

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM12.20	ACTION			Ward: All
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Urgent Support for Cabbagetown Youth Centre - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to evaluate existing programming and the financial situation at the Cabbagetown Youth Centre and report back to the January 15, 2020 meeting of the Budget Committee with interim funding options to support the Centre's core programs for the next year, in alignment with the City of Toronto's commitments to access to recreation facilities.
2. City Council direct the City Manager, in consultation with the relevant City divisions, to review the feasibility, including estimated costs and timelines, of the transfer of ownership of the Cabbagetown Youth Centre to the City of Toronto and to establish the Cabbagetown Youth Centre as an Association of Community Centre and report back to the June 10, 2020 meeting of the Economic and Community Development Committee.

Summary

Cabbagetown Youth Centre, a not-for-profit organization, was founded in 1972 as the Cabbagetown Boxing Club, a boxing club designed to support neighbouring youth with sports and recreation opportunities. The Cabbagetown Youth Centre has been working to serve the Cabbagetown, St. Jamestown, and Regent Park neighbourhoods for 47 years. As a result of the loss of significant government grants, the Centre is facing imminent closure. The Cabbagetown Youth Centre will no longer be able to maintain their core programming.

Over the years, the Cabbagetown Youth Centre has grown beyond their original location at 2 Lancaster Avenue. They are currently operating programming at Rose Avenue and Winchester Public Schools. In 2018, the Cabbagetown Youth Centre enrolled over 2,500 children and youth in their programming. The Cabbagetown Youth Centre offers the following programs:

1. After-four program: an after school program for children in junior kindergarten to fifth grade that provides educational, recreational, and social activities;

2. Cabbagetown Youth Centre Youth Programs Youth Empowerment and Support: an after school youth centered program that provides recreation and skill development and educational training;
3. Community Action Program for Children; and
4. Cabbagetown Youth Centre Boxing Club.

Over the last few years, the Cabbagetown Youth Centre has been under serious financial constraints. The Centre's current 2020 budget projections indicate that without an increase in financial support, they will no longer be able to sustain their core programming. Most recently, Cabbagetown Youth Centre's Youth Employment and Skills Strategy grant ended in March 2019. This grant was integral to fulfilling funding gaps.

The City of Toronto currently operates a number of programs designed to support our vision to address community safety, anti-poverty, and youth engagement initiatives. Programs include the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy, Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the Community Healing Project. With equitable access to recreational services in the Downtown East being an ongoing concern, it is imperative that we review opportunities to increase support for the Cabbagetown Youth Centre.

There is a timely opportunity to strengthen the City's recreation for all vision through supporting the Cabbagetown Youth Centre's core programming. In addition, the Cabbagetown Youth Centre Board of Directors is prepared to transfer complete ownership of their real estate to the City as a long-term operational plan for the Cabbagetown Youth Centre. The Cabbagetown Youth Centre states the current market value of their property is estimated at 3.6 million dollars.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM12.20