



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Update on City Initiatives to Strengthen Neighbourhoods

Date:	June 11, 2014
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration Division
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	19827

SUMMARY

On April 1, 2014, City Council adopted the report, Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy (TSNS) 2020 – Recommended Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. TSNS 2020 will work to advance equitable economic, social, health, environmental and participation outcomes in all neighbourhoods across Toronto, with a focus on 31 *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*. By partnering with residents, businesses and agencies, TSNS 2020 will strengthen neighbourhood wellbeing and deliver local impact for citywide change.

Council directed the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration Division to report back before the close of Council 2014 on the implementation process.

This report:

- Provides an update on Emerging Neighbourhoods Strategy and requests delegated authority to Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration Division to allocate transition funding in the emerging neighbourhoods in 2014;
- Recommends one-time funding through the Community Services Partnership (CSP) Program to support the stabilization of the Rexdale Community Hub in partnership with the Rexdale Community Health Centre; and

- Provides an update on the TSNS 2020 Partnership Opportunities Legacy (POL) Funding for 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council delegate authority to the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to allocate the Council approved \$300,000 in Community Funding for 2014 to support the four neighbourhoods that are transitioning from the *Neighbourhood Improvement Area* portfolio.
2. City Council approve one-time funding in the amount of \$45,000 to support the stabilization of the Rexdale Community Hub in partnership with the Rexdale Community Health Centre as described in the body of this report.
3. City Council delegate authority to the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to re-allocate 2014 Community Service Partnerships funds that are not used during the funding year by organizations to other Community Service Partnerships organizations.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from this report beyond what has been included in the 2014 Approved Operating Budget for Social Development Finance and Administration.

Funding allocations referred to in this report include \$14,697,900 for the Community Service Partnership Program (including \$45,000 to support the stabilization Rexdale Community Hub) and \$300,000 to support the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. With the exception of an economic factor increase, funding levels for CSP agencies are identical to the previous year's allocation. However, additional funds are recommended for the Rexdale Community Hub in partnership with the Rexdale Community Health Centre, requiring Council approval.

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on April 1 and 2, 2014, City Council approved the final report Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy (TSNS) 2020 – Recommended Improvement Areas. As

part of the 2014 Operating Budget process, Council approved an additional \$300,000 in Community Funding to support emerging needs.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2014/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-67382.pdf>

The 2014 Approved Operating Budget for Social Development, Finance and Administration includes funding of \$18,924,200 for Community Partnership and Investment Program as approved by Council at its meeting of January 29 and 30, 2014
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewPublishedReport.do?function=getCouncilDecisionDocumentReport&meetingId=7848>

At its meeting of June 23, 2008, City Council approved a series of recommendations to streamline and improve funding administration. One of the recommendations allowed for multi-year funding for CSP and delegated the approval of funding within a partnership program to the head of the division that administers the program where:

- a. the partnership organization's recommended allocation is identical to the previous year's allocation, with the exception of technical adjustments;
- b. the partnership organization has not requested an increased allocation.

With the exception of an economic factor increase, funding levels for CSP agencies are identical to the previous year's allocation. However, additional funds are recommended for the Rexdale Community Hub in partnership with the Rexdale Community Health Centre, requiring Council approval.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2008.CD16.5>

As part of its 2014 Capital Budget Process Council approved a total of \$12 M in funding for infrastructure investments in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. A Total of \$3 M has been approved for each of 4 years beginning in 2015.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2014/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-67382.pdf>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy was first adopted by Council in 2005 premised on the understanding that an historic under-investment in the community infrastructure for some Toronto neighbourhoods had resulted in a variety of challenges, particularly in the area of community safety, and particularly for racialized youth. The TSNS 2020 Strategy builds on the success of the 2005 Strategy and focuses on improving equitable outcomes for all neighbourhoods and monitors their wellbeing.

TSNS 2020 uses the Urban HEART@Toronto data to assign a Neighbourhood Equity Score for each neighbourhood in five domains: Economic Opportunities, Social Development, Health Lives, Participation and Decision-Making and Physical Surroundings.

The early stages of the TSNS 2020 implementation process have begun following the approval of the new Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) in April 2014. This

report provides an update on neighbourhood investment strategies that are planned for the remaining part of 2014 and early part of 2015.

COMMENTS

Emerging Neighbourhoods Strategy and Fund

As part of the 2014 Operating Budget process, Council approved an additional \$300,000 in Community Funding to support emerging needs in underserved areas. These funds will be allocated during 2014 to support the four neighbourhoods that are transitioning from the *Neighbourhood Improvement Area* portfolio. The Community Funding will be used to help ensure that support exists within these transitioning neighbourhoods to convene continued local improvement planning and delivery efforts. The Community Funding will also ensure that the gains made in the 2005 Strategy are maintained and strengthened.

In addition to this targeted investment, each of these neighbourhoods is currently receiving multi-year funding through S DFA's Service Development Investment Program (SDIP). SDIP invests in coalitions, networks and organizations that develop community capacity and build effective partnerships within Neighbourhood Improvement Areas.

Neighbourhood networks or organizations in transitioning NIAs are in the process of developing comprehensive sustainability and community engagement plans with the support of S DFA staff and community partners. These plans will be assessed along with other considerations such as SDIP funding received to date and the individual neighbourhood equity score to determine the appropriate funding allocation. Given Council's shortened schedule in 2014, delegated authority to S DFA's Executive Director is being recommended to allocate these funds in a timely manner.

Rexdale Community Hub/Rexdale Community Health Centre Funding Recommendation

The Rexdale Community Hub has been an important component of the City's Neighbourhood Improvement strategy. The City of Toronto, United Way of Toronto, other levels of government, and foundations, partnered to transform the former high school into a new 77,000 sq. ft. community centre.

The Hub opened in the spring of 2012 and is a home to over ten agencies working together to provide local residents with services, assistance and access to community space.

Rexdale continues to be a *Neighbourhood Improvement Area* and the Hub plays a critical role in enhancing community and social infrastructure of the neighbourhood. Additional investment at this important juncture will support a strengthened governance model and service integration strategy for the Hub.

TSNS Partnership Opportunities Legacy (POL) Funding 2015

As part of its 2014 Capital Budget process, Council approved a total of \$12.0 million in funding for infrastructure investments in *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*. Funding for this initiative is included in the 2014 Capital Budget and 2015-2023 Capital Plan for Facilities Management and Real Estate. A total of \$3.0 million has been approved for each of 4 years beginning in 2015. Staff are in the process of developing a strategy to identify 2015 projects ready for capital investment in the new *Neighbourhood Improvement Areas*.

Staff will work collaboratively with local residents to identify neighbourhood recreational and social investment priorities and maximize the City funding through leveraged partnerships with the private sector, community funding organizations and other orders of government.

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SIGNATURE

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