



# **Donovan / Elm West Community Action Network**

## **Strategic Visioning Session Report**

**April 26, 2007**

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## **Introduction**

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Forty participants attended the Strategic Visioning Session held at the Croatian Hall on the evening of Thursday, April 26, 2007 with the goal of developing action plans for the Donovan, Elm West and Little Britain neighbourhoods. The Strategic Visioning Session was the second meeting with residents in the area discussing the development of a Community Action Network, following a successful Interest Group Meeting held March 22, 2007.

The vision and efforts of Ward 4 Councillor Evelyn Dutrisac combined with the energy and interest from the participating community members assured that the exercise would be a great success.

## **Process**

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The following made up the agenda for the day:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review of Donovan Community Improvement Plan
- Summary of Interest Group Meeting Notes
- EnviroSCAN (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- Healthy Communities Background Information
- Proposed Ideas, Projects and Initiatives
- Formation of Project Teams and the Community Action Network Executive

## **Review of Donovan Community Improvement Plan**

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Mark Simeoni, Senior Planner with the City of Greater Sudbury provided an overview of the Donovan & Area Community Improvement Plan (1995). The Plan, prepared by the former Region of Sudbury Planning Department, established a framework within which municipal and private initiatives could be coordinated to improve the Donovan area. Mr. Simeoni provided a brief explanation of which projects have been completed and the initiatives still outstanding in the plan.

## **EnviroSCAN Report**

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As part of the invitation to the Strategic Visioning Session, participants were asked to consider the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats present in the area. Participants were then given some time to work in groups to provide the most common themes. The following information provides the ground work on which to build a strategic plan for the Community Action Network.

## **Strengths**

Participants responded in the following manner to the focus question: “Looking inward at our community, what are our community strengths?”

- We have willing and interested residents who are committed to positive change.
- We are multi-cultural community.
- We have a great deal of community pride.
- We are a diverse area for future growth.
- We have 13 churches in our community.
- We have a high percentage of seniors (50%) living in our community.
- We are caring and friendly neighbours.
- We have a significant number of long term residents.
- We have good transit service.
- We have a good number of green areas, parks and recreation areas.
- We have successful community events.
- We have access to a number of different services and businesses.
- We have spaces like Donovan Heritage Park and the Flag Park in our community.
- We have media outlets (MCTV and the Christian Radio Station) in our community.

## **Weaknesses**

The following responses came as a result of the following focus question: “Looking inward at our community, what are our weaknesses?”

- We are dealing with a great deal of community apathy.
- We are dealing with serious crime in our neighbourhood (drugs, violence, break-ins)
- We do not see ‘poop & scoop’ by-laws being enforced.
- We are not familiar with our neighbours as there are increasing transient individuals moving in to our community.
- We are experiencing increased levels of vandalism.
- We are dealing with debris, garbage and trash throughout our community.
- We do not have a doctor’s clinic.
- We have a large number of stray cats in the area.
- We must deal with absentee and negligent landlords.
- We don’t receive adequate police response to incidents.
- We are dealing with a stigma of an unsafe, older community.
- We have CP/CN rail properties that aren’t properly maintained.
- We don’t have enough activities for our youth.
- We have a lack of parking.

## Opportunities

The following are the responses to the focus question: “Looking outward from our community, what do you feel might be some of the opportunities that we might take advantage of?”

- We can explore the development of a COPS program.
- We can take advantage of the proximity of the Main Library Branch.
- We may look at the installation of more garbage receptacles to combat litter issues.
- We can explore the installation of lights and/or security cameras to make the community safer.
- We have an opportunity to improve our image.
- We can work with local schools (Lansdowne Public School, Sudbury Secondary) to assist with projects.
- We have a great history to celebrate.
- We can take part in a number of existing beautification programs.
- We can provide more programs for our youth.
- We have the Donovan Community Improvement Plan document which details potential projects.
- We can apply for a number of grants.
- We can explore tax incentives to encourage individuals to maintain their property.
- We can promote our proximity to downtown as a benefit.
- We can expand upon or revitalize community events (ie. Donovan Days)
- We can work with existing Community Action Networks.

## Threats

Possible threats were identified when asked the following focus question: “Looking outward what do you feel may be some of the threats that will challenge us?”

- We must deal with a lack of funding for projects/initiatives.
- We must deal with the fear of personal safety/security in the area.
- We have a negative image outside our community.
- We must deal with government regulations/’red tape’.
- We must deal with external pressures that are forcing businesses to leave.
- We must deal with increasing crime that are resulting in crack houses in our community.
- We have to combat environmental issues effecting our creeks and greenspaces.
- We must deal with railway companies who do not show interest in maintaining their properties.
- We must deal with provincial downloading of programs and services to municipal level staff.

## **Healthy Communities Strategy Background**

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Chris Gore, Manager of Community Partnerships with the City of Greater Sudbury, conducted a brief presentation concerning the City's Healthy Community Strategy. A Healthy Community model embraces a broad vision of health, one that recognizes balanced economic, environmental and social development that enhances human health (World Health Organization). The Healthy Community Strategy identifies four strategic priorities:

- Active Living / Healthy Lifestyle
- Natural Environment
- Civic Engagement / Social Capital
- Economic Growth

The full City of Greater Sudbury Health Community Strategy is available at:

[www.greatersudbury.ca/content/dept\\_cd/documents/Healthy\\_Communities\\_Strategy\\_Report\\_complete.pdf](http://www.greatersudbury.ca/content/dept_cd/documents/Healthy_Communities_Strategy_Report_complete.pdf)

## **Proposed Ideas, Projects and Initiatives**

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Working in small groups, participants were asked to consider initiatives which would build on the identified strengths of the community and take advantage of available opportunities as well as those projects that would mitigate the community weaknesses and perceived threats. Participants were also asked to consider the four strategic priorities of the City's Healthy Community Strategy, thinking of projects that dealt with active living, natural environment, civic engagement and economic growth.

Once ideas were generated and listed, participants had an opportunity to 'vote' for those projects and initiatives that they felt most strongly about. Each individual had 5 votes to distribute as they saw fit. The following results set the priorities and direction for the newly formed Community Action Network.

### *Active Living / Healthy Lifestyle Initiatives*

- Review the Donovan Community Improvement Plan to see which outstanding projects warrant consideration. (27 votes)
- Encourage the CGS to improve clearing of sidewalks and bus shelters so that residents can more easily use in winter months. (8 votes)
- Encourage the CGS to enhance sidewalks in the community so that they are accessible to seniors and individuals with special needs. (7 votes)
- Explore the possibility of developing a medical clinic in the community. (5 votes)
- Organize a neighbourhood walking club to promote familiarity and safety within the community. (4 votes)
- Develop a skate park for youth in the community. (2 votes)
- Improve trail signage within the community to encourage more use. (2 votes)
- Develop bicycle paths throughout the community. (2 votes)
- Install basketball hoops for youth in the community. (1 vote)

### *Natural Environment Initiatives*

- Work with CGS By-law Department and landlords in the areas to enforce and improve property standards in the community. (30 votes)
- Encourage and work with railway companies to beautify and maintain lands adjacent to railways. (20 votes)
- Explore the possibility of tax incentives in order for residents to improve their properties. (13 votes)
- Work with the CGS By-law Department to ensure that residents are abiding by 'poop & scoop' regulations. (7 votes)
- Explore ways of adding additional garbage receptacles throughout the community. (5 votes)
- Continue and expand on the creek clean up efforts and monitor water quality. (3 votes)
- Work with the CGS to explore garbage amnesty programs, with special consideration for tenants moving out of rental units. (2 votes)
- Work with local students and conduct community clean-ups and adopt-a-spot programs. (2 votes)
- Explore methods to reduce noise pollution, especially in the area of the snow dump. (2 votes)
- Develop a contest for best yards and gardens in the area. (1 vote)

### *Civic Engagement/Social Capital Initiatives*

- Organize a meeting with senior Greater Sudbury Police officials to discuss community safety issues and possible solutions. (21 votes)
- Explore the development of a Citizens On Patrol COPS program. (16 votes)
- Develop marketing initiatives such as a community billboard and welcome pamphlets to improve community image. (7 votes)
- Organize community events and carnivals. (4 votes)
- Develop community spaces for youth and seniors. (3 votes)

### *Economic Growth Initiatives*

- Develop a sub-committee to research and apply for grants which could be used to improve and beautify the neighbourhood. (6 votes)
- Explore opportunities for parking improvements. (4 votes)
- Encourage residents to support local businesses and services. (3 votes)

## **Personal Commitment**

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The following individuals expressed an interest in forming the Community Action Network executive committee at the conclusion of the meeting:

- Marc Belanger
- Keith Breit
- Don Briseebois
- Daniel Boucher
- Jim Ilnitski
- Lucette Langlois
- Irene Larocque
- Bob Komarechur
- Bill Mizuik
- Laurie McGauley
- Vera Primorac
- Lucille Quensnelle
- Mark Rustin
- Malka Snofl
- Lori Wall

These individuals will meet with Councillor Dutrisac and Community Development staff to review the Strategic Visioning Session Report and to set C.A.N. committee guidelines and values. (Individuals who weren't able to attend the meeting but have an interest in sitting on the executive committee are asked to contact staff.)

All participants were reminded that in order to move identified ideas, projects and initiatives forward, the Community Action Network will require the assistance of residents on project teams. Those individuals interested in specific initiatives are encouraged to contact Jeff Pafford, Community Development Coordinator, at 674-4455 ext. 2456 or by email at [jeff.pafford@greatersudbury.ca](mailto:jeff.pafford@greatersudbury.ca).