



Hamilton

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March 31, 2014

Attention: Stinson Community Association

Dear Joanna;

I would like to thank you for the leadership and dedication that you, and the executive, bring to the Stinson neighbourhood, and thank all the members of the SCA for their vision of a healthy and sustainable neighbourhood. As you know, the Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) has operated a neighbourhood small grants program since 2002, which gave them the opportunity to fund small, resident-led projects within the eight “neighbourhood hubs”. When the HCF and the City of Hamilton came together to develop the City of Hamilton’s Neighbourhood Action Strategy (NAS), the eight HCF neighbourhoods continued to receive the small grants program, however the three additional “city” neighbourhoods (Beasley, Stinson and Rolston) had access to funds through the NAS Office for small grant-like requests, on an ad hoc basis.

We have supported many community engagement-type activities such as neighbourhood newsletters, community gardens and children’s summer programs; however, the process for funding these activities does not create the added benefit of building resident and neighbourhood team capacity that comes from administering a small grants program. From meeting with residents to discuss their project ideas, to reviewing grant applications and deciding on where to direct the limited funds, neighbourhood team members develop and enhance valuable organizational and financial skills. They also direct resources to projects they feel will best improve their neighbourhoods. And the residents, who develop ideas and a budget, write and present those ideas to a group of their peers, and then implement their projects, do so in an environment that is not intimidating. And all involved take greater ownership of the projects and their neighbourhoods.

The City of Seattle, with 27 years of small grant history, notes that “Community building is core to project success: the process of bringing people together and building relationships is as important as project results “ (retrieved October 10, 2013 from <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nm>).

In April, 2014, the NAS Office will flow \$4000 each for a small grants program for both the Beasley and Stinson neighbourhoods to the Hamilton Community Foundation. These dollars will be consolidated with the existing HCF small grants program and Beasley and Stinson will follow the same process as the other eight neighbourhoods in the administration of the small grants fund, through the Social Planning and Research Council. The small grant consists of \$3500 for community engagement and neighbourhood improvement projects and an additional \$500 for BNA meeting expenses. The grant money needs to be spent by December 31, 2014.

In 2015, the grant will increase to \$5500, based on a full 12 month program. An information workshop is being held on April 15th at 7:00 p.m. at St. Helen Centre @ McQuesten (see attached flyer) to inform residents of the process and criteria for the Neighbourhood Grants Fund and to answer any questions you may have.

Again, I want to thank you both, as well as the whole Stinson Community Association, for your contribution to making your neighbourhood a great place to live, work, learn and play. I look forward to continuing to work with you to bring your action plan to fruition.

Best Regards,

Suzanne Brown, Manager

Neighbourhood Action Strategy

cc: Paul Johnson, Matt Goodman, Sharon Charters, Grace Mater, Don Jaffray, Reneé Wetselaar, Brandon Braithwaite