

Request for Recommendation

Community Action Networks Terms of Engagement

Presented To:	Priorities Committee
Presented:	Wednesday, Jun 18, 2008
Report Date	Friday, Jun 06, 2008
Type:	Policy Discussion Papers - Preliminary Discussion

Recommendations

That Council approve the adoption of the attached Terms of Engagement for Community Action Networks in recognition of recommendations made within the Constellation City Report [January 2007] and consultation with CAN representatives; and

1] That annual funds be allocated to help address the administrative costs of Community Action Networks in the City of Greater Sudbury; and

2] That one additional full time Community Development Co-ordinator be approved for support for community partnership initiatives.

Finance Implications

1] Allocate \$40,000 annually within the Community Development budget to address administrative costs for CANs at \$2,500 each; and

2] Allocate \$85,000 within the Community Development budget [a...

Signed By

Report Prepared By

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Division Review

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Recommended by the Department

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[finance implications continued...](#)

Report Title: Community Action Networks Terms of Engagement
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(Financial Implications continued from cover)

...[annual] to recruit and hire one additional Community Development Co-ordinator. Financial implications for 2008 would be \$28,500 [4 months] and financial implications for 2009 would be \$85,000.

Funds for the above items to be drawn from funds allocated to respond to recommendations within the Constellation City Report which contains \$125,000 within the operational budget.

Background

The Constellation City Report prepared through broad community consultation and presented to City of Greater Sudbury Council in January of 2007 identified Community Action Networks (CANs) as the best option for community engagement and empowerment. The report recognized the true grass routes nature of CANs and the affiliation to the priority issues outlined in the Healthy Community Strategy earlier adopted by City Council. The report continued by highlighting the potential CANs hold for contributing to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of our community.

The Constellation City Report however also indicated that the structure of CANs is currently very loose and that the role of CANs has yet to be clearly defined. Clarification is also required in describing the role the City of Greater Sudbury in supporting CANs. The report suggested the need for the adoption of clear terms of reference for CANs. Additionally identifying the risk that the creation of terms of reference may present to the essential grass routes nature of CANs was noted as a caution.

A working group comprised of CAN representatives and City of Greater Sudbury staff reviewed examples of similar community groups in other municipalities and developed a draft Terms of Reference representative of our community. In December 2007 the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) was presented to City Council by the CAN representatives supported by City of Greater Sudbury staff. Council received the information and reviewed the draft TOR at the Council Retreat in January of 2008. Following this review Council requested that City of Greater Sudbury staff along with Councillors Gasparini and Berthiaume meet to consider alterations to the draft TOR in an effort to streamline the document and to further clarify the role of the community, Council and staff. The draft Terms of Engagement were forwarded to all existing CANs for review and comment at the beginning of May 2008. There was significant support received from many CANs and also suggestions and questions regarding the draft Terms of Engagement. Efforts were made by City staff to incorporate and fine tune the Terms of Engagement as a result of this feedback where possible.

Many aspects from the original TOR were retained within the revised document including the nature and benefits of Community Action Networks. The nature of support to be provided by the City of Greater Sudbury to CANs while slightly modified in the new Terms of Engagement still reflects the support suggested within the original TOR. The recommendation to provide annual funds to assist with CAN administrative expenses still exists although at a modified level and more in line with support to neighbourhood associations. Liaison staff support from the Community Development Department still remains as does access to copying services for newsletters, meeting space, website training and liability coverage for CAN members engaged in regular CAN activities.

The Terms of Engagement have been redefined along the lines of the newly developed Public Participation Policy which was approved by Council in May of this year. The Public Participation Policy identifies the different levels of engagement which occur within the interaction between the community, Council and staff reflected within each level. CAN activity may fall anywhere along this continuum depending on the nature of the project, the experience of the CAN and the level of involvement required of the City. The Public Participation Policy recognizes the opportunity for the involvement of Council at all levels along the continuum and the understanding that Council as the elected body is the ultimate decision making mechanism for all municipal matters.

This report requests that Council consider an annual budget item of \$40,000 in order to provide all eligible CANs with annual operating funds in the amount of \$2,500 to be allocated by each CAN under the guidelines indicated within the attached Terms of Engagement. The funds would be drawn from the approved budget line allocated to respond to the recommendations contained within the Constellation City Report.

A second budget request is to enhance the compliment of Community Development Co-Ordinators within the Community Development department. The current compliment of staff is 3 Community Development Co-Ordinators (CDCs) plus 1 manager. There are currently 14 CANs in existence within the City of Greater Sudbury. Each of the existing CDCs already liaises with greater than the maximum number of CANs recommended within the Constellation City Report. The CDCs spend significant time working with other community groups and on other initiatives in addition to the responsibilities presented by CANs. (Trail Development, Graffiti Eradication, Civic Awards, facility partnerships, Diversity, Healthy Community, Community Events, etc., and capital initiatives). In order to provide the level of support required to enable CANs to reach their potential for civic engagement and to also enable the success of other community development and Healthy Community initiatives, the staffing level within the Community Partnerships section requires 1 additional full time CDC. It is anticipated that the cost (annualized) for the additional CDC would be approximately \$80,000. The funds required annually to support this position would be drawn from the Council approved budget allocated to respond to the recommendations contained within the Constellation City Report. This position could be in place by the end of September of 2008.

Background

On June 10, 2001, City Council unanimously adopted recommendations from the Mayor's Task Force on Community Involvement and Volunteerism, including a recommendation to initiate Community Action Networks.

Community Action Networks bring people together to build a Healthy Community. Healthy Communities are strong and vibrant. They emerge from the collaborative efforts of citizens who care about where they live and want to make their neighbourhoods the best they can possibly be. Community Action Networks provide resources to make this happen.

Working in partnership with the Roundtable on Health, Economy and the Environment, the City of Greater Sudbury introduced Community Action Networks to help in the planning, budgeting and implementation of community initiatives.

Community Action Networks have also been identified as a valuable means of encouraging civic engagement within the Healthy Community Strategy and the Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development documentation.

Benefits of Community Action Networks

- They enhance the overall quality of life in Greater Sudbury in social, environmental, and economic sectors.
- They enable citizens to participate, appreciate, and fully understand the services offered by community organizations and groups.
- They help to identify community needs and establish co-operative working relationships.
- They promote democracy and inclusiveness by giving participants (Community, Council, City Staff) a unique vehicle to work in harmony towards common goals.
- They provide a mechanism for planning at the Ward level by identifying the different projects with which individual Community Action Networks will be involved.
- They provide a "win-win" experience for everyone involved.

What Community Action Networks are Not

- Ratepayers associations
- Groups focusing on a single issue or mandate
- Political entities
- Policy creators

The Need for Terms of Engagement

Since 2004, fourteen Community Action Networks have been created in the City of Greater Sudbury with the support of Council and staff from the Community Development Department. Each CAN is unique to the area that it represents. The manner in which CANs operate varies significantly from one CAN to the next.

The Constellation City Report (January 2007) called for the development of a Terms of Reference to better define the role of CANs and to detail their responsibilities to the communities they represent. The report noted that in developing a Terms of Reference for CANs, that "the city risks losing the grassroots nature that has made the CANs a success to this point."

The revised Terms of Engagement are intended to accomplish the following:

- Reflect and embrace the grassroots nature of CANs and the unique communities that each represents.
- Provide a fluid framework that is more representative of how CANs develop and change over time.
- Set minimum eligibility criteria for a group to be considered a CAN.
- Allow individual CANs to decide how they will operate and how they are structured.
- Detail the expectations for CANs and their responsibilities to the community which they represent and to the City as a whole.
- Ensure that relationships between CANs, Council and city staff are mutually respectful.
- Outline the administrative and financial support for CANs from the City.
- Ensure that ultimate responsibility and decision making rests with the elected Council.

CAN Minimum Eligibility Requirements

- Community driven and lead
- Association must be non-profit in nature
- Open and transparent to the public
- Strive to represent the broad interests of the community or neighbourhood represented
- Encourage active participation from all residents
- Reflects the cultural diversity of the community or neighbourhood
- To actively take part in educational learning and training opportunities provided by CGS

How will Eligibility Be Measured?

- Each CAN should conduct a Visioning Session identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Issues and priorities developed can be reviewed annually and amended to help guide future direction
- Meetings should be advertised and open to the public
- The staff liaison should be informed of CAN activities
- Chair and any executive positions appointed/elected will be community members
- The CAN should seek community input and participation for projects and initiatives
- Each CAN should endeavour to engage the various service clubs and associations within their respective community
- CAN should take advantage of educational learning and training opportunities

Terms of Engagement for Community Action Networks

Using the City of Greater Sudbury's Public Participation Policy, the Terms of Engagement helps to defines how Council and City staff will Inform, Consult, Involve and Collaborate with CANs.

Inform

- Provide a staff liaison who will regularly attend meetings and is the primary point of contact for the CAN
- Facilitate communication with other departments within the CGS
- Provide information about City programs, policy change and opportunities
- Respond to inquiries from CANs
- CANs assist to disseminate information to the local community
- CANs work with the CGS to increase compliance with regulations or participation in existing CGS programs
- Provide a forum for CANs to exchange information and best practices with one another (concept of a 'CAN summit')
- Provide educational learning opportunities to ensure that CANs are sustainable

Considerations:

This type of engagement is information sharing and communication. It is important that all information provided is timely, clearly defined and easily understood as well as relevant to CANs.

Consult

- Encourage feedback when considering policy change or developing new ways of doing business requiring community input
- Survey attitude of local communities through CANs
- Attendance at CAN meetings to discuss issues or projects relevant to the CAN
- CAN provides feedback representative of the broad community
- Key community champions identified and engaged

Considerations:

This type of engagement involves seeking community views regarding specific issues. The feedback is usually of a one-time nature.

Involve

- Work directly with CANs to understand concerns at the community level
- Cooperatively develop alternatives which will address the identified community needs
- Ensure CAN input is reflected in any alternatives chosen
- Communicate with CANs on how public input impacted final decisions
- CANs lead and mobilize community groups and members

Considerations:

This type of engagement is more of a process than consultation and requires that all relevant groups and individuals within a community are involved. The CAN requires a high level of organization for involvement to be effective, which details how decisions are made and the roles of all involved.

Collaborate

- Develop partnerships with CANs to deliver outcome based projects and programs
- Encourage partnerships with other community groups to benefit from existing networks and nurture civic pride and engagement
- CAN is working in each of the four pillars of the Healthy Community Strategy (Active Living/Healthy Lifestyle, Civic Engagement/Social Capital, Natural Environment, Economic Growth)
- CANs reflect the cultural diversity of the community or neighbourhood they represent

Considerations:

To have successful collaboration, CANs must be truly representative of their communities. They should have representation from youth, seniors and the private sector. Participation of service clubs and other active community associations/groups will enhance the effectiveness of collaboration .

Administrative Support

Those CANs meeting the minimum eligibility requirements will receive the following administrative support from the City of Greater Sudbury:

- Meeting space
- Office space (as available)
- Printing of up to 3 newsletters annually (max 6 pages each)
- Mysudbury.ca website space and training
- Promotional space in Leisure Guide (general CAN info)
- Liability coverage for approved CAN activities

Funding Recommendations

In addition to the administrative support previously outlined, it is recommended that Council approve financial support for each CAN in the amount of \$2,500 per year. The funds are intended to cover costs associated with promotion of activities, purchase of supplies, mailings, websites development (other than mysudbury.ca sites), and other day-to-day expenses. CANs looking for additional financial support for outcome based projects have the option of requesting funds from their Council representative, working with community sponsors and submitting grant applications where eligible.

Currently, the City of Greater Sudbury supports Neighbourhood Associations in the amount of approximately \$1200 per year. The rationale for requesting \$2500 in support for each CAN is that the work of Community Action Networks is wider in scope than that of Neighbourhood Associations. Similar to the process already used for Neighbourhood Associations, each CAN will be required to submit a brief annual report outlining the allocation of the funds provided. The report should also include identification of recent accomplishments and groups/ associations the CAN is working in keeping with the minimum eligibility requirements

Ensuring CANs are Sustainable

In an effort to assist all CANs to maintain and enhance administrative and organizational skills, it is proposed that a series of educational and training opportunities be organized and funded. CANs are expected to take part in these opportunities as part of their eligibility to be recognized as a CAN. CANs are encouraged to provide suggestions for appropriate topics to be covered which would benefit to all CANs.

Topics to be addressed could include:

- Volunteer recruitment
- Facilitating group discussions and effective meetings
- Conflict resolution/Consensus building
- Engaging youth/seniors/private sector
- Strategic planning
- Special event organization
- Developing project proposals

Reporting back to Council

CANs have been providing updates to Council during Priorities Meetings scheduled in their respective communities. Should Priorities meetings continue to be held in various communities, it is recommended that each CAN have the opportunity to present to Council during this cycle. Using the current schedule of Priorities meetings, this would allow for a presentation by each CAN every two years. As with all community groups, CANs may request to speak before Council at other meetings if desired.

HOW THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY ENGAGES CANS (A VISUAL REPRESENTATION)

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
Overview	To provide information to increase community's understanding of issues and decisions	To seek community level input regarding plans, policy and procedures	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the process and decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution
Staff/City Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to inquiries from CANS about policies and procedures Provide information through brochures, media releases, public meetings, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey CANS regarding potential policy changes Attend initial meetings with CANS to discuss plans and alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage CANS at the onset when considering changes to policies, procedures, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with CANS at all stages to realize outcome based projects (trails, parks, etc.)
CAN Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate information received to local community Work with CGS to increase compliance with regulations Work with CGS to increase participation in City programs (Clean Sweep, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback which represents the broad community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead and mobilize community groups and members Using visioning & Strengths-Weakness-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis to identify community priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve and engage existing local community associations Explore external funding opportunities where feasible
CAN Stages of Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few active members Informal operating structure Narrow focus Undeveloped ties with local associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loose structure (Co-Chairs) One or two active projects Some key community organizations involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some working committees Working in multiple Healthy Community pillars but not all Well organized with regular meetings and executive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth, senior and business representation Community associations well represented Functioning sub-committees and executive Four Healthy Community pillars represented
CDC Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help navigate/guide Provide information Keep other departments/Council informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animator Keep other departments/Council informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable Facilitate Keep other departments/Council informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project support Resources Keep other departments/Council informed
Council Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To listen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To solicit feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To involve in decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use CAN as a community sounding board
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff leading process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key community champions identified and working with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer from staff to community Executive in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Truly community lead CAN Executive developing new leaders