

## **2007 CSP Funding for Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative**

<b>Date:</b>	April 30, 2007
<b>To:</b>	Community Development and Recreation Committee
<b>From:</b>	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration Division
<b>Wards:</b>	28
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

### **SUMMARY**

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This report provides information on the achievements of Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative (RPNI) during the first year of funding. RPNI plays a significant role representing the residents in the context of the redevelopment of the social housing project. The report recommends the allocation of \$68,000.00 from the Community Services funding envelope within the 2007 Approved Budget for the Community Partnership and Investment Program, to continue to support the activities of Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative during the second year.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration Division recommends that:**

- (1) funding of \$68,000.00 be provided to Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative from the Community Services Partnership funding envelope within the 2007 Approved Budget for the Community Partnership and Investment Program, for the period of July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008;
- (2) in order to receive the 2007 funds, Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative provide an update on year 2 of the 3-year plan including budget and supporting program documentation satisfactory to the Director, Community Resources; and

- (3) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact beyond what has been approved in the 2007 Approved Operating Budget.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial impact statement.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting of May 23, 24 and 25, 2006, City Council adopted a report from the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration titled, "Funding for Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative". The report recommended that \$68,000.00 be allocated from the 2006 Community Services envelope for the organization's work. This funding allocation was provided for a 3 year period to be reviewed on an annual basis until 2008 in order to facilitate RPNI capacity and sustainability.

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative was formed in 2002 to provide leadership in building and sustaining a healthy and vibrant community in the Regent Park area. The organization works in partnership with service providers, government and local businesses to identify and address issues brought forward by the community. RPNI's role in the community includes being a broker for the residents with various stakeholders in the redevelopment of Regent Park.

The City of Toronto recognizes the unique role of RPNI in the community and provides funding to facilitate the organization to build capacity and sustainability based on a three-year plan covering the period from July 2006 through June 2009.

### **COMMENTS**

The RPNI received the first year funding from the Community Services funding envelope of City of Toronto for the period starting from July 1, 2006 to support their activities. During the first part of the project, RPNI has served 130 direct participants, contacted 6,325 community members in a variety of outreach efforts and successfully mobilized about 50 regular volunteers. One full time staff has been hired through this project. RPNI has developed a community plan and has undertaken a number of projects in response to the needs of the community members. These initiatives have included training for residents in community animator skills, developing a small business for residents providing a needed service for a local program for homeless people, preparing a group of residents for apprenticeships on job sites including the Regent Park Revitalization site, and initiating community celebrations such as Black History Month,

Story-Telling Festival and South Asian Heritage Month. The organization has also played an active role in connecting and collaborating with various stakeholders. As a result, 18 organisations and groups were involved with the project during the reporting period.

In terms of the capacity building activities, RPNI has completed the by-laws and is in the process of developing documentation for the application for charitable status. The first AGM of the organization was held in November 2006 with over 70 members attending. Initial contacts were also made to explore funding possibilities through the United Way of Greater Toronto, Laidlaw Foundation, Toronto Community Foundation and Metcalf Foundation. The organisation has successfully gained support from the Metcalf Foundation to fund another community development project and is working to review their activities to determine how they may be able to meet the criteria of other funding bodies.

The organisation has worked closely with the City of Toronto and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation in the Regent Park Redevelopment process. The organisation has participated in Committee of Adjustment Hearings at the City of Toronto and at an OMB hearing as a way to engage residents in the consultation process. In the coming year, RPNI plans to focus more on the community engagement activities to support the Social Development Plan.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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