
2006 BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE: Clean & Beautiful City Secretariat - Neighbourhood Beautification Program

At its meeting to review Operating Budget submissions on Thursday, January 26, 2006, the Budget Advisory Committee requested a briefing note from the Clean & Beautiful City Secretariat on a number of matters relating to the i) program funding and the delivery of the program with a reduced staff complement, ii) roles and responsibilities of Project Officers and iii) the impact on Business Support Services for the continuation of funding for one position in 2006.

- i) How the non-staffing costs of \$146,700 for the continuation of the Neighbourhood Beautification Program in 2006 would be spent, including details of programs funding with one or two staff.**

The Clean and Beautiful City Secretariat was set up in 2005 to support City Council's initiative to make Toronto cleaner and more beautiful. It coordinates programs interdivisionally, supports the work of the Roundtable on a Beautiful City, and helps to get the public and private sector involved in taking responsibility for making Toronto cleaner and more beautiful. It delivers the Neighbourhood Beautification Program and the Festival of Architecture and Design (fAd). The Secretariat has requested funding to extend the Neighbourhood Beautification Program for an additional year, with the continuation of two Program Officers (one currently paid for by Business Support Services) and program costs.

The Neighbourhood Beautification Program pilot project was designed to engage communities in adopting and beautifying underutilized local spaces in each of the 44 wards in the city, with a contribution of \$1500. The projects have included murals, gardens and art installations. Apart from the projects undertaken since May (42 projects identified, 14 complete and the remaining 28 to be finished this spring) and the funds that have been leveraged, the program has become an in-demand resource for small-scale community development projects including Priority Neighbourhood projects, is helping produce a new culture of civic participation, and is coordinating corporate donations to various initiatives around the city.

It should be noted that the 2005 budget for the Clean & Beautiful City Secretariat did not include any funds for base operating expenses such as telephone, computer and general office expenses.

Scenario 1 - No Project Officers - If funding for Project Officers is not provided in 2006, the Neighbourhood Beautification Program cannot be delivered. Should \$1500 or another amount of funds be provided directly to Councillor's offices for dispersal to community groups to adopt and beautify publicly-owned properties, there would be no city-wide coordination, information sharing, recognition, or website updates for the public, nor would there be staff to deliver the existing Partner Programs which targets specific beautification items across the city, such as Bell Box transformations, wall murals, and the Sakura Tree planting program. The

elimination of the Neighbourhood Beautification program would radically diminish the city's ability to attract new partners to invest, improve and maintain public spaces.

The elimination of two projects officers would also eliminate the city's ability to coordinate the Festival of Architecture and Design (fAd). Support to the overall Clean and Beautiful City initiative would be radically reduced - Project Officers currently are involved in projects such as encouraging civic engagement through programs at the Design Exchange, and are working with Priority Neighbourhood Areas on beautification efforts.

Scenario 2 – One Project Officer – The Secretariat will be unable to secure the range of new partnerships for Neighbourhood Beautification projects with the business community, institutions and the private sector. With significant support from the Councillor's offices in 2006, one project officer could generally oversee the program; however there would not be sufficient resources to be involved in working with communities on project organization, implementation or to secure approvals. The elimination of one position would also diminish the efforts being put into the Roundtable on a Beautiful City, fAd and other projects.

Scenario 3 – Two Project Officers – As per budget request. If funding for two staff positions is approved then the service delivery provided in 2005 can be maintained and the proposed 2006 work program can be implemented. The proposed work program includes the following:

- Identify, plan and execute one new project in each ward of the city
- Complete the implementation of the remaining 2005 projects
- Support the implementation of additional projects and work with communities to access resources
- Produce “Ward Beautification Maps” to be used as local resources
- Develop a hand book for neighbourhood groups to plan and implement projects on their own
- Develop additional partnerships with the private sector and continue to formalize relationships with other agencies, boards and commissions.

Program costs	Proposed	No Project Officers*	1 Project Officer**
Projects in Wards (44 x \$1,500)	\$66,000	\$ -	\$66,000
Communication support and materials; displays; notifications; advertisements, handbook printing	\$25,700	\$5,000	\$15,000
Offices expenses (telephone, cell phone, parking, mileage, computer equipment and software)	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$18,750
Meeting expenses for Roundtable and its subcommittees	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Clean & Beautiful City Awards, workshops for community groups, Design Exchange charrettes	\$10,000	\$ -	\$5,000
Festival of Architecture and Design, Proclamation event, city-wide building inventory.	\$10,000	\$ -	\$6,000
Total	\$146,700	\$27,500	\$120,750

* Elimination of Neighbourhood Beautification Program

** Modified Neighbourhood Beautification Program utilizing Councillor's Office resources for implementation

ii) The roles and responsibilities of two Project Officers requested for the Neighbourhood Beautification Program in 2006.

Following is a description of the work program of Projects Officers.

Neighbourhood Beautification Program Project Management:

Work with City Councillors and community and business groups to identify appropriate beautification locations on publicly-owned lands in each of the 44 wards in the city. Depending upon the particular project, the project officer performs a variety of functions, listed below.

- Act as project manager, mobilizing whatever is required for project implementation
- Secure approvals within the city and with other levels of government (i.e. Negotiate agreements with the Ministry of Transportation, CN and CP, city divisions and utility companies on behalf of community groups)
- Seek and set up new partnerships and implement Partner Programs
- Locate designers (i.e. OALA, Ontario Master Gardeners, Ryerson, HGTV)
- Organize work sessions, launches and ribbon cutting ceremonies for projects – send notification, prepare media advisory/news releases and speaking notes
- Locate real and in-kind donations (i.e. plant materials, building materials, benches, paint) and mobilize volunteer labour
- Encourage and form new inter-divisional groups to work together (i.e. Bendale Library Project with various City divisions and Toronto Library Foundation)
- Attend and/or organize community meetings (i.e. Project Officers posted notices in communities seeking adoptive groups, met with and organized new community groups)
- Supervise project implementation and act as the site supervisor

Create Beautification Inventory:

- Conduct site inspections and complete mapping, photo and text inventories for beautification opportunities (for Neighbourhood Beautification as well as proposals for Benjamin Moore, Sheridan Nurseries and Bell)
- Identify and map thematic beautification opportunities (i.e. Railway underpasses)
- Meet with City Councillors to identify and map “beautification sites” for the future to be used as resources become available

Build new Partnerships and Programs:

- Develop new partnerships between the City and private sector
- Approach and work with senior corporate executives on proposals for projects (i.e. Benjamin Moore, Sheridan Nurseries, HGTV, Bell Canada)
- Approach developers for Sales Office Reclamation Program for reuse of discarded plant material
- Coordination of the Design Exchange Neighbourhood Beautification Charrette in November 2005 and April/May 2006. Approximately 50 student designers and design professionals have been and will be involved in looking at ways that small spaces could be improved in the city
- Manage the Sakura Tree Planting Project with the Japanese Consulate and City Councillors – coordinate site proposals from communities for 80 trees to be planted in 2006

Advocate for Clean & Beautiful City Initiatives:

- Develop PowerPoint presentations on beautification opportunities used to brief various private and public groups on the Clean and Beautiful City Initiative
- Recognize those who have been involved
 - Provide letters of acknowledgement
 - Help to coordinate the Clean & Beautiful Appreciation Awards
 - Answer public inquiries (email, phone, fax and letters) regarding beautification opportunities
 - Participate in Canada Blooms – work at information booth and host information session presentations on Neighbourhood Beautification opportunities

Coordinate other related initiatives:

- Coordinate the Festival of Architecture & Design – manage partners, help organize Proclamation event and facilitate the calendar and website
- Work with Priority Neighbourhood Group on beautification efforts
- In 2005 facilitated 16 additional beautification projects as offshoots of the core program, including the Wellesley Street planting and Lawrence Heights Garden
- Support work of the Roundtable on a Beautiful City
- Develop a hand-book for neighbourhood groups as a resource tool to plan and implement projects on their own.

iii) The impact on Business Support Services of the continuation of the funding for one project officer position to the Secretariat for Neighbourhood Beautification program in 2006

In 2005, Business Support Services budget provided the gapping to fund the seconded project officer. Business Support Services will be unable to provide the funding in 2006 since proposed reductions of five vacant staff positions in Business Support Services budget have removed the flexibility previously available to fund this position.

For further information, please contact:

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