

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

February 23, 2005

To: Community Services Committee
From: Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services
Subject: Funding and Workplan for the Toronto Social Development Network

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to allocate funding for the development of a Toronto social development network and to outline the network's activities during its first year of operation.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

This report recommends the allocation of \$68,000.00 from the Community Services Grant Program (CSGP) funding envelope within the 2005 Approved Budget for Community Partnership and Investment Program, to support the activities of a Toronto social development network for the first year of operation.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial impact statement.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council allocate \$68,000.00 from Community Services Grant Program funding envelope within the 2005 Approved Budget for Community Partnership and Investment Program, to the Ontario Council for Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) to act as trustee in supporting the development of a Toronto social development network;
- (2) the workplan in Attachment I guide the activities of the social development network during its first year of operation;
- (3) appropriate City staff report to the Community Services Committee in April 2006 about the activities of the social development network during its first year of operation; and

- (4) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

At its meeting of November 30, December 1 and 2, 2004, City Council adopted the recommendations contained in the report, "Increasing the Effectiveness of Community-Based Social Planning" which was Clause No. 1, Report 8 of the Community Services Committee. The report proposed a process for developing greater co-ordination of community-based social planning activities in Toronto. Council adopted the recommendation that "funding be made available through the 2005 Community Services Grants Program (CSGP) to support the development of a Toronto social development network." It was also recommended that one of the initial members of the network apply for the development funding and act as a trustee for the funds on behalf of the network.

Council also requested the Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services to report to the Community Services Committee on the network's proposed 2005 workplan and deliverables.

Comments:

Community-based social planning encompasses a range of activities including social policy analysis, research, advocacy, service co-ordination, and capacity building. A consultant's report released in June 2004 identified the need for a body to co-ordinate the activities of the various organizations which are involved in some aspects of community-based social planning.

The report adopted by City Council in December 2004 suggested that \$50,000.00–\$100,000.00 from within the existing CSGP funding envelope be allocated to support the development of a co-ordinating body—provisionally called the Toronto social development network—to assist Toronto's community based social planning sector to overcome its current fragmentation. The role of the proposed network would be to:

- (1) shape the broad community-based social planning and social development agenda;
- (2) encourage the development of joint planning initiatives;
- (3) make joint representations to funders and policy-makers regarding social planning and social development priorities;
- (4) support the development of emerging community-based social planning groups and initiatives which represent marginalized communities such as women of colour;
- (5) co-ordinate research projects and other activities in order to provide a city-wide perspective on current issues and concerns; and

- (6) ensure proper sharing of information by acting as a clearing house for research findings and data.

The report recommended that the initial membership of the network should include the organizations which took part in the consultant's review of the community-based social planning sector, completed in June 2004. Initial members are Aboriginal Peoples Council of Toronto; African Canadian Social Development Council; Chinese Canadian National Council-Toronto Chapter; Community Social Planning Council of Toronto; Council of Agencies Serving South Asians; Hispanic Development Council; Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants; Portuguese Interagency Network; and Toronto Neighbourhood Centres.

At their first meeting, the initial members of the social development network agreed that the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) would act as trustee for funding received by the new body and would provide administrative supervision for any staff required to support the network's development. The second meeting of the initial members will appoint interim co-chairs who will supervise program activities on behalf of the network. Based on a budget prepared by the group, funding of \$68,000.00 is being recommended for the period May 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006 to support the development of the network.

The workplan (see Attachment I) prepared by the initial members of the network outlines its activities during its first year of operation. A co-ordinator will be hired to support the development of the network. The co-ordinator will consult with a range of community-based organizations about the mandate, terms of reference and membership criteria for the network. Potential new members of the network will be identified during this consultation.

The real work of the network will also get underway during the consultation process. The co-ordinator will begin to compile an inventory of current community-based social planning and to identify opportunities for joint projects and co-ordinated activities. The consultation will also identify where service gaps may exist within the community-based social planning sector and how those gaps can be closed by supporting emerging planning groups.

It is anticipated that the consultation process will result in expanded membership of the network which will meet together for the first time in September. The full membership will approve a more detailed workplan for the network through to end of its first year of operation.

The work of the social development network will result in a more representative, co-ordinated and effective community-based social planning sector in Toronto. It is the City's expectation that the network will achieve significant progress during its first year in:

- (a) facilitating joint planning initiatives and activities among its members;
- (b) support the development of emerging social planning organizations; and
- (c) developing an inclusive, equity-focused social planning agenda.

The progress in reaching these objectives will be reported to Community Services Committee in April 2006.

Conclusions:

The Toronto social development network will bring greater co-ordination to the city's community-based social planning sector. Council has previously authorized development support for the network. This report recommends the allocation of \$68,000.00 from the Community Services Grant Program funding envelope within the 2005 Approved Budget for Community Partnership and Investment Program, to the Ontario Council for Agencies Serving Immigrants to act as trustee in supporting the development of the network during its first year of operation. A workplan for the network is attached to this report. The City expects that during its first year the network will make significant progress in facilitating joint planning initiatives and activities, in supporting the development of emerging social planning organizations and in developing an inclusive, equity-focused social planning agenda.

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Commissioner of Community and Neighbourhood Services

List of Attachment:

Attachment I – Workplan for Toronto Social Development Network, 2005–06

Attachment I
Workplan for Toronto Social Development Network, 2005–06

Activity	Timeframe
Second meeting of network: – select interim co-chairs – confirm administrative and operational arrangements	March 16
Develop draft mandate, terms of reference and membership criteria	March – May
City Council approves network funding allocation	April 12
Develop job description for network co-ordinator	mid-April – early May
Circulate posting for co-ordinator’s position	early May
Hire co-ordinator	early June
Start date for co-ordinator	mid-June
Community consultation on mandate, terms of reference, membership criteria, planning priorities and opportunities for project co-ordination	mid-June – September
Identify additional network members	mid-June – September
Develop inventory of research and other social planning activity; undertake service gap analysis; identify opportunities for collaboration	mid-June – September
Develop communications plan	September
Develop detailed network workplan	September
Meeting of full network membership: –ratify mandate, terms of reference and membership criteria – discuss network workplan	mid-September
Second meeting of full network membership – elect co-chairs –finalize network workplan	mid-October
Work on priorities as identified in workplan including: – facilitate joint planning initiatives and activities among its members; – support the development of emerging social planning groups; – develop an inclusive, equity-focused social planning agenda	October – March
Develop outcome indicators	October – March
Monthly network meetings	November – March
Liaison with social planning funders’ table	November – March
Report to Community Services Committee on network activities	April