue the development of the community playground.

- 12) Clarkson Community at Peace (CCAP) c/o Clarkson Secondary School, South of QEW to Lake Ontario, East to Lorne Park Road, West of Winston Churchill Blvd, \$17,500

This community is located in South Mississauga and the Clarkson Community at Peace (CCAP) is a committee comprised of parents, children, youth, local businesses, Peel District and Catholic District school boards, library staff, parks and recreation staff, peel police representative, and a city councillor. As a furtherance of last year, the projects for the Clarkson community will continue to attract and engage the residents, organizations, businesses and media towards building a safe/peaceful community.

- 13) Malton Neighbourhood Services, Malton Community Festival, \$14,200

The festival has a rich and lengthy heritage having begun in 1976 by local residents. This Festival annually attracts about 60 display organizations, about 10-15 entertainment groups, about 50-100 high school students as volunteers, and has still a lot of growth potential to move beyond the approximate 3,000 gross attendance.

- 14) Volunteer MBC and Partnering with the City of Mississauga, Mural Project: Meadowvale (Lake Aquitaine), \$26,500

This mural project is an effort to bring a fragmented community together through creativity and crime prevention. Under the supervision of the City of Mississauga Parks staff and a mentor artist, this project will engage students, residents, and seniors in the painting of murals along their local park trail in the Meadowvale Lake Aquitaine/Wabukayne neighbourhood. The Lake Aquitaine and Wabukayne trails connect the neighbourhood leading through local schools, one major shopping mall, several churches, one sports park and a major public transit hub. By changing the environment of these underpasses and along the trail system the community will see a reduction in vandalism, regain ownership of their neighbourhood, and recover a sense of community pride.

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**7. Community Impact and Measurement**

Community development can be defined as “the long-term process whereby people who are marginalized or living in poverty work together to identify their needs, create change, exert more influence in the decisions which affect their lives and work to improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live, and the society of which they are part”. Hence, measuring impact can be challenging in the earlier stages but some of the outcomes that can be measured immediately include: continued and increasing attendance and participation at community events; extent of community engagement in the process; community feedback and observations; stakeholder feedback; observations and participation from future plans as well as future funding secured.

Staff is currently working with United Way of Peel Region to learn how other organizations measure impact and hope to align it to the impact that our current projects have made and continue to make in the community. We also recognize that the agencies/projects may require support and training on how to capture this in the neighbourhood work they are doing. We will be hosting meetings in partnership with United Way of Peel Region for grantees to build their capacity in various areas, such as evaluation and resident engagement.

**8. Alignment**

**a) Community Investment Strategy**

The Neighbourhood Capacity Support Strategy and resulting neighbourhood development align with Region of Peel Community Investment Strategy (community grants). In working with neighbourhoods and creating capacity to encourage resident engagement we can enable residents to build community in their neighbourhood and advocate for changes that will improve the quality of neighbourhood life.

**b) Sustainability**

This is the first year that the Region of Peel has partnered with United Way of Peel Region to offer the Neighbourhood Development grants. The hope is that this partnership will assist the Region to support and enable resident engagement work in more neighbourhoods in Peel.

**c) Mississauga Summit**

This year, staff has also been involved with the Mississauga Summit Task Force working on neighbourhood development. There is a close alignment between the Region’s vision for neighbourhood development and that of the Mississauga Summit. Part of the work that has been identified to move forward is to convene stakeholders in Peel to develop a comprehensive neighbourhood development strategy, building on the strategy developed by the Mississauga Summit Task Force.

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**a) Research**

Two years ago, University of Toronto graduate students completed research around 14 specific neighbourhoods across Peel by adapting UW Toronto's Vitality Index that outlines the census data, systemic observations and demographic information. One of the grant recipients this year is the University of Toronto in Mississauga. UTM is proposing to use socio-demographic data, including violent crime indicators, to identify priority neighbourhoods and to develop a survey tool to conduct a comprehensive scan of the neighbourhood, complementing the research that was already completed by UTM students. This research will be conducted in a collaborative manner, with community partners sitting on the steering committee of this project in order to provide a solid evidence base for our future neighbourhood work.

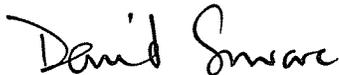
**CONCLUSION**

Peel citizens are embracing the opportunities to become actively involved in defining and tackling the problems of their communities and improving their quality of life. By supporting these projects we are enabling neighbourhoods and communities to strengthen the skills and abilities of local people and community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities and to engage with Region of Peel. Further, administrative efficiencies have been achieved by amalgamating the selection process for the funding of neighbourhood development with United Way.



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**Approved for Submission:**



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