

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair and Members of Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

FROM: Margaret Taylor, Recreation Coordinator-Active Living

DATE: June 10, 2019

MEMORANDUM NO.: MEM-RP-2019-0002

RE: Active Easy Project Update

PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide Committee with a summary of accomplishments of the two-year *ActiveEasy* Community Development and Partnership Project, to confirm completion of requirements to the project funder, and to highlight next steps for the Active Living Strategy implementation.

BACKGROUND:

On April 27, 2018, Council approved Resolution No CCA-2018-0068 that provided an update on the first year of activities related to the implementation of the *ActiveEasy* Community Development and Partnership Project, which was funded in part by a grant of \$96,444.00 from the Provincial Government Ontario Sport and Recreation Community Fund.

The report outlined the year-one accomplishments of the *ActiveEasy* project:

- Year 1a) Alliance partnership development
- Year 1b) Community presentation: "Is Sitting the New Smoking?"
- Year 1c) *ActiveEasy* launch – first Open Streets event
- Year 1d) Caught Being Active initiative
- Year 1e) *ActiveEasy* Rocks initiative

All of these initiatives, with the exception of the Community Presentation which was a one-time event, carried forward into year-two.

The report referenced the following initiatives scheduled to be completed in year-two:

1. Continuation of Alliance partnership development
2. Distribution of active toys in community parks
3. Installation of fitness features
4. Distribution of Family Activity Kits
5. Evaluation of *ActiveEasy* project and Alliance health

COMMENTS:

1. Continuation of Alliance Partnership Development

Alliance partnership development was a project priority as it is recognized that the inactivity crisis requires action and engagement by a wide variety of sectors. Alliance recruitment was ongoing throughout the two-years, with twenty-four (24) members and partners, representing a broad range of organizations, sectors as well as the community at large, engaged to provide leadership and direction throughout the implementation process.

2. Toys in Park

Over the spring and summer of 2018, active toys were placed in five (5) parks across the community with *ActiveEasy* signage. The concept is considered a 'best practice' across the active living community, as research indicates children will play longer on the playground when toys are available. The bulldozers and front end loaders were met with great enthusiasm by the community, creating significant social media conversation.

3. Trail Features

Three (3) fitness features have been purchased and are currently being installed at the West Branch Drive Park. A grand opening event will be hosted by the Recreation and Parks Department in July 2019. Signage will be included with pictures demonstrating how to use the equipment for fitness purposes. Fitness features are designed to enhance the experience and encourage trail users to engage in resistance activities while utilizing the trail system.

4. Family Activity Kits

Project funding supported the purchase of active equipment, such as utility balls, badminton sets and skipping ropes, for distribution to families on low incomes. A total of one-hundred fifty (150) Family Activity Kits were created with fifteen (15) different active items in each and distributed through a variety of networks and social service agencies across the community. The kits included information about fundamental movement skills and their importance to enjoying and engaging in activity across the lifespan. The goal of this project was to provide simple equipment for families to enjoy that would also develop physical literacy.

5. Evaluation

The Alliance members participated in an evaluation workshop facilitated by a Community Consultant with the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition. The purpose of the workshop was to offer Alliance members an opportunity to provide feedback on how they viewed the project to be progressing as well as comment on the health of the Alliance. Although in the early stages, the project is considered to be producing positive outcomes across the community, as reported by posts on social media, the completion of evaluation surveys and comment cards at events, and by observations made by staff and Alliance members. All partners remain committed to supporting the initiative going forward in an advisory and information-sharing capacity.

Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund Grant Reporting:

The Final Report has been completed and will be submitted to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as required to fulfill the requirements of the grantor. The entire grant of \$96,444 was spent and the project deliverables were achieved, and in some cases exceeded, as proposed.

Next Steps:

It is recognized by the Alliance and staff that the position of Community Activator, funded by the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund, played a key role in implementing the ambitious two-year workplan. Usually announced in December annually, the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund has not been launched for this year by the Provincial Government. The Alliance contributed to the development of a tempered workplan for 2019-2021 to carry on the implementation of the Active Living Strategy without the support of a Community Activator. The workplan will be integrated into existing staff work programs. Staff will continue to monitor grant opportunities as it is recognized that successful implementation of the Active Living Strategy requires adequate resources.

CONCLUSION:

The 2017-2019 two-year *ActiveEasy* Community Development and Partnership Project was completed as outlined. All requirements to the funder are on schedule as required. The Project has created positive traction on addressing inactivity across the community, with forty-five per cent (45%) of the recommended actions in the Active Living Strategy completed to date. Staff will report back to Budget Committee on anticipated future operating budget requirements.

Reviewed and approved by,

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Samantha Howard, Manager of Recreation Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Harris".

Warren Harris, Commissioner of Recreation and Parks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Marshall".

Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer