

Ward 22, St. Paul's

City Hall, 100 Queen Street West
2nd Floor, Suite A17
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Tel: 416-392-7906
Fax: 416-392-0124
councillor_matlow@toronto.ca
www.joshmatlow.ca



Motion re: Youth Equity Strategy Funding in 2014 Budget

Community Development and Recreation Committee recommend the following initiatives to be included in the 2014 budget as part of the Youth Equity Strategy to support youth who are at highest risk of involvement in serious violence or crime:

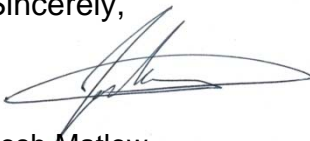
Prevention

1. In partnership with Toronto Community Housing Corporation provide mental health supports for youth in the Jane & Finch area (cost: \$50,000)
2. In partnership with the Toronto Public Library provide family support and skills development for inmates aged 18-29 to maintain family contact and increase chance of rehabilitation/lower recidivism rate (cost:\$50,000)
3. High-engagement employment strategy for youth with criminal records (cost: \$10,000)
4. Implement Youth Equity Strategy and create evaluation tools to ensure that programs dedicated to reducing youth violence are achieving positive outcomes (cost: \$117,000)

Alternatives to Criminalization

5. Create alternatives to exclusion, expulsion and eviction policies and practices from City facilities such as libraries, recreation facilities, and Toronto Community Housing (cost: \$50,000)
6. In partnership with TPS divisions 12 & 14 facilitate pre-charge interventions and programming assist young persons in accepting responsibility and addressing the impact of their actions on themselves, their family, the victim and the community (cost: \$100,000)
7. In partnership with TPS division 42 expand FOCUS REXDALE program model in Scarborough. FOCUS responds immediately to individuals, families, groups at high risk for involvement in serious violence or crime (cost: \$117,000)

Sincerely,



Josh Matlow
Toronto City Councillor
Ward 22 – St. Paul's

SUMMARY

The **Toronto Youth Equity Strategy** will be considered at the January 21, 2014 Community Development and Recreation Committee. The Strategy is focused on youth who are at highest risk of involvement in serious violence or crime. The Strategy takes this focus because these youth are being missed by our anti-violence programs and strategies.

Since June 2013, an interdivisional staff committee comprising staff from 9 divisions, agencies, and corporations have worked with an external advisory panel of youth and youth-serving community agency staff to develop the Strategy. Staff are building the Strategy upon the foundation of the Roots of Youth Violence report, incorporating promising practices identified in research and consultation with community groups and other orders of government. Finally, the Strategy is being developed to reflect youth's experiences.

A modest investment of resources in the 2014 operating budget would ensure that the first phase of work can begin immediately upon Council's approval of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy. Resources to implement both prevention and intervention initiatives will help to reduce instances of youth violence.

The following initiatives have been identified as key opportunities to carry the work of the Strategy forward into 2014. These criminal justice and social development activities allow for cross-corporate engagement in priority areas of mental health, skills development & economic opportunity, justice & community safety, and accountability. In total, they can be achieved for a combined 2014 investment of \$494,000.

TORONTO YOUTH EQUITY STRATEGY – PHASE 1 ACTIONS

A: PREVENTION Initiatives

Mental health: Toronto Community Housing Post Traumatic Stress Project Pilot

The pilot will work with youth from areas plagued with recent high occurrences of violence through an intensive intervention model of support to move from trauma to healing both at an individual and community level. The pilot will be launched in three communities across the city with a goal of supporting high risk youth in finding alternative means of channelling and unpacking the trauma that they have experienced.

Program Costs: \$50,000: Toronto Community Housing Corporation

Geographic focus: Ward 9

Family support and skills development: Storybook Parents High Risk Youth Pilot

The pilot will deliver the Storybook Dads program model to enable imprisoned parents aged 18-29 to maintain family contact, develop their literacy, and engage in training and volunteering opportunities, thus improving their skills and chances of rehabilitation.

Program Costs: \$50,000: Toronto Public Library

Geographic focus: City-wide

Economic opportunities: High-Engagement Employment Strategy for Youth with Criminal Records

The City will implement a high-engagement employment strategy for youth with criminal records. A criminal record presents a significant barrier to gaining employment, but the right job can be a very important support for a young person. A high engagement program sets clear expectations for both youth and employers, to develop good matches between and strong supports for both youth and employer. This program would include twice-annual high-engagement recruitment fairs and a review of barriers to participation in existing employment programs for youth with criminal records.

Program Costs: \$10,000: Toronto Employment and Social Services
Geographic focus: City-wide

Accountability and Impact: Youth Equity Strategy implementation and evaluation tools
Coordinate delivery of the Youth Shared Outcomes Framework, work with community organizations to develop shared metrics for programs looking to reduce youth violence and assist Equity, Diversity and Human Rights in development of a youth equity lens.
Program Costs would be covered under the PREVENTION initiatives staff position below.
Geographic focus: City-wide

Staff coordination for PREVENTION initiatives would be supported by a one-year temporary staff position.
Staff Costs: \$117,000: Social Development, Finance & Administration

B: INTERVENTION Initiatives

Alternatives to criminalization: Restorative Justice Pilot
The pilot will engage a community partner to consult on a City-wide restorative justice model that includes mediation between City staff, residents and community partners and youth, to create alternatives to exclusion, expulsion and eviction policies and practices from City facilities such as libraries, recreation facilities, and Toronto Community Housing.
Program costs: \$50,000: Community partner
Geographic focus: City-wide

Alternatives to criminalization: Pre-charge Diversion Pilot
This pilot will work in two communities in partnership with Toronto Police Services to provide supportive interventions and programming as an alternative to a criminal charge. Supportive interventions and programming assist young persons in accepting responsibility and addressing the impact of their actions on themselves, their family, the victim and the community.
Program costs: \$100,000: Community partner
Geographic focus: TPS Divisions 12 & 14

Risk-driven community safety: FOCUS model expansion
The pilot will deliver the FOCUS Rexdale program model in Scarborough. FOCUS responds immediately to individuals, families, groups at high risk for involvement in serious violence or crime with co-ordinated and integrated intervention by government and community partners.
Program Costs would be covered under the INTERVENTION initiatives staff position below.
Geographic focus: TPS Division 42

Staff coordination for INTERVENTION initiatives would be supported by a one-year temporary staff position.
Staff Costs: \$117,000: Social Development, Finance & Administration