

## **Community Partnership Strategy**

<b>Date:</b>	January 20, 2010
<b>To:</b>	Community Development and Recreation Committee
<b>From:</b>	Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

### **SUMMARY**

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This report describes the Community Partnership Strategy, which guides the analysis of the community based service system in the city's social planning neighbourhoods. This neighbourhood-focused strategy will allow the City to assess and monitor the strength of the community based service system in neighbourhoods and establish appropriate service levels for community based supports.

In addition to recommending that Council adopt the Strategy, this report recommends that the City assess and monitor the strength of the community based service system in neighbourhoods using the Strategy, and pilot the application of the Strategy in the Community Service Partnerships' 2011 funding cycle.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

1. Council adopt the Community Partnership Strategy, which describes the community based service system in the City social planning neighbourhoods in terms of six system components and five categories of measures:
  - a. System Components: Organizations, Services, Space, Connections, Resources, and Governance;
  - b. Measure Categories: Quantifiers, Accessibility, Adaptability, Effectiveness and Equity;
2. The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration assess and monitor the strength of the community based service system in neighbourhoods using the Community Partnership Strategy;
3. The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration report periodically to the Community Development and Recreation Committee on the results of this assessment and monitoring process;
4. The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, continue to work with the City's Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Divisions, external funders and community representatives on the ongoing refinement, application and evaluation of the Community Partnership Strategy;
5. The Corporate Grants Lead pilot the application of the Community Partnership Strategy in the 2011 cycle of the Community Service Partnerships and report back to the Community Development and Recreation Committee on potential application of the Community Partnership Strategy to other Community Partnership and Investment Programs following the evaluation of this pilot.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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The adoption of this report will have no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the 2009 operating budget.

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

## **EQUITY IMPACT**

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The Community Partnership Strategy supports an equity analysis of the community based service system in neighbourhoods. The application of the Strategy will allow the City to

better understand how its various partnerships with the community based service system affect the equity of this system in neighbourhoods and across the city.

The Community Partnership Strategy is a place-based tool that supports an analysis of the community based service system in neighbourhoods. Within this neighbourhood focus, the Strategy supports the analysis of the needs of different population groups, including equity-seeking groups. As a result, the implementation of the Strategy may enhance the City's capacity to address the needs of equity-seeking groups in the neighbourhoods where they live.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting on November 14, 2008, Council adopted the report titled "Development of the Community Partnership Strategy."

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-17230.pdf>

The Community Partnership Strategy has been developed in the context of the City's place-based work. Council formalised its place-based approach with the adoption of 13 priority neighbourhood areas at its meeting on October 26, 27, 28 and 31, 2005.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2005/agendas/council/cc051026/pof9rpt/cl006.pdf>

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Over the years, Toronto has developed a very sophisticated human service system. This system is a mixed model that has moved away from an exclusive reliance on municipal service delivery to one based on partnerships between the city, community organizations, and for-profit service providers.

The strength of this system lies in the extensive City-community partnerships that support it. Working with community service organizations, ethno-racial groups, cultural organizations and many others, the City has developed a service system more responsive than it would have been able to achieve on its own. It has been able to reach out to all parts of Toronto to work with changing populations, identify evolving community needs and develop flexible, innovative and cost-effective ways of meeting them.

As a result of the nature of this system, the City depends on the community based sector<sup>1</sup> to achieve its service and strategic goals in almost every area of human service.

Divisions as diverse as Children's Services, Economic Development and Culture, Employment and Social Services, Long Term Care Homes and Services, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Public Health, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, Social Development, Finance and Administration, Transportation Services and the Toronto

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report "non profit sector" is used to refer to the entire range of non-profit organizations, both incorporated and unincorporated. "Community based sector" is used to refer to the subset of the non-profit sector comprised of organizations with community-defined mandates. It excludes all public and quasi-public institutions with mandates defined by an order of government, such as City ABCs, hospitals, schools and school boards, and crown corporations.

Environment Office all provide financial resources to the community based service system as a means of advancing their divisional mandates.

Even those City divisions and Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABCs) that do not provide financial resources to the community based sector for service delivery have a variety of partnerships with the sector that are designed to enhance services and improve the quality of life for residents.

These City-community partnerships are possible in such wide variety because of the diversity of the community based sector. Community organizations are active in almost every area of social, economic, and community life – in health care, education, economic development, social services, employment, training and skills development, financial services, the environment, culture, the arts, recreation, religion, and spiritual pursuits.

The sector is not only diverse, it is also of significant size. Although figures specific to Toronto are not available, across Canada the community based sector employs almost one million people, more than eleven times the number of employees in the automotive industry and four times more than the agricultural sector. In 2005, its gross domestic product amounted to \$31.0 billion, accounting for 2.4% of the Canadian economy. The sector owns important assets, produces a vast array of goods and services, and generates significant revenues. It also supports the activities of millions of volunteers who contribute a billion hours of time each year.

In spite of its importance both to the City and to the economy, there is little Toronto-specific information available about the community based service system, and no tool currently available to help understand its overall functioning. This lack of analytical tools and supporting information makes it difficult to determine where the community based service system is functioning at an appropriate level and where it might need to be strengthened.

The first attempt to analyse service levels in the community based service system in Toronto was made in 2005 by the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force (SNTF). A joint City-United Way Toronto initiative, the SNTF brought together private, public and community sector representatives to develop a strategy to support Toronto's vulnerable neighbourhoods.

The SNTF measured the strength of social supports available to neighbourhoods by measuring how close residents were to eleven different services they might most need. The Task Force considered a mixture of both public and community based services, and identified a total of nine neighbourhoods with poor service levels and high levels of social need. This service level analysis was one of the elements considered by the City when it subsequently established its 13 priority neighbourhood areas.

The Community Partnership Strategy builds on the work of the SNTF, but focuses exclusively on the community based service system in neighbourhoods. It is designed to complement the extensive service planning approaches that the City and its ABCs already

have in place by providing an analysis of the strength of the community based sector with which the City is so closely linked.

## **COMMENTS**

The Community Partnership Strategy was developed with the assistance of three different reference groups:

- A staff reference group comprised of representatives from nineteen divisions and special project offices, four ABCs and the Toronto District School Board;
- A community reference group comprised of representatives from seven different community based organizations and networks; and
- A funder reference group comprised of eight key governmental and non-governmental funders in Toronto.

Appendix A provides a complete list of reference group member organizations.

During 2009, these three reference groups assisted in the development of a draft Strategy for public consultation. Five public consultation sessions were held across the city during the last two weeks of November 2009, and were attended by approximately 220 representatives from community organizations, along with City staff and representatives of other funders. The results of the consultation sessions were presented to the reference groups in early December, and the Strategy finalised with their assistance.

## **The Community Based Service System**

As a standard part of its due diligence practices, the City assesses and monitors the strength of those individual community based organizations with which it has a financial relationship. These assessments are conducted with a variety of tools, including funding criteria, risk management frameworks, contracts and letters of understanding, site visits, reports, and policies in areas as diverse as financial management and anti-racism. These tools allow the City to better understand the strength of individual organizations, and help it maximise the impact that City resources have on community needs.

The Community Partnership Strategy provides the City with a tool to assess and monitor the strength of the community based service system at the system level in neighbourhoods. Unlike the City's existing tools, it does not focus on the strength of individual organizations, but rather provides a means for understanding the way the full range of community based organizations and services work together to support residents in their neighbourhoods.

The Strategy describes the community based service system in neighbourhoods in terms of six distinct components:

1. Organizations – community based non-profit organizations. This component excludes non-profit organizations with mandates prescribed by the federal,

provincial or municipal governments, such as hospitals, schools and school boards, and City ABCs and crown corporations. It includes those faith-based organizations that provide community services that are clearly demarcated from their faith services at both the service and budget level.

2. Services – services provided by the community based sector. This component excludes services provided by the private and public sectors, and by excluded non-profit organizations such as hospitals and City ABCs, and faith services.
3. Space – indoor and outdoor spaces available to support the community based service system.
4. Connections – links among the community based sector and with the community, the private sector, public sector and faith communities. This component includes links such as partnerships, communications, and joint programming.
5. Resources – the inputs to the community based service system required to support its functioning. This component includes financial resources, staff and volunteers.
6. Governance – the engagement, leadership, decision-making and accountability processes required to ensure the community based service system is community-owned.

The Strategy includes five categories of measures that the City can use to assess and monitor the strength of the community based service system in neighbourhoods:

1. Quantifiers – measures that indicate the size and scope of a component and the overall system, such as the number of organizations, the number of services, and the number of spaces.
2. Accessibility – measures that indicate the accessibility of a component and the overall system in areas such as physical access, language, culture, and hours of operation.
3. Adaptability – measures that indicate the ability of a component and the overall system to both proactively and reactively address change.
4. Effectiveness – measures that indicate whether the most effective use is being made of a component and the overall system.
5. Equity – measures that indicate whether a component and the overall system are being used in a way that reflects community needs and priorities.

This report recommends that the City adopt the Community Partnership Strategy and assess and monitor the strength of the community based service system at the neighbourhood level using this Strategy. The report also recommends that the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, report periodically to Council on the results of this assessment and monitoring process.

## Implementation

The Community Partnership Strategy is intended to be an iterative strategy, refined over time as the City's capacity to analyse the community based service system grows. The Strategy is also intended to be interactive, developed and refined based on significant and ongoing community engagement.

Participants in the Strategy's public consultation sessions proposed that the Strategy's ongoing engagement involve a broad range of stakeholders, including residents, businesses, faith communities, community organizations, community service users, and a variety of specific demographic groups. They envisioned a role for engagement in all aspects of the Strategy, including its ongoing refinement and validation, application, and its evaluation. Participants also thought a diverse set of engagement tools, from one-on-one interviews to Web 2.0 strategies would be required.

This report recommends that the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, continue to work with the three reference groups that have shaped the Strategy as its implementation proceeds. The work of the reference groups will focus on the development of a detailed engagement plan to support the ongoing refinement of the Strategy, an evaluation plan for the Strategy, and the development of additional measures and data, with an initial focus on measures of Accessibility.

As a part of this first implementation, the Strategy will be populated with all currently available data, and the resulting measures of the strength of the community based service system validated. The resulting analysis will then be applied during 2011 cycle of the Community Service Partnerships.

The Community Service Partnerships (CSP) is a partnership program that provides ongoing funding to support community programs that improve social outcomes for marginalized and vulnerable groups. As the Community Partnership and Investment Program's (CPIP) largest partnership program, the CSP is often used to pilot new initiatives such as the Corporate Grants Information System, and the changes initiated as a part of the Council-approved report "Options to Streamline and Improve Funding Administration" (2008).

The Strategy will be used to enhance the existing CSP allocation process. It will allow the CSP to consider both the way in which its funding recommendations might impact the strength of the community based service system, and the way in which the strength of the community based service system might impact the effectiveness of its funding recommendations.

By considering the broader community based service system in its allocations process, the CSP may be able to identify neighbourhoods where its funding impact could be enhanced by strengthening the overall community based service system in addition to addressing service needs. It may also assist in identifying the ways in which the CSP's funding recommendations could positively impact the accessibility, adaptability, effectiveness and equity of the overall community based service system.

Following its application in the 2011 CSP, the Strategy will be evaluated and its potential application to other CPIP programs assessed. As a part of this assessment, the Strategy's potential applications in other program areas will also be explored. Members of the Strategy's reference groups have already identified that the Strategy could complement their own planning processes. They have also noted that the Strategy could provide a common platform for the City, other governments, community funders, community organizations and neighbourhood residents to collaborate on their efforts to strengthen the community based service sector. Both of these possibilities will be explored as the Strategy is evaluated.

This report recommends that the Corporate Grants Lead pilot the application of the Strategy in the CSP, and report back to the Community Development and Recreation Committee on its possible application to other CPIP programs once the evaluation of the pilot is complete.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Lydia Fitchko  
Acting Executive Director  
Social Development, Finance and Administration

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A – Reference Group Membership



## **APPENDIX A – REFERENCE GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

### **Staff Reference Group Membership**

#### **Divisions/Special Project Offices**

Affordable Housing Office  
Children's Services  
City Planning  
Corporate Finance  
Economic Development Culture & Tourism  
Emergency Medical Services  
Employment & Social Services  
Fire Services  
Long Terms Care and Home Services  
Municipal Licensing & Standards  
Parks Forestry & Recreation  
Public Health  
Shelter Support & Housing Administration  
Social Development, Finance & Administration  
Strategic and Corporate Policy  
Technical Services  
Toronto Environment Office  
Toronto Water  
Transportation Services

#### **Agencies, Boards and Commissions**

Toronto Community Housing (including Toronto Housing Connections)  
Toronto Police Services  
Toronto Public Library  
Toronto Transit Commission

#### **Other**

Toronto District School Board

## **Community Agency Reference Group Membership**

Social Planning Toronto<sup>2</sup>  
Alternative Planning Group (network)  
Family Services Toronto<sup>2</sup>  
St. Christopher House<sup>2</sup>  
Toronto Neighbourhood Centres<sup>2</sup>  
Scarborough Executive Director's Network  
Etobicoke Executive Director's Network

## **Funder Reference Group Membership**

Laidlaw Foundation  
Metcalf Foundation  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Toronto Community Foundation  
United Way Toronto  
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration  
Ministry of Children and Youth Services  
Service Canada

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<sup>2</sup> Membership was directed by the Community Development and Recreation Committee at its November 2008 meeting.