



PO Box 1749  
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## Item No. 8.6

**Halifax Regional Council**  
**October 16, 2007**  
**October 23, 2007**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

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**SUBMITTED BY:**

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Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

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Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

**DATE:** September 21, 2007

**SUBJECT:** **YouthScape - McConnell Foundation Youth Engagement Initiative**

### ORIGIN

HRM is continuing to collaborate with youth organizations and service providers, such as Heartwood, a not for profit youth focussed agency, to implement its current initiatives and partner on new ones that support community youth development. An opportunity to expand this collaboration through Heartwood, the McConnell Foundation, and other youth serving partners was initiated in 2006/07, resulting in this newly formed YouthScape project.

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council approve:

HRM's participation in the Heartwood facilitated partnership engagement as per the budget implications section of this report.

## **BACKGROUND**

Over the last two years, HRM has launched a number of initiatives supporting the Council Focus Area on youth. These initiatives represent a multi-layered approach to empowering and engaging youth and improving youth services. One layer endeavours to create opportunities for all youth to engage in recreation and civic life (Youth Governance Model, Youth Engagement Strategy and Toolkit), and the second recognizes the need for focussed attention on serving at-risk youth and those that experience multiple barriers to accessing programs, facilities, or community life (Youth Advocate Program).

In order to build on these efforts, HRM is continuing to collaborate with youth organizations and service providers such as Heartwood, to implement current initiatives and partner on new ones. In one of these new partnerships Heartwood has acted as the convener of several youth based organizations and applied to the McConnell Foundation for funding to pursue a comprehensive community youth development initiative.

The J.W. McConnell Foundation is a private family foundation that funds initiatives of national significance which address challenges for Canadian society by engaging people, by building resilient communities, and by developing a strong knowledge base for the work that the Foundation supports.

In 2005, the Foundation created a four-year Building Resilient Communities by Engaging Youth Funding Program, known as YouthScape. YouthScape, a new national youth engagement initiative, compliments HRM's range of youth engagement activities by focussing on (a) creating physical and social spaces more inclusive and welcoming to youth, and (b) coordinating and strengthening the public, non-profit, and private youth services sector. The Foundation will match contributions up to \$100,000 per year for three years to support a range of youth-driven and youth-focussed projects geared to those 13 to 18 years of age.

The principle objectives of this initiative are:

- to encourage young people across the country to become active and involved in civic life
- to create "youth-friendly" programs and spaces in organizations and communities
- to support national youth-led initiatives.

In May 2006, Heartwood approached HRM and a number of other local agencies and potential stakeholders to make application to this fund. Heartwood facilitated partnership engagement and planning exercises that ultimately culminated in an application to the Foundation with HRM as a key stakeholder and partner in the process.

HeartWood brought together various partners such as the Halifax Public Libraries, NS Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Boys and Girls Clubs, United Way and Youth Health Centres to raise \$100,000 to leverage the \$100,000 in matching funds from the McConnell Foundation. A total of \$50,000 has been committed from the above-named organizations and agencies and

HeartWood requested \$50,000 from Community Development for this initiative that was approved in HRM's 07/08 Business Plan and Budget for the first year and will be renewable subject to Budget Planning and Regional Council approval for 08/09 and 09/10. Heartwood, as convener for the project, will receive and be responsible for all grant monies from the McConnell Foundation as well as those contributions made by local partners.

### **DISCUSSION**

In May 2007, Heartwood was informed that the Halifax region was successful as one of five Canadian municipalities to receive funding from the McConnell Foundation. The Foundation will match contributions up to \$100,000 per year for three years to support a range of youth-driven and youth-focused projects. Heartwood, as convener of the project in the Halifax region, will qualify for funding up until December 2009.

The **YouthScape** initiative in HRM will focus on two areas:

- Supporting and creating youth inclusive places and spaces, beginning by improving diverse access and use of existing resources and facilities
- Developing and strengthening the youth services sector in HRM by coordinating public, not-for-profit and private sectors to improve youth program and service delivery

**YouthScape** will be directed by a steering committee comprised of partners and community stakeholders, including youth representatives. HeartWood as the convener for this initiative will provide oversight and will ensure implementation and coordination of projects. A full-time Project Coordinator and a part-time Developmental Evaluator were hired by Heartwood in August 2007.

The preliminary planned actions are:

- to create a communications plan
- to perform an environmental scan of youth services and organizations across HRM to identify gaps and overlaps in service delivery
- to initiate a youth grants program
- to create a learning network to share best practices and encourage leadership development

The **YouthScape** project in HRM will be launched with a public kick-off event October. Staff will update Council with specifics of this project as initiatives get underway.

Halifax Regional Municipality will benefit from contributing and participating in this initiative as Council Focus Areas include Youth, Community Spaces and Facilities, and the review and restructuring of support to community events, cultural activities, and recreation programs.

There is a connection between this initiative and the HRM Youth Governance Model, Community Recreation Services (Facilities & Programs), HRM Youth Engagement Strategy and HRM Youth Engagement Tool Kit projects.

## **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The \$50,000 for the first year was approved in HRM's 07/08 Business Plan and Budget and has been allocated under Cost Centre D101-6919 to match the McConnell Foundation funding. Monies will go directly to Heartwood as they are the recipient of matching dollars from the Foundation. Funding will be renewable subject to Operating Budget approval for 08/09 and 09/10.

### **Budget Summary 2007/2008:**


Operating Account # D101 6919. Rec. Prog. Admin.	
Cumulative Unspent Budget as at Sept 27, 2007	\$ 111,893.00
<b>Less: Project Funding</b>	<b>\$ 50,000.00</b>
 Balance	 \$ 61,893.00


## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**


This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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