



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Government of Canada Investment to Establish Youth Gang Prevention Project in Toronto

Date:	August 28, 2008
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report recommends that the City of Toronto receive a federal project contribution from the Government of Canada's Youth Gang Prevention Fund for an amount of up to \$4,932,954 between 2008-2012 to establish a new Preventing Youth Gang Activity Pilot Project in Toronto.

This report also recommends that the Social Development, Finance and Administration's 2008 Operating Budget be increased by \$100,000 gross and revenues to reflect the initial pilot project contribution and expenditure in 2008; and that the Executive Director be delegated authority to negotiate and execute the agreement on behalf of the City with Public Safety Canada including full responsibility and accountability of funds in 2008 and subsequent years.

The Preventing Youth Gang Activity in Toronto pilot project represents the largest youth gang diversion initiative the City has undertaken to date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. the City of Toronto receive funds from the Government of Canada's Youth Gang Prevention Fund in the amount of up to \$4,932,954 to support a new youth gang prevention pilot project;

2. the 2008 Operating Budget of Social Development, Finance and Administration be increased by \$100,000 gross and \$100,000 revenues to reflect the initial pilot project contribution and expenditure in 2008 from the Government of Canada's Youth Gang Prevention Fund, and that the balance of funds of up to \$4,832,954 be reported through the 2009 and subsequent operating budget process; and
3. the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration be delegated authority to negotiate and execute the agreement on behalf of the City with Public Safety Canada including full responsibility and accountability of funds in 2008 and subsequent years.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The project has a total value of \$4,932,954 for the period of October 1, 2008 to March 31, 2012. The 2008 contribution for the initial pilot project will increase Social Development, Finance and Administration's 2008 Operating Budget by \$100,000 gross and revenues, resulting in a zero net increase in 2008. The balance of funds in the amount of \$4,832,954 will be reporting through the 2009 and subsequent operating budget process.

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

DECISION HISTORY

On March 30, 2007, the Social Development, Finance and Administration Division submitted a final proposal under the federal Youth Gang Prevention Fund for \$4,885,046 to establish a new multi-year pilot project aimed at preventing youth gang activity in Toronto. On August 11, 2008 the Social Development, Finance and Administration Division received notification that the proposal was approved in the amount of \$4,932,954 over a period of 3.5 years (2008-2012).

The implementation of this project is in keeping with Council Directive #9 from EX 21.2 "City-Based Measures to Address Gun Violence" adopted by Council on June 23 and 24, 2008:

City Council direct the Deputy City Manager, Cluster A, in consultation with the Toronto Police Service, to work with staff from the National Crime Prevention Centre and other relevant federal and provincial ministries to facilitate approval of the City's application for funding for a 'gang exit' wrap around support initiative, in keeping with the goals of the National Crime Prevention Strategy.

See <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/cc/minutes/2008-06-23-cc22-mn.pdf>.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The City of Toronto, Toronto Police Service, Toronto's school boards and members of the community have consistently identified youth gang involvement as a significant danger to the long-term health, safety and success of Toronto's youth. Historically the City and its community partners have endeavoured to provide the families of at-risk and gang-involved youth with supports to break the cycle of gang violence, but limited resources have restricted these efforts. Gang violence has directly and indirectly impacted the lives of many Torontonians shaping how they perceive the city in which they live, work and play.

Since 2004, the City and its partners have been working to address this issue through its Community Safety Plan, "Making A Safe City Safer". This pilot project advances this work by directly engaging the City's vulnerable youth.

COMMENTS

Building on the work of the City's Community Safety Plan, in 2007 the City undertook the Making A Safe City Safer mandate, which emphasizes a youth strategy focused on anti-violence intervention, public interest partnerships for youth employment, and expanding training apprenticeships and educational opportunities for young people.

In keeping with this mandate, the Preventing Youth Gang Activity pilot project will provide supports to address youth/family need for resources such as housing, education, youth employment, and positive community involvement. The project will work to strengthen protective factors by working collaboratively with parents, schools and community to provide the maximum possible intervention strategies for neighbourhood youth. The project will enhance the capacity of communities to decrease risk factors and increase protective factors related to gang victimization by augmenting community assets to support high risk youth and reduce the presence of gang related activity in affected areas.

The project contribution agreement includes a six month project development phase to develop a formal work plan (including program design and deliverables), establish a Project Advisory Committee to provide strategic direction to the project, and determine several contracted service providers for project delivery and evaluation.

Staff will report back to the Community Development and Recreation Committee in the first quarter of 2009 to provide further description of the project's partners, delivery model and scope of work, following the completion of the initial project development phase.

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