

Investigating Community Service Hubs

Includes:
Final Report

By
Brad Kussen

Completed for: The Peterborough Social Planning Council
Supervising Professor: Nadine Changfoot
Trent Centre for Community-Based Education

Department: Political Studies
Course Code: POST 4070Y
Course Name: Community Engagement and Leadership Internship in the Era of Neoliberal
Globalization
Term: Fall/Winter
Date of Project Submission: April 2013

Project ID: 4236

Call Number:

INVESTIGATING COMMUNITY SERVICE HUBS

By: Brad Kussen

Course: POST 4070Y Community Engagement and Leadership Internship in the Era of

Neoliberal Globalization

Faculty Host: Nadine Changfoot

Host Organization: The Peterborough Social Planning Council

Host Sponsor: Brenda Dales

In Partnership with: The Trent Centre for Community-Based Education

Projects Coordinator: Andy Cragg

Abstract

The purpose of the ‘Investigating Community Hubs’ project was to develop an understanding of the role that community hubs play in developing community capacity to engage in socially cohesive initiatives. Specifically, the project was focused on how community hub models can encourage participation, buy-in, and commitment from local residents to ensure the creation of a sustainable community hub that is able to offer successful programs to the community year-round. As such, creating a report that outlined various hub models across Ontario and across Canada was the primary objective of the project.

The methodology for the project started with the creation of a literature review of academic sources to define the term ‘community capacity building’ to bring an academic understanding to the project goals. Second, the project involved the creation of a number of case studies of community hubs and hub-related initiatives across Ontario and Canada. The goal of repertoire of the case studies was to outline the various strengths and weaknesses of community hubs, key players in the development of hubs, and strategies for effectively generating community support for a community hub. These case studies include:

Community Hub Models:

- The East Scarborough Storefront Hub
- St. Andrew’s Place, Sudbury

Hub Implementation Plans:

- Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan, Kingston
- City of London Hub Implementation Plan

Community Hub Reports:

- City of Toronto Report on Community Hubs
- West Vancouver Community Centre Services Society
- General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres

The report finished with a number of conclusions and recommendations for the development of community hubs in Peterborough with specific focus on the George Street Hub project. It was found that community hubs can generally be defined as providing services to residents of a local community in a manner that allows for their active participation in the development and implementation of these services. As such, the purpose of a community hub is often analogous to the community for which the hub is being developed which requires an extensive understanding of the needs of the residents within the community. Developing a community hub requires intensive research into the strengths and weaknesses of the community to develop a strong understanding of what the community needs and what it can offer to the development of the hub (Appendix 2 offers a tool to support this kind of research).

In terms of developing community engagement, the case studies outlined by the report were an effort to develop options of various community hub models and the kind of community actors that can be utilized to develop community capacity regarding community hub development. The various models include commercial models, volunteer models, and public and not-for-profit partnerships models that include both volunteer and paid staff roles. In addition, the report identified a variety of actors that can potentially be included in the development of community hubs, depending on the context of the neighbourhood in which the hub is being implemented. These actors include residents of the community, community leaders, municipal governments, not-for-profit organizations, and public or private service providers.

The development of the 'Investigating Community Hubs' project has been a long and intensive one but I am incredibly glad that I had the amazing opportunity to take on the project. I definitely feel that I have developed a number of key skills that I can carry forward into my future studies and career. Having said that, there are a number of people to whom I owe a significant amount of thanks for the important roles they played in the project. If it were not for them, this project would have never come together!

Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank the professor of the community internship class Nadine Changfoot for all of her support throughout the year. Her constant commitment to scheduling classes, providing feedback and support for projects, and even just checking in with everyone in the class on a personal basis was definitely a crucial element in developing a positive atmosphere in the class and making sure that we all were on track and feeling good about our projects.

I would also like to thank staff of the Trent Centre for Community Based Education (TCCBE) for their hard work in facilitating class down at the office and providing our class with their own personal experiences with the program. I would like to send a special thanks to Andy Cragg for all the time and effort he put into providing feedback on my literature review and my community event poster, and teaching me about some of the tricks for formatting my final report. Without his input and expertise, this project would have never come together the way it did.

I owe a great deal of thanks to Brenda Dales of the Peterborough Social Planning Council (PSPC). Over the course of the year, this project took a number of twists and turns and I am very grateful that she allocated time to meet with me on a frequent basis to ensure that I was updated

with the progress of the George Street Community Hub project allowing me to gear my research towards meeting the needs of the overall project.

Finally, I would like to thank a number of students I had the pleasure to meet and work with in the community internship course at Trent. Thanks to Samantha and Amber for coming to all of the classes and providing input on not only my project but also each other's. I would also like to thank Mike Andrews who worked on a similar project to mine. The meetings we had and the information we were able to share with each other really helped me to conceptualize my project effectively making it much easier to work on.

Executive Summary

The report has found that regardless of the model implemented for the development of a community hub (commercial, volunteer, or combination thereof), plans for hub implementation in a community require extensive research and understanding of the community strengths and weaknesses in order to adequately develop services needed for the residents of the community. In addition, every community hub in this report has developed a model that includes local residents in the overall operation of the hub (to varying degrees depending on the nature of the model). This often involves leveraging pre-existing neighbourhood relationships and networks so that community members take active roles in the development of the hub. Community involvement is important for hub implementation plans and hub analysis reports have identified this need for including local residents in the development of community hubs. By integrating residents into the operation of the hub, community hubs serve to change the relationship between residents and service providers from strictly a client-service provider relationship to a client-service provider partnership that allows for a more efficient allocation of resources and increased community engagement.

One problem with community hub development has been the ability of community hubs to access funding. In an era of government budget cut-backs and reduced funding, community hub initiatives have been compelled to look to not-for-profit and for-profit organizations for funding. Unfortunately, this funding is often volatile as donors may cut their donations in tough financial times. This report recommends not-for-profit incorporation as a potential method of obtaining funding for community hubs in development as a way of diversifying funding sources.

Based on the findings mentioned above, this report has provided four recommendations for the development of the George Street Community Hub project:

- 1) The steering committee of the hub project should focus on building up relationships with the members of the community. This is a long and intensive process that will require innovative methods of engaging with the residents of the community (Appendix 2 offers a tool to support this process).
- 2) Although the plan to use church space for the implementation of a hub is an excellent way of effectively using pre-existing space compared to building new space, there could be the potential of alienating members of the community who are not a part of the church congregation. The development of the hub within the church will therefore require extensive work to ensure that the congregation is
- 3) Community hubs that have been successful have included the role of resident participants in not only the development of the hub but also the continued engagement of the community.
- 4) Governance of the community hub within the church should focus on bringing together members of the congregation with members of the community to ensure that the interests of all parties are represented. This may involve utilizing one of the models provided in this report or developing a unique model based on the needs of the community.

Table of Contents

Summary of Project and Findings

Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	5
Executive Summary	7

Introduction

Neighbourhood Profile and Survey, 2012	11
Development of the Community-Based Education Project	11
Initial Goals	11
Development Phase #1- Community Hubs in Churches	13
Development Phase #2 – Feasibility, Sustainability, and Commitment	14
Reflection on the research process	14

Findings

Individual Hub Case Studies within Ontario:	16
Case Study #1: St. Andrew’s Church and St. Andrew’s Place	16
Case Study #2: Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan	21
Case Study #3: The East Scarborough Storefront Hub	30
City Reports and Implementation Plans for Hubs in Ontario	36
London Community Hubs Report	36
Toronto Community Hubs Report	42
Case Studies outside of Ontario (within Canada):	49
West Vancouver Community Centres Services Society (WVCCSS)	49
General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) Plan 2025	52
Hub Governance Models:	57
Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc. Report on Community Hub Governance	57

Table of Contents **10**

Not-for-profit incorporation..... 63
 Not-for-profit incorporator’s handbook..... 63

Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary of Findings..... 66
Conclusions 69
Recommendations for the George Street Hub Project 71

Appendices

Appendix #1: Literature Review on Social Cohesion 74
**Appendix #2: ACE (Active, Creative, and Engaged) Communities Toolkit for
community development** 94

Neighbourhood Profile and Survey, 2012

In the spring of 2012, the Peterborough Social Planning Council (PSPC) and the Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network (PPRN) were approached by the Minister and congregation members of the George Street United Church (GSUC) about the possibility of developing a community hub within the pre-existing church space.

After years of having a declining population within the congregation and cumbersome maintenance of the church, members of the church congregation have decided to look into creative and innovative ways to utilize their beautiful space and to engage with the community. After an intensive envisioning process, the members of the congregation were able to develop a community outreach committee with the goal to cultivate relationships with community organizations, services, and members.

The PSPC and the PPRN decided to partner with the GSUC and the community outreach committee to develop a strategy for building a community hub. The first step in the project was to do some preliminary research of the neighbourhood and of who would primarily be using the space and what their needs were. The methodology for gathering data involved gathering statistics from Statistics Canada 2006, distributing a survey to 200 homes in the immediate neighbourhood and providing the survey on the internet, and organizing a barbecue to allow community members discuss community needs¹.

Development of the Community-Based Education Project

Initial Goals

¹ Peterborough Social Planning Council. Neighbourhood Profile: George Street Community Hub. Peterborough : (3), 2012.

The initial goals of the ‘Investigating Community Hubs’ project were to develop a repertoire of five case studies of neighbourhoods in cities similar in size to Peterborough, Ontario. The goal was to find different models of community organization that best allowed for the development of neighbourhood and social cohesion. The project was also interested in understanding how government funding and support could improve the development of these community organizations and how these supports were best allocated. Finally, the project was to unearth different strategies for promoting community commitment to neighbourhood and social cohesion in an effort to ensure sustainable development of a neighbourhood organization and neighbourhood cohesion.

It was agreed upon that a literature review would be provided in the report to provide an academic and theoretical background to the project (see Appendix 1). The goal of the literature review was to look into academic articles and non-academic sources defining social and neighbourhood cohesion and to look for models that exist in academic circles that have been used to develop this cohesion.

The initial cities that were included as potential case studies were Sault St. Marie, Sarnia, Sudbury, Niagara Falls, Milton, Guelph, Cambridge, and Waterloo. These cities were picked as they were similar in size to Peterborough, were located in Ontario, and had similar styles of communities. Eventually, these options were brought down to five which included Sudbury, Hamilton, Dufferin Grove Park in Toronto, Cambridge, and the George Street Community Hub Project itself. In addition, there was also encouragement to investigate the models of cities in various Western provinces of Canada (particularly Vancouver, British Columbia) for models of community organization to use as examples of initiatives taken on in other provinces.

Development Phase #1- Community Hubs in Churches

As the project progressed, the emphasis became centred on the development of community hubs in churches. This was largely influenced by the talks within the George Street United Church for developing a community hub using church space and interest was focused on discovering models within Ontario that allowed for this to occur. This resulted in a change in the nature of the case studies from cities that were similar in size to Peterborough to cities that had churches utilizing church space for a community hub. This resulted in emphasis being placed upon finding community hub organizational models that allowed for the hub to operate outside the church congregation but to also link the members of the congregation to the broader community.

The Peterborough Social Planning Council and members of the George Street United Church were interested in the creation of a paid staff member who would coordinate programs through the community hub. This was an attempt to change up how the church has interacted with the broader community by allowing the church to actively program through its community hub compared to simply renting out church space for independent programs. While the community hub would be linked to the congregation, the role of the community hub coordinator position would be to run inclusive programs for the community at large.

Since the George Street United Church is a congregation that is part of the broader United Church of Canada, the project specifically focused on looking for united churches within this overarching organizational framework that had successfully developed community hubs. This was in an attempt to understand how particular church congregations were able to operate

and make decisions within the United Church of Canada organization to effectively develop their community hubs.

Development Phase #2 – Feasibility, Sustainability, and Commitment

After the search for models of community hubs operating out of church space proved fruitless, it was determined that the George Street project for a community hub within the church was a relatively new or untried idea. As a result, emphasis of the project was switched to understanding the feasibility of developing community hubs in neighbourhoods, how to make these hubs sustainable, and how these hubs would increase the commitment and participation of residents within the community.

It was during this time that researching into government funding for community projects became less important of an element to the project. The new goal was to understand the feasibility of developing community hubs, how these community hubs manage to remain sustainable, and how community hubs are able to engage with a local community to effectively program and provide services.

Reflection on the research process

The topic for this project was a really interesting one and I am incredibly glad to have been able to undertake it. I feel that community hubs can be really useful in bringing together residents and service providers of a community to develop understandings of the needs of the community and act on those needs by providing the proper services. I believe that community hubs will be the future of efficient service provision and community engagement within cities and that ensuring that there is knowledge on how these hubs work will really improve the

development process. I really hope that the George Street Hub project continues to develop and help to promote a vibrant community in the downtown Peterborough area for years to come.

Overall, one thing I noticed when conducting research on community hub models was how little academic information there seems to be on hubs in Ontario. I managed to find a good amount of reports about community hub development, hub governance models, and implementation plans for hubs but academic coverage of the topic seemed to be limited at best. This has suggested to me that community hubs are a relatively new concept to the province of Ontario which has meant that very few, if any, scholars have been able to conduct adequate research on them. I not only found this interesting but it also made me feel that the work I have been conducting on this report will help to contribute to scholarly knowledge on the topic of community hubs and aid in future hub development projects.

Individual Hub Case Studies within Ontario:

Case Study #1: St. Andrew's Church and St. Andrew's Place

Community: Sudbury, ON

St. Andrew's Place is a not-for-profit corporation that is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Directors are members of St. Andrew's Church and managed by Luxor Property Managers. The Board meets monthly to attend to the business of the building and to ensure the continuation of its mission to serve the needs of the church, seniors, and the downtown community².

St. Andrew's Church is located within St. Andrew's Place. The church is an active participant in many facets of Sudbury community life. St. Andrew's has often joined up with other groups/ organizations such as the YWCA Geneva House, Samaritan Centre, Elgin Street Mission, Salvation Army, Corner Clinic, and the Social Planning Council of Sudbury to fundraise, host and support the work of downtown organizations and plan programs and events for the community at large.

Funding:

St. Andrew's Place has 30,000 square feet of non-residential and commercial space which it leases out to local businesses. Current tenants of St. Andrew's Place include³:

- Laurentian Architecture
- 111 Senior Citizen's Centre

² St. Andrew's Place. "St. Andrew's Place (About Us)." Website, Sudbury, Ontario, 2011. Date retrived: 20 Nov, 2012

³ St. Andrew's Place. "St. Andrew's Place (Commercial)." Website, Sudbury, Ontario, 2011. Date retrieved: 20 Nov, 2012

- Nickel Range Barber Shop
- Pandemonium Hair Salon
- Liberty Tax Service
- Janis Floreani Dentistry Professional Corp

St. Andrew's Place also provides meeting, event and concert space with complementary amenities to community organizations for a nominal fee. There are four venues available at St. Andrew's Place of which The Sanctuary is able to seat up to 400 people. Rates are \$350 per day but the church is also able to provide additional services (such as use of the piano, furniture movement, and operator for use of lighting) for additional fees.

In addition, St. Andrew's Place operates residential spaces for senior citizens (50 years and older). Amenities on site include state of the art laundry facilities, a Club 111 Lounge, a 111 Senior's Centre, a gym and shuffleboard, a dentist office, a restaurant, a barber, and a hair salon (see tenants). St. Andrew's Place also offers a number of activities for seniors which include and Annual Resident Christmas Party, classes, concerts, and community events. Rates for senior residences start at \$587 a month (including all utilities, a stove, and a fridge)⁴.

Community Partners:

St. Andrew's has a number of partners from the community of Sudbury⁵:

- **Laurentian School of Architecture** – St. Andrew's has formed a partnership with Laurentian University whereby the university was able to use space within St. Andrew's Place to establish a downtown office thus allowing for greater advertising of the school's new program as it is being developed. In return for the use of its space, St. Andrew's has

⁴ St. Andrew's Place. "St. Andrew's Place (Senior Residential Living)." Website, Sudbury, Ontario, 2011. Date retrieved: 20 Nov, 2012.

⁵St. Andrew's Place. "St. Andrew's Place (Community)." Website, Sudbury, Ontario, 2011. Date retrieved: 20 Nov, 2012.

been able to open its doors to a new segment of the Sudbury community and has the potential to benefit from creative minds redesigning some of St. Andrew's tenant meeting areas.

- **Downtown Sudbury** – Being in the heart of downtown Sudbury, St. Andrew's is able to work in partnership with the Downtown Village Development Corporation. St. Andrew's is able to benefit from this partnership through the advertising of its services and senior's residences on the Downtown Sudbury website.
- **Grow Downtown** – St. Andrew's is also partners with Grow Downtown which is an organization that focuses on developing the downtown Sudbury area based on the three directives of activity and growth, access and connectivity, and beauty and pride. Grow Downtown outlines its Master Plan on its website which is to transform the Sudbury downtown core into an active, safe, and diverse destination for people, businesses, not-for-profits, agencies, and new investments in all forms.

Strengths:

St. Andrew's Place represents an interesting model that blends association with a religious denomination and membership with the Sudbury community in addition to a commercial model for generating revenue outside of government funding. This appears to have allowed it to engage with the broader community, form partnerships with local businesses (through a renter/ landlord relationship) and provide services for multiple demographics.

One of the most interesting aspects of St. Andrew's Place is the residential spaces it offers to senior members of the community. This is a useful way of engaging with the elderly population and may be of interest to the development of community hubs in the city of Peterborough. With respect to the George Street United Church, developing residential space

using pre-existing church space may be difficult and costly (especially considering the limited space the church has to work with). However, St. Andrew's demonstrates the ability of a church to engage with its local community and provide services.

The commercial financial model of St. Andrew's Place is both unique but also raises some concerns. The advantage to adopting a commercial model of charging rent to local businesses set up in church space and offering residential space for elderly people enables the church to achieve a certain degree of financial self-sufficiency and autonomy. This is especially important in an era of declining government funding and subsequent budget cuts to funding for social service initiatives which may be a severe hindrance to the development of community hubs. In addition, by adopting a commercial model, St. Andrew's Place has the ability to avoid excluding people not associated with the church and therefore has the ability to reach out and engage with the broader Sudbury community.

Concerns:

The primary concern of this model is the understanding of where the priorities of the governing body for the community hub lay and whether those priorities conflict with the overarching mandate of the church itself and the principles of community hubs. As stated before, distancing St. Andrew's Place from St. Andrew's Church may be useful publicity in attempting to draw in non-religious community members but members of the congregation may not feel entirely comfortable having church space being used for the commercial and non-denominational purposes connected to the organization. In addition, renting out space to local businesses may be useful in cutting the costs of the businesses (if cheap rent is offered) and therefore allowing them to reduce prices but this is not guaranteed since St. Andrew's Place has no control over the decision each business owner makes. This potentially creates a conflict between the mandate of

the church congregation and the goals of each individual business owner and has the potential to create tension between the two.

It is strongly recommended that further research be done into the overall operation of St. Andrew's Place in order to understand the power relations and decision making frameworks that govern the church and the associated community hub/ centre. Specific focus may need to be placed on how these power relations affect the level of engagement between the church, the community hub, local businesses, and the members of the local community. This may be able to shed more light on the potential strengths and weaknesses of running a community hub out of a church using a commercial financial model.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, St. Andrew's Place represents a community hub model that synergizes residents of a community, local businesses, and the congregation of a church to provide services to the people of a local community. Although the model adopted by St. Andrew's Place may be a too ambitious project for implementation in Peterborough at the present time, it does demonstrate that a local congregation can effectively work to develop a community and engage with the local residents. This could provide an impetus for the members of the George Street United Church congregation to continue with plans of developing a community hub within the church.

However as stated before, further research would need to be conducted to better understand how St. Andrew's Place interacts with the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, the residents of the community, and local business owners. This will provide a better understanding of some of the strengths of this model as well as some of its shortcomings and will be very useful for community hub projects wishing to pursue a similar development path.

Case Study #2: Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan

Community: Rideau Heights (Kingston), Ontario

Rideau Heights and Marker's Acres are two residential communities in northern Kingston that encompass the area between the Cataraqui River and Division Street, and between Highway 401 and Elliott Avenue. The centre of the neighbourhood is a series of public housing developments and inexpensive rental apartments. The Rideau Heights area is physically disconnected by railway tracks and industrial areas from the rest of the City of Kingston⁶.

There had been a growing recognition from the City of Kingston agencies of the need to provide more support for the Rideau Heights community. This was due to the fact that the Rideau Heights area faced a number of challenges and barriers that adversely affected its social and neighbourhood cohesion. The argument (which was backed up by extensive research) was that strong communities could positively affect long term outcomes for residents in key areas such education, employment, incomes, and health.

A resolution was therefore made to bring together a working group that consisted of residents of Rideau Heights, service providers, and representatives of the City of Kingston to develop a plan. This plan involved the launching of new programs and projects but also included the possibility of creating a community hub at the Wally Elmer Centre to add as a valuable element to any community development effort⁷.

⁶ Meagher, Sean. *A Community Engagement Strategy for Rideau Heights and the Wally Elmer Centre Community Hub*. Kingston, Ontario: Public Interest Strategy & Communications, 2007 (1).

⁷ Meagher, Sean. *A Community Engagement Strategy for Rideau Heights and the Wally Elmer Centre Community Hub*. Kingston, Ontario: Public Interest Strategy & Communications, 2007 (1).

The working group determined that communities often develop from the inside out and that positively changing the community of Rideau Heights meant a greater initiative than simply changing a building. The goal was to actively engage with the community of Rideau Heights by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the community. This required an appreciation for the community composition, community needs, community dynamics, community structures, and the aspirations of the people who live in the community.

Key Challenges and Assets:

The community of Rideau Heights had a number of challenges that faced it in terms of relationships in the community, attitudes, expectations, behaviours, opportunities, and structural supports. These included⁸:

- 1) Negative stigma of the community.
- 2) Fragmentation (community disconnected from the rest of Kingston).
- 3) Internal tensions within the community.
- 4) Prisons near the community and the influence of these.
- 5) Elevated levels of crime.
- 6) Poor services.
- 7) Feelings of abandonment and distrust with the rest of Kingston.

However, Rideau Heights also benefits from a number of assets within the community which include⁹:

- 1) Close-Knit Social Networks between residents of the community.

⁸ Meagher, Sean. *A Community Engagement Strategy for Rideau Heights and the Wally Elmer Centre Community Hub*. Kingston, Ontario: Public Interest Strategy & Communications, 2007 (10-11).

⁹ Meagher, Sean. *A Community Engagement Strategy for Rideau Heights and the Wally Elmer Centre Community Hub*. Kingston, Ontario: Public Interest Strategy & Communications, 2007 (11-13).

- 2) Effective Networks that allow for rapid support between neighbours.
- 3) Broadening Social Networks as networks open up to each other.
- 4) Prominence of schools in the development of the community.
- 5) The few services within the community have gained the respect and loyalty of the residents.
- 6) Facilities that serve as symbols of the community (such as the Splash Pad and community centre).
- 7) Churches and the strong networks created through congregations.
- 8) Self-reliance of residents in the face of inadequate services.

In summary, the Rideau Heights community held a number of challenges but also a number of assets that would allow the community to develop and implement socially cohesive initiatives. As such, the report emphasizes that community development projects understand these strengths and weaknesses in order to better develop projects to improve the well-being of the community.

The Hub Development Process:

The initial stages of the community hub involved reaching an understanding with the residents of Rideau Heights on whether a community hub was needed. Both residents and service providers were adamant about having a community hub in the area and understood it as something that would help to bring the community together. Through interviews, a list of programs was created that residents of Rideau Heights would like to see. This list included athletic programs, healthy living programs, year-round services, clubs, and cultural events¹⁰.

¹⁰ Meagher, Sean. A Community Engagement Strategy for Rideau Heights and the Wally Elmer Centre Community Hub. Kingston, Ontario: Public Interest Strategy & Communications, 2007 (15).

Initially, these programs were focused on providing sports programs for children and youth but eventually there was a shift in consensus that emphasized the importance of supports and skills programs for adults and families. Regardless of the style of programs, most residents of Rideau Heights emphasized the importance of drop-in styled programs and one-time events compared to long-term membership driven activities that require consistent attendance from the community in order to be sustainable.

Residents and service providers also listed a number of strategies for effectively engaging with the community. These included¹¹:

- 1) Being prepared to build participation gradually.
- 2) Make the program welcoming and easy to get involved in.
- 3) Serve everyone in the community but focus more on children.
- 4) Make the hub familiar to the residents of the community.
- 5) Work with partner organizations to improve success.
- 6) Ensure that people feel safe when participating in hub activities.
- 7) Denote the hub as a community space versus an institution to promote welcome feelings.
- 8) Ensure that communication with the residents of Rideau Heights is established and well-used to bring them together to work on a common goal.

¹¹ Meagher, Sean. A Community Engagement Strategy for Rideau Heights and the Wally Elmer Centre Community Hub. Kingston, Ontario: Public Interest Strategy & Communications, 2007 (16-17).

A hub steering committee oversees the development of the Rideau Heights community hub project and has developed a comprehensive plan to ensure that their development efforts are clearly outlined. These include¹²:

- 1) Announcing intentions as soon as possible. This has involved immediately declaring the desire to have the community hub itself be a community-based initiative then working on gaining support from the community for the project. This tactic is different from other community hub initiatives that often develop relationships with the community before initiating the hub development process. However, due to the challenging nature of the Rideau Heights community, it has been deemed necessary to initiate the project as soon as possible to ensure that the community is aware of it.
- 2) Developing a balanced but inclusive hub governance model based on the East Scarborough Storefront Hub (discussed below). This model separates program management from overall hub governance. The East Scarborough Storefront Hub has a few paid staff but relies heavily on partner agencies (such as the YMCA and Schools without Borders) to run programs and use the space. Programs are managed through the partner agencies and these agencies sit on the Program Management Committee to address issues that affect programs across the hub. This Program Management Committee then sends representatives to a Steering Committee for the hub which also includes community representation. To ensure accountability, the hub organized “Community Speaks” events which were open gatherings that allowed the

¹² Meagher, Sean. A Community Engagement Strategy for Rideau Heights and the Wally Elmer Centre Community Hub. Kingston, Ontario: Public Interest Strategy & Communications, 2007 (18-23).

community to discuss and debate key issues affecting the hub which then would be taken up by the Steering Committee for implementation.

- 3) Start offering child-focused programs centred on fun and simple activities and events, with adult programs taking a secondary role.
- 4) Use partners to deliver programs and reach participants. Since hubs are located in a specific geographical location and have relatively limited capacity to run a broad range of events for residents, the residents of Rideau Heights recognized the importance of recruiting community partners to help supplement original hub programming.
- 5) Building the community development process by slowly diversifying the hub development process. By understanding that the overall goal is to achieve community cohesiveness, the hub development plan seeks to avoid focusing too heavily on short term successes.
- 6) Reaching out and recruiting using many small processes. By implementing strategies to draw out new community leadership, the hub project hopes to draw not only active members of the community but other residents who may not be initially inclined to join. This has involved incorporating information on event promotional media as to how residents may get involved and help out with the event and eventually the greater hub development. In addition, the project has recognized that having regular and frequent community meetings can help the process but other strategies are needed. These have included:

- Porch Talks – an innovative way the residents of Rideau Heights have engaged with the community simply by talking to residents on their front porches about community issues.
- Event Interceptions – hosting one-time large events that allow residents to engage in conversations and understand what is going on in the community.
- Neighbourhood Circles – holding small dinner meetings through event leaders to discuss community issues.
- Embedded Discussions – encouraging other community gathering areas and organizations (such as churches and parent council meetings) to earmark part of their meeting time to discuss the community hub project and programs in the community.
- Community Animation – employing members of the community with strong network ties to act as the frontline for developing connections and reaching out to residents of the community.

In summary, the Rideau Heights community hub report presented some interesting issues and challenges facing a community in addition to the community's strengths and weaknesses. The community of Rideau Heights has overwhelmingly indicated that the development of a community hub is necessary to positively develop their community. This hub needs to focus not only on providing large one-time events but also frequent programs that focus on children and adults in partnership with community service providers.

The governance of the hub is largely focused on having a few paid staff to help implement programs in coordination with service providers. In addition, the management of the

hub is to be relatively disconnected from the overall hub governance. Overall hub governance is focused on bringing together multiple service providers and residents of the community to plan for the hub as a whole.

Strengths:

The Rideau Heights community hub plan demonstrates the processes of developing a community service hub. The plan demonstrates how drivers and leaders of community hub initiatives need to spend a great deal of time developing initial connections with the intended recipients of the services provided by the hub (the residents of the community). This creates the development process of a community hub that occurs simultaneously with the community it is being built in. However, there is also recognition from the plan for the need for quick decisions to ensure that the community remains engaged with the project. As such the processes adopted by the Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan run contrary to the ideas that developing a community hub is the first step in developing a community and instead suggest that they both develop together.

In addition, the Rideau Heights community hub plan demonstrates the need for a broad range of community engagement tactics such as porch talks to effectively understand the needs of the local community so that the hub can effectively meet those needs. It also demonstrates that developing a community hub may require its leaders to develop or utilize engagement tactics that are commonplace within the community. An example is how the leaders of the Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan adopted engagement tactics (such as porch talks) that were already being used by members of the community to engage with one another. By tapping into pre-existing networks and tactics, leaders of community hub initiatives may find warmer reception from the members of the community.

Concerns:

The primary concern of the Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan is to develop strategies to maintain the momentum of a project (i.e. community capacity and commitment). As stated by the report, developing community hubs is a long process in which community members might not see quick developments. This could result in distraught over the length of the project and cause some community members to lose interest in it thus reducing overall community commitment. This could have detrimental effects on the overall success of the project.

Further research into understanding potential tactics for maintaining community commitment during the hub development process could be beneficial for improving these processes. However, it is recommended that research on this element of a community hub project be careful in not generalizing commitment generating tactics. The Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan demonstrates how engagement tactics need to be specific to the community they are being used in or else residents may not be comfortable engaging with the development of the hub. As such, research into the specific communities (such as conducting interviews) may be useful in generating a set of tactics for engaging that community.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the Rideau Heights Community Hub Plan demonstrates some of the important aspects of community hub development and engagement. Specific focus is on how leaders of a community hub need to develop the community they are working with in addition to developing the community hub to service that community. This can be done with a range of engagement tactics and tapping into pre-existing community networks to utilize local leadership for the project. In addition, these tactics need to be contextually accurate to the community they are being applied to or they may have little to no effect. The Rideau Heights Community Hub

Plan therefore demonstrates that strong knowledge of a community is a requirement for the effective development of a community hub.

Case Study #3: The East Scarborough Storefront Hub

Community: East Scarborough (Toronto), Ontario

Background

The community of East Scarborough is an inner suburb located east of Toronto's downtown core. The community has the highest concentration of social housing in Ontario and one-third of the residents in the community live below the low-income cut-off line (or poverty line). The community also faces a number of other challenges including unemployment, poverty, substandard housing, poor transit, and a lack of community services¹³.

In the late 1990s, the community of East Scarborough was in desperate need as families were forced to leave the inner city in an effort to find more affordable housing. The influx of people from the inner city to East Scarborough served to overstretch the community's capacity to house and provide services to these people. In addition, the suburban transit system in East Scarborough was inadequate to deal with the growing needs of the community¹⁴.

To address the needs of the community, the East Scarborough Storefront worked on leveraging the power of collaboration to support people and build a community. For this, the hub implemented a revolutionary hub model that was completely new to North America. This model has emphasized working with local residents, service providers, staff, funders, volunteers,

¹³ Mann, Cathy. *The Little that Could: The Story of our Story*. Scarborough, Ontario: The East Scarborough Community Hub (11), 2009.

¹⁴ Mann, Cathy. *The Little that Could: The Story of our Story*. Scarborough, Ontario: The East Scarborough Community Hub (13), 2009.

academics, and 40 partner agencies which has allowed it to achieve results that would otherwise have not been attainable by any of the partners individually¹⁵.

To understand the needs of the community, organizers of the Storefront Hub developed a survey and then went door to door handing out the survey and engaging residents in discussions to understand what they needed. This has resulted in a focus on bringing together members of the community to better understand the community needs which has been a strength of the hub to date.

The East Scarborough Storefront Hub:

The East Scarborough Storefront Hub has focused on its strengths and successes to build a base for community engagement. These include¹⁶:

- 1) Facilitating collaboration between various partners in the community.
- 2) Building community by allowing residents to voice their opinions and concerns thus allowing them to lead community initiatives.
- 3) Supporting residents of the community by providing services of up to 10 hours of services a week that allow residents to access a broad range of services which include but are not limited to:
 - Job search support.
 - Mental health counselling
 - After-school programs.
 - Legal Advice.
 - Seniors and youth groups.

¹⁵ Mann, Cathy. The Little that Could: The Story of our Story. Scarborough, Ontario: The East Scarborough Community Hub (13), 2009.

¹⁶ Mann, Cathy. The Little that Could: The Story of our Story. Scarborough, Ontario: The East Scarborough Community Hub (15-20), 2009.

The hub is partnered with a number of service providing agencies that include but are not limited to:

- Schools without Borders
- YMCA
- Catholic Cross-cultural Services
- Vasantham Tamil Seniors Group

The Storefront also acts as a resource centre that includes computers, internet, printers, telephone services, and meeting space for residents of the community. Due to the diverse nature of the hub and the welcoming atmosphere it has managed to cultivate, the East Scarborough Storefront Hub is able to provide services to people more than 50,000 times a year.

Between 2004 and 2008, the East Scarborough Storefront Hub has managed to increase its client contacts from 55,592 clients to 69,177 clients. In addition, between 2006 and 2008, the hub has managed to increase its number of volunteers from 305 volunteers to 393 in addition to increasing the number of volunteer hours engaged in from 9532 hours to 11,138.5 hours (East Scarborough Storefront Hub 18). This is a remarkable achievement and stands as a testament to the overall success of the hub in engaging with the local community and providing leadership opportunities for the residents to aid in the overall development of the neighbourhood.

The East Scarborough Storefront Hub has focused on developing a relationship with its community that emphasizes the idea that the hub is there because it is desired by the residents and is not mandated by the government or an organization. This resident focused strategy has allowed community members to feel more comfortable engaging with the hub and utilizing its services to meet their needs. The hub has also focused on ensuring that it takes the time to build

the trust of the members of the community and partner agencies to ensure that services are provided and residents are there to utilize them.

The model of the hub is focused on empowering the residents of East Scarborough by providing them with opportunities to take on leadership roles within the hub. These roles include:

1. Being a member of the hub Steering Committee.
2. As volunteers within the hub.
3. At Community Speak events where residents can voice their opinions and brainstorm solutions to local problems.

The hub also allows residents to access certain services and programs offered through partner organizations that are completely free to residents within the community such as:

1. Structured initiatives – community gardens, community/ university initiatives, etc.
2. Drop in services such as a local market where food and goods are sold.
3. Social activities such as festivals.
4. Activism opportunities.

The hub model employed by the Storefront Hub emphasizes the role of service delivery through partner organizations. The role of the hub is to simply coordinate these service providers and bring in new ones from across the city. As such, the hub receives funding from donors to cover maintenance and basic infrastructure costs while partner organizations source their own

funding. As such, the Storefront Hub does not charge the partner organizations rent for use of their space nor do partner agencies charge for use of their services¹⁷.

The East Scarborough Storefront Financial Model:

The East Scarborough Storefront Hub has been able to provide services to the residents of the community free of charge through an innovative financial model. The hub itself focuses on securing funds to cover its basic infrastructure costs (such as rent, utilities and staff) which is done through effectively developing relationships with donors to secure long-term investment. The service providers that operate from the hub focus on sourcing their own funding that allows them to provide services free of charge while at the same time are not charged rent by the hub and share common resources enabling them to cut some of their costs. This model focuses on ensuring that collaboration between the Storefront Hub and the multiple service providers within the building is achieved by preventing the creation of power-dynamics that arise in rent-paying relationships¹⁸.

The East Scarborough Storefront Governance Model:

The East Scarborough Storefront Hub has managed to develop an innovative governance model that focuses on building resident leadership within the community. This model disperses leadership roles throughout the hub enabling a wide range of leaders across various issues and settings. Decisions made for the hub are done through a formal decision-making framework that allows every resident to understand the issues and use their specific skills to address these issues. This is done under the overall guidance of the Director and staff of the hub who have the freedom to make decisions for the hub but are bound by a set of parameters ensuring their

¹⁷ Mann, Cathy. *The Little that Could: The Story of our Story*. Scarborough, Ontario: The East Scarborough Community Hub (21), 2009.

¹⁸ Mann, Cathy. *The Little that Could: The Story of our Story*. Scarborough, Ontario: The East Scarborough Community Hub (21-22), 2009.

decisions reflect the interests of the community. The Director of the hub oversees several coordinators which include the Coordinator of Programs and Services, the Coordinator of Community Resources, the Coordinator of Volunteers, the Coordinator of Special Projects, and the Coordinator of Community Capacity Building. Each of these coordinators in turn oversees a number of various partner groups including volunteers, students, project facilitators, community engagement workers, and community resource specialists¹⁹.

Strengths:

The successes of the East Scarborough Storefront Hub can largely be attested to the grass roots strategy for engaging with local residents and developing the community hub itself adopted by its leaders. This process has also been effective in building community commitment and buy-in to the hub as shown by the amount of clients using hub services on a yearly basis. This process ensures that the community hub is feasible and able to sustain clients. By directly engaging with the East Scarborough community, hub leaders have been able to understand and address the needs of the community to adequately provide services to meet these needs.

Weaknesses:

The primary concern of the model adopted by the East Scarborough Storefront Hub is its reliance on government funding to ensure a sustainable financial model. Although this allows the hub to utilize a non-rent charging relationship with service providers using its space, it does make the hub reliant on external funding to ensure long-term sustainability. This can be problematic in an era of government budget cut backs and might make it difficult for other hubs to obtain funding.

Conclusion:

¹⁹ Hub, East Scarborough Storefront. 2009: *Our Story*. Scarborough, Ontario: East Scarborough Hub, 2009.

In conclusion, the East Scarborough Storefront Hub provides an example of a community hub with a largely grass roots foundation. The emphasis on understanding what the community needs and including residents within the decision making process has allowed the hub to increase resident buy-in and promote participation. The Storefront Hub also provides an example of a community organization that has partnered with local businesses and service providers to bring services that could not normally be accessed by the residents of East Scarborough (for geographic or financial reasons) to the community.

The interesting aspect of the Storefront Hub is the relationship it has with its residents and service-providers. For the residents, the hub operates as a centralized location that is able to bring in services to help out members of the community and also acts as a forum to allow communication and information sharing amongst the people. For service-providers, the Storefront Hub acts as another geographical location that allows them to temporarily move their operations to a space to provide services to a different group of people.

City Reports and Implementation Plans for Hubs in Ontario

London Community Hubs Report

Community: London, Ontario

The City of London, Ontario released a report in 2010 on the development of community hubs in the city for the purposes of developing a community that is conducive to the growth of children in the city. This came from the recognition that even though most children in the city are able to grow up happy and healthy, there are a number of them who face economic, socio-cultural, education, and physical challenges that put them at risk.

In an effort to make more of a commitment to the residents of London, the Child and Youth Network created an agenda which was designed to meet the City of London's vision for youth and children. The four main priorities of the agenda are²⁰:

1. End Poverty: reduce the proportion of London families who are living in poverty by 25% in five years and 50% in 10 years;
2. Make Literacy a Way of Life: lead the province in child, youth and family literacy;
3. Lead the Nation in Increasing Healthy Eating and Healthy Physical Activity: create environments, neighbourhoods and opportunities that promote and support daily physical activity and healthy eating; and,
4. Create a Family Centred Service System: make it easier for London's children, youth and families to participate fully in their neighbourhoods and communities and to find and receive the services they need.

In an effort to create a more comprehensive system of services in London, The Child and Youth Network developed a five year plan to implement community hubs across the city. The Network believed that community hubs serve as safe gathering spaces in the hearts of communities that provide families with an easier access to a mix of services that help them to succeed in their lives. As such, the Network argued that community hubs are not only a strategy to change the way services are organized and delivered but also serve to build community strength and capacity through a unique community-driven approach. It was identified that the community centre approach would allow residents to actively participate in their communities as

²⁰ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (3) City of London, 2010.

well as encourage them to take action and initiative to make positive changes to their neighbourhood²¹.

The report understands community hubs as centres where a variety of integrated services can be provided to residents of a particular community. The population that community hubs would cater to are children and families in the city of London. In addition, the report recognizes that community hubs can be incredibly diverse and that differences between hubs can include where they are located (such as within a school or a church), their size (either a large room or a multiplicity of smaller rooms called ‘hublets’), and their dynamics (depending on the community they are in)²².

The importance of hubs to the Network was outlined in the report. Community hubs were identified as important to the integration of services within a community by bringing together core and specialized services for children, youth, and families. This would require service providers to work together to jointly plan, modify, and offer services. This integration is supposed to allow community hubs to provide a wide variety of services that effectively meet the needs of the targeted population²³.

The geographical location of a community hub was also identified as an important element to its feasibility and effectiveness. By creating hubs in local neighbourhoods, residents could access services without needing to travel to a downtown core. This is especially important

²¹ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (3) City of London, 2010.

²² Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (4) City of London, 2010.

²³ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (4) City of London, 2010.

for low-income families where travel by car is not necessarily a viable option and public transport is their primary means of mobility²⁴.

Finally, the report identifies that community hubs can be effective tools for developing stronger neighbourhood communities through a community driven approach. It was identified that this process encourages existing community leaders, resident organizations, and grassroots collective groups to work together thus creating stronger community ties. As more individuals and groups join in on participating within the hub, the hub would begin to serve as an anchor for the community²⁵.

Plans for Implementation

To implement their plans for development of community hubs, the City of London focused on developing steering committees for each community. These steering committees will focus on guiding the hub development and coordinate the organization at the neighbourhood level. The goal is to have all of these committees come together to create a city-wide network of hubs that are responsible for coordinating services across the city and ensuring that service integration is taking place²⁶.

In order to determine the readiness and feasibility of a neighbourhood for a community hub, the City of London had considered a number of indicators including the availability of existing space, existing programs and services, leadership at the community level, and a community's capacity and assets. Once an understanding of the community has been developed, planning for a more grass-roots and in-depth analysis of the neighbourhood can be done using

²⁴ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (5) City of London, 2010.

²⁵ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (5) City of London, 2010.

²⁶ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (13-14) City of London, 2010.

the Active, Creative, and Engaged (ACE) Communities Toolkit as a framework (See Appendix 2). This tool kit was developed by the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association to aid community leaders in understanding the needs of the community, building off of pre-existing strengths, and effectively implementing programs for the residents. The ideal community hub model identified by the implementation plan is the Shared Human Services Partnership model.

The Shared Human Services Partnership Model (SHSP):

The SHSP model is a London-based initiative that works to bring together multiple agencies to address strategic priorities related to the sharing of human services. The model guides service providers through the internal workings of a shared service by looking at the following aspects²⁷:

- 1) Financial Perspective – understanding the relationship between the service provider and its stakeholders.
- 2) Learning and Growth Processes – understanding how the service will develop, sustain the ability to change, and respond and grow to new challenges.
- 3) Internal Business Processes – understanding what a community partnership needs to excel at in order to succeed.
- 4) Customer Perspective – understanding the relationship between the service provider and its customers.

²⁷ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (18) City of London, 2010.

The model also breaks down the above aspects into more in depth analysis in order to understand what is needed to achieve success and sustainability. These include²⁸:

- 1) Efficient use of resources for maximum client benefit
- 2) Improved outcomes per dollar invested per client and financial sustainability.
- 3) Diversification of funding sources.
- 4) Financial Sustainability.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the implementation plan for community hubs in the City of London Ontario has focused on creating a network of service providers across the city to create efficiency between these services and reduce operational redundancies. These hubs are developed in a “bottom-up” process in an effort to tap into pre-existing community networks, leadership capacities, and assets in an effort to promote community buy-in of these projects.

However, the community hubs project has been implemented largely under the leadership of the city government of London and various non-government organizations. This allows greater communication and coordination between these individual neighbourhoods to allow for greater efficiency and integration of service providers. Overall, the case of London Ontario provides a model of community hub development that utilizes micro-level networks and populations (i.e. neighbourhoods and communities) in addition to macro-level organizations and institutions (i.e. the city and NGOs). This is in attempt to create a large network of community hubs across the city.

²⁸ Network, Child and Youth. "The Best for our Children, Youth and Families: London's Five-Year Community Hub Implementation Plan February 2010." (18) City of London, 2010.

Toronto Community Hubs Report

Community: Toronto, Ontario

Background:

In the summer of 2010, the Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development in Toronto (ICE) identified community hubs as an area of interest to all three levels of government (municipal, provincial, and federal). In Toronto, a number of community hub initiatives had been started in the wake of the Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force (SNTF) report initiative that was a joint program between the city of Toronto, and the United Way of Greater Toronto and supported by the governments of Canada and Ontario. The SNTF identified a number of underserved neighbourhoods in Toronto and a number of place-based strategies to address local needs which included investment in local community services that were grounded in grass roots principles²⁹.

The purpose of this Community Hubs report was to³⁰:

- 1) Provide context for the recent spread of hubs in Toronto and define a hub.
- 2) Draw out key themes that emerge from the interviews and identify some of the issues around hub development.
- 3) Offer some suggestions to ICE stakeholders and outline next steps.

The report identifies community hubs as providing two main benefits for residents and service providers in a community³¹:

²⁹ Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. *Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto*. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (4) 2011.

³⁰ Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. *Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto*. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (4) 2011.

- 1) For service providers, economies of scale can be achieved through shared “back-office” duties. Funders also benefit from co-location of service providers.
- 2) For residents, services are more accessible and a broader range of service needs can be met. Additionally, as neutral public spaces, community hubs strengthen social networks within local communities.

The report identifies a number of key functions of a community hub in an effort to develop a comprehensive idea of how a community hub benefits communities³²:

- 1) Service (to meet community needs): Programs run by the hub respond to the needs of the local community and involves providers of social, health employment and/or business services.
- 2) Space (accessible community space): The space is seen as public and common areas are available for both formal and unstructured programming.
- 3) Synergy (multiple tenants and service-providers are co-located): The scale and focus of services creates a critical mass that improves overall accessibility for clients and creates synergies for co-locating tenants. Informal social networks among hub users are also fostered.

Successes and Challenges:

A summary of the report provides the key successes and challenges associated with the implementation of hubs in Toronto communities. The key successes of community hubs include³³:

³¹ Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (5) 2011.

³² Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (6) 2011.

- 1) Community hubs are a key strategy in bringing services to underserved neighbourhoods. Those hubs in operation already are warmly received by local communities and continue to see demand grow. Some service-providers have begun to be able to coordinate grant requests because of their co-location.
- 2) The impetus for community hubs comes from a range of sources: Strong policy goals, funder commitment, community development goals, local vision and/or happenstance opportunity. Tenant selection models also varied widely.
- 3) Hub structures allow emerging and smaller organizations to partner with larger service-providers, supplementing the range of services available in a community and improving cross-learnings for each organization. Common reception also facilitated clients' intake experience.
- 4) Governance structures among community hubs varied widely, including the form of internal governance and the degree to which the local community or target population was engaged in the operations.
- 5) A broad range of service-providers is more likely to create a community space where a thriving neighbourhood mix can emerge. This also facilitates service collaboration, cross-referrals among co-tenants and sharing of resources.
- 6) Most hub governance structures were in early development still but had successfully engaged with the local community or target population.
- 7) Hub managers were identified as having a unique blend of community development and facilities management and planning skills.

³³ Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (7) 2011.

- 8) Employment or local community economic development was an emergent theme for a number of community hubs, including employment training, business incubation supports, and commercial and social enterprises.

The key challenges identified by the report included³⁴:

- 1) Community hubs have been developed piecemeal, in isolation from each other. A broad coordinated strategy would ensure a joint vision of enhanced services across the city, supporting the operation of individual hubs. Harmonized development plans and funding envelopes need to be developed among multiple funding bodies.
- 2) One of the biggest challenges is to identify space for the development of hubs. Identification of an appropriate centrally-located site for development can be difficult and time-consuming. The concentration of space in private stock also makes securing of a location difficult. Civic buildings are well-suited to be re-purposed as community hubs. Several hubs have had to rely on the private real estate market. Alternately, those who are able to access public buildings need to negotiate multiple and sometimes conflicting regulations, timelines and bureaucratic priorities.
- 3) Hub start-up times are lengthy. Community hub development often was caught between different departments and units or among different orders of government and funders. Resources and time were wasted trying to deal with multiple partners or bring (potential) funding partners together.

³⁴ Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (8) 2011.

- 4) Hub operators identified sustainability as a key concern. Current operating funds to sustain the hub infrastructure are too limited, especially as community demand grows. This limits the ability of hubs to offer extended hours or programming as requested.
- 5) Additional technical assistance to help with such specialized tasks as facilities development, real estate negotiations, negotiation of cost-sharing, governance models, community needs assessments and outreach is need during the development of hubs to assist staff with the specialized knowledge and resources they might need. This would also facilitate knowledge-sharing between hubs.
- 6) Because the scale of funding needed for capital budgets is often considerable, government funding is pivotal and creates opportunities for important social infrastructure development.

The report also included a number of responses from interviewees for ideas on how to improve the implementation of hubs in the city of Toronto. In areas of hub development, a number of key recommendations were made³⁵:

- 1) Creating flexible program funding to help secondary service providers to plan program and site expansion or re-location to a community hub.
- 2) Developing a process to transfer surplus public facilities and real estate for the development of community hubs.
- 3) Ensuring that hub development supports (human and technical resources) are provided to ensure hub start-up projects can be sustained – preventing these supports from adding

³⁵ Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (11) 2011.

another layer of bureaucratic decision-making processes will help to make start-up hubs more efficient.

- 4) Early inclusion of space and programming to support certain programs (i.e. arts).
- 5) Developing coordinated strategies to reduce the time taken for gathering space for hub development.

Recommendations for improving the coordination of hubs included:

- 1) Developing a public policy framework to ensure effective coordination between a community hub, associated organizations, and government departments where hub funding comes from.
- 2) Creating an ongoing fund and coordinating body for that fund to ensure consistent and effective core funding for hub initiatives.
- 3) Improve coordination between individual hub development projects to ensure a more strategic approach to developing numerous hubs and preventing operational redundancies.
- 4) Developing an information sharing network between individual hubs to allow formal and informal learnings to be easily shared between each hub thus reducing the isolationism of them.

In terms of overall recommended actions, the report identifies a number of key moves that need to be made to ensure effective hub implementation across the city of Toronto³⁶:

³⁶ Unit, WoodGreen Community Services Planning and Research. Community Hubs: A Scan of Toronto. City of Toronto: Intergovernmental Committee for Economic and Labour Force Development, (11) 2011.

- 1) Convene funders to discuss the development of an implementation framework for the coordination of community hubs, system-level planning and funding issues, especially across silos.
- 2) Host a conference/forum for hub service-providers. To discuss common operational issues, shared learnings and best practices.
- 3) Document. Develop resources which chart the various models of community hubs including their development and operation.
- 4) Evaluate. Identify common metrics to measure the impact of community hubs on their target populations. Key questions could include:
 - The appropriate scale and service mix and satisfaction levels.
 - Effective governance and management structures.
 - Community engagement strategies.
 - Identify any necessary adaption.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the community hubs report for Toronto identifies community hubs as an effective way to provide various social services at a local level. They do this by bringing services closer to the people who need them and providing social supports to address local needs. However, it also identifies the need for documenting and evaluating hub development as a way of effectively and efficiently organizing and supporting these hubs. The main issue identified by the report has been the fact that community hubs in Toronto have often times developed in isolation of each other which makes it difficult for effective coordination and resource/knowledge sharing between the hubs. By effectively coordinating the operations of hubs, the

report argues that operational redundancies will be avoided and hubs will be able to more effectively develop.

Case Studies outside of Ontario (within Canada):

West Vancouver Community Centres Services Society (WVCCSS)

Community: Vancouver, British Columbia

Background:

The West Vancouver Community Centres Society (WVCCS) is a not-for-profit society that is governed by the community members of the District of West Vancouver with the goal of being a centre for community leadership and participation that is aimed at creating social, recreational, and cultural aspects of community in West Vancouver³⁷. The society oversees and manages the operation of the West Vancouver Community Centre and the Aquatic Centre. The society requires a small payment of \$3 for individuals or \$5 for families for one year memberships in the community that can be renewed without any cost so long as it is done so before the membership expires. Memberships allow community members to register for programs and events run by affiliated community centres in West Vancouver³⁸.

Governance:

The West Vancouver Community Centre Society is governed by a non-profit Board of Directors with ample degrees of credibility and experience. Overall operation of the community

³⁷ Society, West Vancouver Community Centres. *West Vancouver Community Centres Society - Community Governance Model*. 2011. <http://www.wvcommunitycentressociety.ca>

³⁸ Society, West Vancouver Community Centres. *West Vancouver Community Centres Society - Membership*. 2011. <http://www.wvcommunitycentressociety.ca/membership>

centres within the society is handled by teams of managers and facility operators in addition to providing opportunities for volunteers from the community. Emphasis of the society has been focused on the development of volunteer opportunities to encourage community engagement and participation in addition to encouraging leadership within the local area.³⁹

Meetings in the society are governed by a formal ten page constitution that defines positions and outlines the mission statement of the society, the structure of meetings, voting and participation rights, grounds for removal from the society, amendments to the constitution, borrowing rights, etc. The constitution allows for participation of members who are at least 16 years of age who either own property or are non-resident owners of real property in West Vancouver (West Vancouver Community Centres Society website). This constitution is made available on the society's website and is accessible to anyone interested⁴⁰.

Funding:

The WVCCS receives grants from five organizations: the United Way Canada (\$110,000), Recreation Foundation of BC (\$6,000), BC Parks and Recreation Association (\$300), West Vancouver Community Foundation (\$1,000), and the West Vancouver Community Foundation – Early Childhood Programs in West Vancouver (\$1,000). The money from these grants is also supplemented by the money received from membership fees from community

³⁹Society, West Vancouver Community Centres. *West Vancouver Community Centres Society - Community Governance Model*. 2011. <http://www.wvcommunitycentressociety.ca/community-governance-model>.

⁴⁰ Society, West Vancouver Community Centres. *West Vancouver Community Centres Society - Constitution*. 2011. <http://www.wvcommunitycentressociety.ca/constitution>.

members. The WVCCS also receives donations from various private companies in the West Vancouver area.⁴¹

Programs and Initiatives:

The society also releases strategic plans (on its website) that outline its own initiatives for the broad community. One initiative was a survey that was to provide constructive criticism for the organization. The survey indicated that the WVCCS was strongly engaging with its community, had a diversity of programs, had a strong ability to leverage funds through grants and fundraising, and had a board of directors who were actively committed and diverse. However, the survey also indicated that the WVCCS suffered from a small number of members, low visibility of the WVCCS in the society, lack of financial resources, and minimal staff resources (West Vancouver Community Centres Society 7). The WVCCS outlined in its plan its initiatives to mitigate the weaknesses of the organization to better engage with the community⁴².

Conclusion:

The WVCCS provides an interesting example of how the conditions mentioned earlier in the paper can be met through a formal community organization with physical space. First, the WVCCS uses a method of determining its community by implementing a formal membership structure for events and initiatives but also by providing eligibility requirements for participation in meetings. This enables the WVCCS to identify members of the community who are interested in being involved and allows them to identify the issues and goals of these members. While this

⁴¹ Society, West Vancouver Community Centres. *West Vancouver Community Centres Society - Grants*. 2011. <http://www.wvcommunitycentresociety.ca/grants>.

⁴² Society, West Vancouver Community Centres. *2011-2015 Strategic Plan*. Strategic Plan, Vancouver: West Vancouver Community Centres Society, 2011.

method may be useful for identifying a community, it may be exclusionary to those who are unwilling to pay the membership fees to join. Second, the WVCCS defines what it wants its community to look and feel like (the atmosphere). This enables the WVCCS to identify what its “ideal” community would be and to brainstorm, develop, and implement programs, initiatives, and events to allow for the creation of this community (thus creating a model of neighbourhood cohesion).

Finally, the WVCCS has a formal organizational structure that is manifested in a constitution that serves to legitimate the organization and enable it to command funding and donations from a variety of not-for-profit organizations, private companies, and the government. The rationale behind choosing the WVCCS is that it provides an example of a stand-alone community centre that is supported by a number of partners. The WVCCS also provides an example of a formal organizational structure that is useful in mobilizing resources and people towards projects, initiatives, and programs. In addition, the creation of a formal organizational constitution, the WVCCS provides itself with a governance structure that can create greater legitimacy in the eyes of potential funders/ partners. This would allow for more collaboration between the community centre and the city in general and greatly increase the capacity of the community centre to engage with its city.

General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) Plan 2025

Community: Winnipeg, Manitoba

Background:

The General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) Plan 2025 is an initiative started by the GCWCC to support and sustain a volunteer base for recreation services, guide the delivery of recreation programs, and direct the development of recreation facilities⁴³. Plan 2025 is the GCWCC response to the City of Winnipeg's Recreation, Leisure, and Library Facilities Policy (RLLF) to reconfigure its recreation, library, and leisure facilities in a way that is more responsive to the needs of the locals. The City of Winnipeg has officially capped the size of community centre space and instead wishes to see the strengthening and optimization of community centres in Winnipeg.

The approach of the GCWCC is focused on the role individuals play in driving community centre programs which in turn drives the facilities. In other words, the GCWCC emphasizes that it is impossible to plan for facilities without an understanding of the programs that are to be run through those facilities and these programs cannot be planned without knowing the needs of the people that the programs are for⁴⁴

Composition of the GCWCC:

Currently, community centres in Winnipeg are not run by municipality workers but rather volunteers from the community. Members of the Board of Directors are elected by members of the community they serve. It has been noted by the GCWCC that meeting the complex needs of the people of Winnipeg has become an increasingly difficult task and recruiting new volunteers for programs is also becoming an issue. Maintaining qualified staff is also becoming an issue due

⁴³ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025*. Strategic Plan, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (5) 2009.

⁴⁴ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025*. Strategic Plan, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (5) 2009.

to financial constraints placed upon the organization itself⁴⁵. The GCWCC is mandated to provide a wide range of recreational and leisure programs that are suited to the needs of the residents living within their designated area.

As such, it is acknowledged by the GCWCC that community centres need assistance in identifying demographic changes and emerging trends within the community thus require collaboration and cooperation with service providers. However, it has been noted that establishing connections with service providers has been hampered by the inability of volunteers to meet during the average working day. Finally, the GCWCC identifies the annual facility operating grant that community centres in Winnipeg receive from the City of Winnipeg which is the official owner and insurer of the facilities as a necessary support for the continued development of community centres. However, despite being owned by the government community centres in Winnipeg are responsible for first line maintenance and administration costs including providing programming for the community and hiring staff for the facilities⁴⁶.

Boundaries of the GCWCC:

The GCWCC has divided up the city of Winnipeg into community centre districts. These districts were drawn out in close alignment with the boundaries of Winnipeg's various political communities. Each of these districts is then further divided into neighbourhood clusters which enable the collection of information through the city government. In addition, each district

⁴⁵ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025. Strategic Plan*, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (5) 2009.

⁴⁶ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025. Strategic Plan*, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (5) 2009.

planning committee includes representation from each of these neighbourhood clusters when making decisions about community centre initiatives and plans⁴⁷

Plan 2025: The future of GCWCC:

Plan 2025 outlines a number of concerns for the community centres in Winnipeg. Of primary concern was the ability to recruit and retain volunteers and qualified staff. This was linked to insufficient funds commanded by the community centres themselves. There was also the concern that programming was not reaching out to the entire communities of Winnipeg as it has been solely focused on providing organized sports. The GCWCC acknowledged that community centres need to evolve their programming methods in an attempt to reach out to broader communities of the city of Winnipeg⁴⁸. Finally, the GCWCC acknowledged the need to develop suitable facilities for flexibility in providing programs to the citizens of Winnipeg. It is understood by the organization that the efficient use of pre-existing space needs to be accomplished and that a more contemporary mix of facilities is required to meet citizen needs⁴⁹.

Plan 2025 outlines its strategies for mitigating the problem of lack of volunteers and qualified workers. One such strategy involves the collaboration between community centres and the GCWCC to create resources such as how-to manuals and standardized job descriptions to better outline responsibilities of volunteers and workers⁵⁰. The GCWCC also emphasizes the staff model of community centres that is subject to periodic review by the GCWCC. The GCWCC also advocates collaboration with schools to set up programs whereby students are able

⁴⁷ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025*. Strategic Plan, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (14) 2009.

⁴⁸ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025*. Strategic Plan, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (16) 2009.

⁴⁹ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025*. Strategic Plan, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (18) 2009.

⁵⁰ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025*. Strategic Plan, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (24) 2009.

to obtain community service hours or credits through work with a local community centre. There is also emphasis placed on improving communication and advertising of volunteer opportunities in community centres through newsletters and websites to better enhance community awareness.

The GCWCC advocates the sharing of volunteers between community centres, the creation of full-time positions with attractive salaries within community centres, and the offering of training upgrade programs to better improve the skills and qualifications of volunteers. The GCWCC also understands that increased support will be needed from the City of Winnipeg government in the form of additional funding to allow community centres to further develop. Finally, the GCWCC acknowledges that efforts will be needed in terms of collaboration between community centres under one united Board of Directors. The goal of this is to build off of various strengths while addressing weaknesses of individual community centres⁵¹.

Conclusion:

Like the WVCCS, the GCWCC uses an overarching model of organization to integrate community centres across the city. This would seem to allow for greater coordination and sharing of resources between various neighbourhood groups but presents problems of financial sustainability. The model also allows for formal organizations at the grass roots level that serves to provide locals with a voice to aid in programs and initiatives. The biggest problems for the model are the lack of financial resources and adequate amounts of qualified volunteers and staff. This model and the goals of Plan 2025 serve to better create programs to reflect the needs of the population and represent a more bottom up approach to the development of neighbourhood

⁵¹ Centres, General Council of Winnipeg Community. *Plan 2025*. Strategic Plan, Winnipeg: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres, (24) 2009.

cohesion. In addition, the plans to provide more adequate training and to create more official and standardized positions serves to better influence human and social capital of individuals which would play an important part in developing community capacity for programming. Finally, the GCWCC and Plan 2025 show how service providers such as the government can be integrated within a community centre project through the provision of funding. Although this means that the government officially owns these centres, the model in place allows for a more collaborative approach between community centre and government to programming and the maintenance and administration of individual community centres.

The rationale behind the choosing of the GCWCC and Plan 2025 is the role that local government can play in owning/ funding a community centre project. By taking a joint ownership approach, the GCWCC has ensured long term government financial support while still retaining a degree of autonomy for the individual community centres. This model could also be useful in allowing the George Street Community Hub project take on an open principle that could prevent issues of inclusivity by being partially administered by a secular government institution. This could increase the range of groups who could be included in the project/ attending programs run by the community centre and greatly increase the size of the community and create more commitment of community members.

Hub Governance Models:

Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc. Report on Community Hub Governance

The Public Interest Strategy and Communication Inc. Report on Community Hub Governance report was initiated in 2008 to support the development of community hubs in

Toronto. The aim of the report is to provide a number of basic models for community hub governance, identify strategies for community engagement and working in successful partnerships. As such, the report was developed to be a reference to community hubs in developing their own governance structures, partnership agreements, and space allocation policies⁵².

The report has identified a number of different hub governance structures utilized by existing hubs within Toronto. These hub models include⁵³:

- 1) Staff-led organization: The community hub is governed by executives of the partner organizations operating out of the hub space who oversee management of the centre and determine its policies. This organization is responsive to the community through a client-centred service delivery approach that utilizes standard customer service strategies such as surveys. The benefits of this model are that the partner agencies can assure that their priorities are met while also minimizing liability risk. The drawbacks of this model are that it prevents the direct engagement of the community by making decision making processes largely controlled by staff.
- 2) Elected Board of Directors with limited membership: The community hub is governed by a member constituency board which is characterized by various stakeholders who are elected to sit on the board as representatives of the broader community. This board is able to elect members of a Board of Trustees and vote in an

⁵² Inc., Public Interest Strategy and Communications. "Community Hubs: governance, partnership and community." Toronto, (3) 2008.

⁵³ Inc., Public Interest Strategy and Communications. "Community Hubs: governance, partnership and community." Toronto, (4-5) 2008.

Annual General Meeting. The benefits of this model are that it ensures that stakeholders of the community hub are represented by community leaders while providing these leaders with experience. Thus the community tends to feel more engaged with the hub. The drawbacks of this model are that the exclusive nature of it makes it difficult for less established stakeholders to obtain representation thus limiting the breadth of community involvement.

- 3) Elected Board of Directors (standard not-for-profit model): The community hub is governed by an elected Board of Governors which directs the policies and strategies of the broader organization while senior staff members direct the operation of the hub. The benefits of this model are that it allows community members to add accountability to the operation of the hub. The drawbacks of this model are that it is not inclusive to members of the community who may not have the mechanisms to adequately represent their community while the organization itself may not have adequate resources to train these representatives.
- 4) Dual Stream Agency and Residence Steering Committee: The community hub is governed by a Steering Committee made up of residents and partner agencies with equal standing. Residents elected to this Steering Committee are done at community speak events while partner agencies are elected at agency meetings. The benefit of this model is that it fosters the shared ownership of the hub organization between residents and partner agencies and also allows for the development of community leaders thus improving community commitment and capacity building. The drawback of this model is that representatives of the Steering Committee might not fully represent every group within the community.

- 5) Participant-Based Model: The community hub is governed by a Board of Governors who are members of the broader community. The organization has supports in place to aid in the development of the leadership capabilities of the board members. The benefits of this model are that it allows community members to make key governance decisions and develop community capacity based upon the resources available to the organization. The drawbacks of this model are that it is very resource intensive and may not be sustainable in the long run. In addition, the members of the Board of Governance may be able to evade accountability mechanisms and may not adequately represent the broader community.
- 6) Severed Accountability Model: The community hub is governed by a governance body that is removed from the operating procedures (such as legal and financial obligations) by allocating these responsibilities to a trustee agency. This allows the governance board to focus on the broader policies and programs offered by the organization while operation procedures are covered by the trustee agency. The benefits of this model are that it limits the liabilities and risk often associated with having community members in the governance of the hub. The drawback of this model is that the voices of the broader community may be overlooked or subverted by the trustee agency.

The report identifies a number of strategies for engaging with a community for the development of a community hub. These strategies include⁵⁴:

⁵⁴ Inc., Public Interest Strategy and Communications. "Community Hubs: governance, partnership and community." Toronto, (9-10) 2008.

- 1) Community Sweeps: This strategy involves volunteers going out into the community to talk to residents about specific themes associated with the development of the community. This engagement involves informal interviews where volunteers write down any information which is then consolidated to the community at a large event (such as a BBQ).
- 2) Community Speaks: This strategy involves inviting residents to a community meal hosted by a community member where residents sit in small groups of about 6-8 people and discuss community issues with the help of a facilitator that is often accompanied by a creative exercise. Each group then reports back to the broader group and a discussion is facilitated in which only three questions are allowed to be asked to prevent confusion. This strategy has been identified as useful for allowing community members to identify gaps in service provision by the hub, community safety, and community space.
- 3) Grassroots Leaders Networks: This strategy involves the training of interested volunteers to go out into the community on a regular basis to talk to people about issues facing the neighbourhood and gather feedback for future initiatives.
- 4) Peer/Community Lead Programming: This strategy involves giving existing community members the resources and tools to develop their own programs and groups utilizing the space offered by the hub.
- 5) Governance Advisory Councils: This strategy involves the formation of Advisory Councils that represent residents, participants, and past clients that serve as consultants to the Board of Directors of the hub.

- 6) Program Advisory Councils: This strategy involves the formation of Program Advisory Councils that take an active role in the direction of programs offered by the hub. Membership to these councils is open to any resident interested in participating.
- 7) Strategic Planning: This strategy involves consulting community members for advice on the development of strategic plans for the hub through the use of resident focus groups, surveys, interviews with informants, and including community members in steering committees meetings.
- 8) Board Policies and By-Laws: This strategy includes the inclusion of policies grounded in principles of community involvement in the formal by-laws for the governance of the hub.
- 9) Board Recruitment Techniques: This strategy involves moving beyond word-of-mouth techniques for board recruitment to ensure a broad range of individuals make up the composition of the board.
- 10) Board Positions to Designated Stakeholders: This strategy involves the designation of certain positions on the governance board to specific stakeholders within the community.
- 11) Board linked with Community Engagement Staff: This strategy involves ensuring that members of the governance board are directly linked to the broader community to ensure communication between the two entities.
- 12) Capacity Building of Potential Community Leaders: This strategy involves ensuring that community members have opportunities to engage with the governance and operation of the hub by developing programs aimed at building their skills.

- 13) Client-Centred Community Service Model: This strategy involves the consultation of clients of services to shape the nature of the services provided by the hub. As such, this strategy involves allocating enough time to clients to ensure that their voices are heard.

Conclusion:

The report on community governance models and engagement strategies provides a number of useful models for governance and community engagement strategies within the process of development of a community hub. This report is a useful reference for community hub initiatives

Not-for-profit incorporation**Not-for-profit incorporator's handbook**

The Not-for-profit incorporator's handbook is provided by the Ontario provincial government to aid in the process of incorporating an organization as a not-for-profit by providing general information on the nature and composition of a not-for-profit organization while providing guidelines for not-for-profit incorporation. The handbook identifies a not-for-profit corporation as an artificial person or separate legal entity from the members that run the organization. This allows the organization itself to benefit from the ownership of property in its own name, the acquisition of rights obligations and liabilities, and the ability to enter contracts or personal agreements with other individuals and organizations⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ Government, Ontario Provincial. *Not-for-profit incorporator's handbook*. Handbook, Toronto: Ontario Provincial Government, (6) 2010.

The advantages of not-for-profit incorporation are that the organization is able to provide limited liability protection to its members and is able to own or rent property in its own name. This allows members of the organization to separate themselves from the debts and obligations of the organization while also allowing the organization to remain relatively unaffected by changes in membership composition. In addition, the organization is able to apply for certain funding from the government that otherwise may not be available to unincorporated organizations. The disadvantages of not-for-profit incorporation are that the constitution and by-laws of the organization must be governed by the Corporations Act and the organization must report information to the government. Failure to apply by these rules could result in penalties for the corporation that could potentially result in a cancellation of the incorporated designation⁵⁶.

Critical Analysis:

Within the context of the George Street Hub Project, incorporation has the potential to provide a number of advantages to the overall development of the hub. From a financial perspective, incorporating as a not-for-profit would allow the hub to access funding that would otherwise not be available as a not-for-profit organization. Increased access to government funding could supplement funding the church receives as a religious institution and allow for greater development. From a community engagement perspective, by incorporating the hub as a separate legal entity (with its own unique name), the hub would be able to demonstrate that it is a separate entity with a separate mandate from the church. This could potentially allow for increased participation from members of the community who are not affiliated with the church itself and may be skeptical of engaging with the organization if it is closely tied to the church.

⁵⁶ Government, Ontario Provincial. Not-for-profit incorporator's handbook. Handbook, Toronto: Ontario Provincial Government, (7-8) 2010.

As identified above, the disadvantages of incorporation include the requirement of the corporation to govern itself according to the legalities of the Corporation Act. This could have the potential of preventing community members from developing a unique governance model that reflects the needs of the community and may limit participation. This would hinder the development of grass-roots initiatives of the hub and undermine a principle element of community hubs. However, by incorporating the George Street Hub, the George Street United Church could potentially open up direct channels and links to the provincial government allowing greater coordination and collaboration between the church and the government.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, not-for-profit incorporation provides a number of advantages and disadvantages to the development of the George Street Hub project. However, the biggest concern about incorporation is how it would fit into the overall mandate of the church congregation's vision for the community hub. Not-for-profit incorporation is just one route that could potentially be taken but there are also instances of community hubs operating without any sort of not-for-profit designation.

Summary of Findings

The ‘Investigating Community Hubs’ report has sought to develop an understanding of community hubs and the role they play in developing community capacity to engage in socially cohesive initiatives with a focus on community hub models that allow for this to occur. Each case study has identified a number of key elements for the successful development of community hubs in neighbourhoods:

St. Andrew’s Place provides an example of the commercialization of a community hub to develop a relatively sustainable financial model that is not wholly reliant on government or external funding for support. This allows the community hub to generate its own revenues to cover its own property and maintenance costs but at the same time is not necessarily inclusive to residents in the community (who may be unable to afford services). In addition, St. Andrew’s Place provides an example of the utilization of church space for the linking of the church congregation to the broader community. This has been done by making the community hub a separate entity from the congregation but also developing a close relationship between the church and the community hub. This helps to simultaneously distance the hub from the congregation to avoid potentially excluding people who are not of the same faith as the church but also shows a close connection with the congregation to encourage interaction between the faith community and the Sudbury community. This is an important point for the George Street United Church to consider while developing a community hub utilizing church space and while commercialization may not be a viable option for the project, establishing the hub as a separate entity may be important for successfully engaging with the broader Peterborough community.

The Rideau Heights Community Hub implementation plan provides an example of the various methods that can be used to engage with a community during the hub development

process. By utilizing pre-existing community leaders, tactics of interaction (such as porch talks), and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the community, the Rideau Heights Community Hub plan shows that the development of a community hub is often a long and extensive process that requires patience and understanding on behalf of the leaders involved. Like the East Scarborough Storefront Hub, the Rideau Heights plan also demonstrates how the process of developing a community hub is analogous to the community that it is being implemented which requires a model of development that is specific to the community needs.

The East Scarborough Storefront Hub provides an example of a community hub model that allows for the integration of service providers and the development of community capacity building and engagement by incorporating both volunteer roles (in the overall governance of the hub) and paid staff roles (in the operation of the hub). This allows the East Scarborough Storefront Hub to effectively engage with the surrounding community and provide leadership opportunities for community members to address community needs while providing paid staff positions to allow for the efficient organization and implementation of those services. The East Scarborough Storefront Hub also demonstrates that although there is a general understanding of the definition and role of community hubs as providing services to the community, the nature of these community hubs needs to be specific to the community that in which it is being implemented.

The London Community Hub Implementation Plan provides an example of the role that municipal government can play in the development of community hubs. Not only does this entail government support through funding but also in overall organization of community hubs to effectively create web of hubs across a city to allow for effective coordination and communication between individual hubs. Similarly, the Toronto report on community hubs

provides an example of some of the issues facing individual hubs (such as a lack of coordination and information sharing between hubs) and the role that the municipal government can play in mitigating these problems.

The West Vancouver Community Centres and Services Society and the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres provide examples of the differences in understandings of community hubs within Canada. Both of these case studies demonstrate how municipal governments in Western provinces have taken an active role in the development of community hubs while also supporting the development of grass-roots models of community engagement to ensure efficient provision of services and encouragement of local leadership. A key difference in these models is how they divide the city up into sectors for community hub development. This allows for the compartmentalization of community hubs initiatives that allow for effective organization and allocation of resources from the municipal government. The biggest concern of this model is ensuring that community leadership is maintained throughout the development process and that the municipal government does not monopolize the decision making processes of each hub.

The hub governance model report provides a useful table outlining various hub governance models and community engagement tactics that can be utilized by hub development projects to understand the needs of the community and develop an effective model of organization that reflects the leadership styles and requirements of the community. In addition, having each hub model outlined with its strengths and weaknesses allows for an interesting comparison that is useful when it comes to applying a hub governance model for a specific community.

Conclusions

Based on the case studies presented in this report, a number of key elements have been defined as being inherent to the success of a community hub project. These include:

- 1) It should be recognized that the process of developing a community hub is a long and intensive one that requires an extensive amount of research and understanding of the needs of a community in order to provide services to adequately address these needs. In addition, it should also be recognized that developing a community hub is a constantly changing process and one that does not end when the hub is physically developed. Hub leaders need to be able to ensure that they are flexible enough to meet needs of the community; especially if those needs change.
- 2) Success of community hubs is based on leveraging the power of pre-existing neighbourhood networks and community leaders. Successfully leveraging this power requires utilizing tactics for engaging with the community that are inherent of the community itself.
- 3) Although utilizing the power of the community is a key element, developing relationships with service providers is also crucial for having partnerships that allow community hubs to provide services to the community.
- 4) There are a variety of models for achieving sustainability of a community hub. These can include commercial models (St. Andrew's Place), community membership models (Winnipeg and West Vancouver), and a strictly affordable service provision model (East Scarborough Storefront Hub).

- 5) There are a wide range of governance models for community hubs (as outlined by the Public Interest Strategy and Communications Report on Community Hub governance). Each of these models has different strengths and weaknesses based on its composition. The most successful hubs seem to incorporate the roles of paid staff for efficiency in programming and volunteer governance structures for policies and strategic plans.
- 6) Utilizing government support can be useful for obtaining funding and allowing for broader organization and communication with other community hubs in the municipality. Pursuing government support should be done so with caution to prevent community hub decision making processes being stripped from the local community and absorbed into the broader government bureaucracy.
- 7) With reference to point 5, government funding appears to be lacking for the development of community hubs due to cutbacks in government budgets. Although a community hub cannot change government funding policy, there should be attempts at making the hub initiative attractive to funding (such as incorporating a community hub as a not-for-profit or charitable organization).
- 8) With reference to point 7, not-for-profit incorporation of the community hub could potentially allow the hub to access and apply for funding that it otherwise would not be able to access as an unincorporated organization. However, pursuing this designation needs to be done with caution to prevent the undermining of the grass-roots principles of community hub development.
- 9) Within the context of the George Street United Church, utilizing church space for development of a community hub may require a degree of independence of the hub from the congregation to allow for effective engagement with the broader community

(especially with members that are not part of the same religious community). This may require making the hub a separate legal entity from the church itself (such as through incorporation).

Recommendations for the George Street Hub Project

Based on the research conducted and the conclusions that were reached by this report, a number of recommendations come to mind for the development of the George Street Hub Project.

- 1) This report recommends that the leaders and members of the steering committee for the hub project make long-term efforts to develop strong relationships with the members of the community and the intended users of the community hub. This will involve a long and intensive process that may require different strategies for engaging with the community. Although the barbeque held by the church was a useful strategy for getting residents of the local community out to discuss ideas for hub programs, it provided a limited picture of the issues faced by the community. Utilizing active strategies (such as community sweeps and community talk events) would be useful for continuously engaging with the community at regular intervals to ensure relationships between the church and the community are strong.
- 2) The plan for developing a community hub utilizing pre-existing church space is an excellent idea for efficiently using otherwise underused space to engage with the community. The main issue with this is that community members may be skeptical to engage with the community hub especially if they are not a part of the George Street

United Church congregation or are members of a different faith community. This has the potential of limiting the possible number of community members who could engage with the community hub. With the exception of St. Andrew's Place, all of the community hubs and hub models presented in this report have been implemented in physical locations identified as being religiously neutral or secular. Even St. Andrew's Place has made efforts to distance it from the St. Andrew's Church congregation (such as naming the organization slightly differently). It is recommended by this report that the George Street United Church congregation distance development of the community hub from the congregation itself to ensure that members of the community feel that the hub is not being directly utilized by the congregation to expand its numbers.

- 3) Community hubs that have achieved long-term sustainability have focused on providing services to the people of the community versus simply running programs. This requires the development and maintenance of relationships with service providers within the city itself to provide these programs. It is recommended by this report that the leaders and steering committee of George Street Hub Project focus on developing relationships with service providers in the city of Peterborough so that these services can be offered to the members of the community which provides a number of benefits to both the residents and service providers. For service-providers, being able to use another geographical space within the city of Peterborough to deliver services allows them to reach out to people in other areas of the city that the service provider may not have the physical resources or capacity to achieve on its

- own. For residents, having a space that provides services that is closer to home allows them to access these services that they otherwise may not have the capability to do so.
- 4) Because the plan for the community hub is to have it implemented in church space, governance for the hub should focus on the creation of a governing body that is comprised of members of the community (who are not members of the church), members of the church congregation and possibly service providers. This will ensure that the interests of the various stakeholders will be represented when determining the development of policy of the community hub. It is recommended that the community hub utilize a model such as the Participant-Based Model, the Dual-Stream Agency Residence Model or combining elements of both to form a governance model that is unique to the George Street Hub. These two models focus on ensuring that governance is placed in the hands of residents and stakeholders of the community hub (versus having a separate legal entity do it). This allows the congregation to retain a degree of power in deciding the policy of the hub while simultaneously allowing members of the community and service providers take an active role in hub governance.

Appendix #1: Literature Review on Social Cohesion

How does one define social cohesion? How does one know whether a community is socially cohesive or not? How can we develop tools and strategies to engage our communities to develop social cohesion? These questions are very interesting and often difficult to comprehend and yet they play such an important role in developing community projects aimed at pursuing this notion of “social cohesion”. The goal of this literature review is to synthesize and critically analyze a number of academic writings regarding the development of social cohesion for urban communities. This will be done by first attempting to unpack a number of ambiguous and loaded terms that are often used in social cohesion projects. Understanding what a community is, what social cohesion is, and how to mobilize and maximize community capacity to engage in socially cohesive projects aimed at creating inclusive neighbourhoods will be the main focus of this literature review. In addition, this literature review will analyze various models that have been theorized or implemented to mobilize and maximize community capacity to ensure long term commitment to socially cohesive projects and community development. The purpose is to discover the most ideal model for ensuring community commitment to socially cohesive projects that will ensure long term participation in building inclusive and socially cohesive neighbourhoods.

This paper will be divided into five sections. First, the literature review will critically analyze a number of articles regarding the definition of what a community is. The purpose is to treat a “community” like a definable unit that is subject to change based on its overall objective. In relation to the “Investigating Neighbourhood Cohesion Project”, the community is the centre for all action and is the unit that is affected by its own actions. Second, the literature review will

discuss a number of articles regarding the definition of “social cohesion” and critically analyze the arguments made by these articles. The goal is to treat “social cohesion” as a long term objective that a community strives to achieve. Third, the literature review will analyze the definitions of “community capacity” and methods that serve to generate “community capacity” as a factor contributing to the development of social cohesion for a community. Fourth, the definitions of these terms will be synthesized to provide an understanding of how a community model effectively accommodates these aspects. Finally, the paper will analyze a number of models that have been proposed for developing community capacity and promoting social cohesion.

Section 1: How can ‘community’ be understood?

There are a number of different definitions regarding the nature of a community. Robert Chalskin and Mark Joseph refer to a community as a both a spatial unit (although it is often difficult to determine) and a social unit. As such, they determine that a community serves as a functional site for the production and consumption of goods and services, but also a site where the development of processes such as socialization, education, religion, and social support occur. For these authors, these developments are shaped by actors within the community as a response to the actions of actors in the broader scope of the political economy⁵⁷. Similarly, Simmons et. al. define three aspects of community which include community as a spatial unit, community as an identity, and community as a group of people with similar interests or issues⁵⁸. Karen DeMasi and Mary Ohmer define community as having a number of different elements that include communities as a focus of association (religious groups, gender, race, etc.), communities as

⁵⁷ Chalskin, Robert, and Mark Joseph. "Building "Community" in Mixed-Income Developments." *Urban Affairs Review*. 45.3 (2010): 300.

⁵⁸ Simmons, Annie, Rebecca Reynolds, and Boyd Swinburn. "Defining Community Capacity building: Is it possible?." *Preventive Medicine*. 52. (2011): 196.

systems of norms, values and moral codes that provide a sense of identity, and communities that form around a spatial location⁵⁹.

There are a number of similarities between these definitions of community in that they all acknowledge that a community can represent a spatial geographical space but that they also can represent omnipresent forces of social norms, values, and identities that compel individuals to come together to form communities and influence the nature of these communities. These forces and the impetus for organizing around them are socially constructed by the tentative members of the specific community in response to their perceptions of the world around them. Understanding communities in this way serves to create a holistic approach to defining communities and allows for more intensive analysis of what a community is.

Section 2: How can ‘social/ neighbourhood cohesion’ be understood?

Social cohesion is an interesting term that, like community, has a number of definitions and is often ambiguous to understand. Kelly Koonce acknowledges that the ambiguity surrounding the term “social cohesion” has invited differing definitions over the years. These have included understanding social cohesion as having certain ideals such as equitable distribution of wealth and resources, universal community participation, and democratic ideals and practices. However, Koonce argues that social cohesion needs to be more narrowly defined as “a measure of the degree of trust members of a society in each other and society itself and their willingness to cooperate with each other, manifested in voluntary actions that are in

⁵⁹ DeMasi, Karen, and Mary Ohmer. "Approaches to Community Organizing and Their Relationship to Consensus Organizing." Trans. Array Consensus Organizing: A Community Development Workbook. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc., 2009. 6

accordance with social norms". Koonce emphasizes that these societal actions need to be voluntary and coercion to perform them is not acceptable in a socially cohesive society⁶⁰.

Forrest and Kearns provide a slightly less rudimentary definition of social cohesion and argue that social cohesion is defined as consisting of common values, civic culture, social order and social control, social solidarity, etc. They continue to argue that the neighbourhood becomes a centre for social cohesion as it is here where domestic activities and leisure and recreational activities take place⁶¹. This differs from Koonce's argument about the definition of social cohesion and indeed would be a definition that Koonce would want to avoid due to the ambiguity of how Forrest and Kearns define social cohesion.

Andreas Novy et. al argue that although there is a difference in opinions in scholarly circles as to what social cohesion is defined as, there is the general belief that social cohesion is goal or direction that society moves towards. In the broadest sense, they argue that a socially cohesive community in a city is one where people have the opportunity to live differently but at the same time have the ability to live with the differences of their neighbours⁶². This definition takes a different perspective than those of the previous two authors in that social cohesion is seen as the achievement of toleration between individuals that allows them to co-exist on fairly peaceful terms. The strength of this argument is in its broad reach but its weakness lies in its ambiguity.

Finally, Kath Hulse and Wendy Stone analyze the definition of social cohesion from a policy lens and provide a number somewhat similar definitions used by various countries when

⁶⁰ Koonce, Kelly. "Social Cohesion as the Goal: Can Social Cohesion Be Directly Pursued?" *Peabody Journal of Education*. 86. (2011): 145.

⁶¹ Forrest, Ray, and Ade Kearns. " Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighbourhood" *Urban Studies* . 38.12 (2001): 2129.

⁶² Novy, Andreas, Daniela Coimbra Swiatek, and Frank Moolaert. "Social Cohesion: A Conceptual and Political Elucidation." *Urban Studies*. 49.9 (2011): 1874.

developing government policy aimed at promoting social cohesion. The two authors note that the definition of social cohesion between various countries is often similar and encompasses principles such as shared values, mutual support, sense of belonging, cooperation, and solidarity (Hulse and Stone 110-118). They argue that social cohesion is a 'bottom up' model that sees the impetus behind the development of social cohesion coming from the members of the community who are directly affected by it versus coming from the lofty positions of the government⁶³.

The four articles mentioned above demonstrate the difficulties that arise when attempting to develop a definition of social cohesion and definitions can greatly vary. From a theoretical perspective (provided by Novy et. al and Koonce), all the elements of social cohesion can be boiled down into a fundamental theory as to how it should look. The creation of fundamental ideas serves to create a broad ranging ideal of what social cohesion is. The strength in this understanding of social cohesion lies in its broad range and relative simplicity in summing up what social cohesion looks like. In addition, the ambiguity surrounding the definition indicates that there may be a complex variety of factors that contribute to social cohesion and therefore discourages 'cutting corners' and overlooking certain perspectives or interests when developing tools and strategies aimed at building social cohesion. However, the rudimentary nature of this perspective and the ambiguity it generates serves to perplex would be participants from understanding viable course of action to develop social cohesion.

Alternatively, the perspectives of social cohesion provided by Hulse, Stone, Forrest, and Kearns create a somewhat more pragmatic and practical approach to defining social cohesion. These authors determine that social cohesion can be achieved by attaining certain objectives that

⁶³ Hulse, Kath, and Wendy Stone. "Social Cohesion, Social Capital, and Social Exclusion." Policy Studies. 28.2 (2007): 118.

are broken down into almost comprehensive steps. Although this perspective does allow for a more policy based approach to developing social cohesion, the ambiguity surrounding the definition is still observable. In addition, by providing a sort of “list” of objectives to pursue to develop social cohesion, these articles create the conditions in which certain objectives or goals may not be considered. For example, if common values are considered an element of social cohesion then it makes sense to develop approaches aimed at creating this commonality. However, this may overlook the importance of diversity in creating social cohesion and may serve to hinder the efforts of even the most altruistic participants.

Section 3: How can ‘community capacity building’ be understood?

Simmons, Reynolds, and Swinburn determine that community capacity incorporates a number of elements. They define it as a process with an intended outcome that is a collection of domains, characteristics, aspects, capabilities. Community capacity is also determined as being built upon existing capacities such as human capital, organizational resources, and social capital⁶⁴. From this perspective, the ability to build and maintain strong community capacity requires having strong existing capacities from which to build upon. Community capacity is not the groundwork for building social cohesion but is rather a stepping stone or process to the goal.

Betty Hounslow provides a number of possible definitions for the meaning of “community capacity building”. Community capacity building can be defined as “the degree to which a community can develop, implement, and sustain actions which allow it greater control over its physical, social, economic, and cultural environments⁶⁵. This definition of community capacity provides a contextual sense of community capacity and determines that community

⁶⁴ Simmons, Annie, Rebecca Reynolds, and Boyd Swinburn. "Defining Community Capacity building: Is it possible?." *Preventive Medicine*. 52. (2011): 196-198.

⁶⁵ Littlejohns, Lori, and Donna Thompson. "Cobwebs: Insights into community capacity and its relation to health outcomes" *Community Development Journal*. 36.1 (2001): 30-41.

capacity building is an end toward which a community strives for. This perspective differs from Simmons et. al in that community capacity is not a means to an ends (that Simmons et. al claim) but is rather an end itself and that social cohesion could be seen as a means to developing community capacity building. This is an interesting perspective and raises the notion that community capacity building positively affects the development of social cohesion and vice versa and that they both are mutually reinforcing forces for developing a strong community in general.

Section 4: What does all of this mean?

From the authors and articles cited above, developing models for effectively building community capacity must focus on empowering the members of a specific community to allow them to take the leadership to brainstorm, develop, and implement their own needs for the community. The first step in this process would be to identify the community and understand what issues exist within it. This would provide a contextual background and allows community members to identify what it is that is most important to them to provide the community with an overall objective on which to focus its efforts and energies on.

Second, the community needs to know what neighbourhood cohesion means to it. This could almost be re-phrased to asking ‘what is the ideal atmosphere of the community that members would like to see?’ or more simplistically ‘what do members of the community want their community to look and feel like?’ This is most likely too difficult to address directly to members of a community for open discussion but knowing the issues and overall goals for the community may be a good start to identifying what the community considers as positive development. For example, a community may value the development of young families and therefore members may see their community as working towards ensuring that there are

programs for the healthy development of these families. Alternatively, a community may decide that the care of the elderly is lacking within the community and members may see their community as providing programs and services for these people to mitigate this discrepancy. Knowing what issues exist allows a community to identify the “non-ideal” state of their community and therefore allows them to develop projects aimed at creating the “ideal” state.

Finally, the community would need to develop a model for organization to effectively govern community initiatives and develop ideas for projects to tackle for the community. Emphasis should be placed on ensuring that all members of the community are welcome and enfranchised in the decision-making processes yet the organization is formal enough to ensure that participation is effectively governed. There should also be a focus on communicating with the members of the community. This would allow for a wide breadth of ideas and opinions and allow a more open ground for bridging any gaps between various demographics within the community. This would also allow for a more formal and well developed organization that would have an easier time gaining legitimacy from other community actors (such as the government or private businesses) that may open doors for collaboration and sharing of resources. As such, efforts should be made to include these other actors in these organizations. Finally, this would also allow a community to directly organize and mobilize its resources and labour towards projects for the community. Having a physical space may be beneficial for bringing these groups together as it would allow members to discuss issues in person and provide a focal point for all community organization.

Section 5: Models for community development

The West Vancouver Community Centres Society

The West Vancouver Community Centres Society (WVCCS) is a not-for-profit society that is governed by the community members of the District of West Vancouver with the goal of being a centre for community leadership and participation that is aimed at creating social, recreational, and cultural aspects of community in West Vancouver. The society oversees and manages the operation of the West Vancouver Community Centre and the Aquatic Centre. The society requires a small payment of \$3 for individuals or \$5 for families for one year memberships in the community that can be renewed without any cost so long as it is done so before the membership expires. Memberships allow community members to register for programs and events run by affiliated community centres in West Vancouver⁶⁶.

Meetings in the society are governed by a formal 10 page constitution that defines positions and outlines the mission statement of the society, the structure of meetings, voting and participation rights, grounds for removal from the society, amendments to the constitution, borrowing rights, etc. The constitution allows for participation of members who are at least 16 years of age who either own property or are non-resident owners of real property in West Vancouver. This constitution is made available on the society's website and is accessible to anyone interested⁶⁷.

The WVCCS receives grants from five organizations: the United Way Canada (\$110,000), Recreation Foundation of BC (\$6,000), BC Parks and Recreation Association (\$300), West Vancouver Community Foundation (\$1,000), and the West Vancouver Community Foundation – Early Childhood Programs in West Vancouver (\$1,000). The money from these grants is also supplemented by the money received from membership fees from community

⁶⁶ "The Mission and Vision of the WVCCS." West Vancouver Community Centres Society: Mission and Vision. West Vancouver Community Centres Society, n.d. Web. 4 Dec 2012.

⁶⁷ "The Mission and Vision of the WVCCS." West Vancouver Community Centres Society: Mission and Vision. West Vancouver Community Centres Society, n.d. Web. 4 Dec 2012.

members. The WVCCS also receives donations from various private companies in the West Vancouver area⁶⁸.

The society also releases strategic plans (on its website) that outline its own initiatives for the broad community. One initiative was a survey that was to provide constructive criticism for the organization. The survey indicated that the WVCCS was strongly engaging with its community, had a diversity of programs, had a strong ability to leverage funds through grants and fundraising, and had a board of directors who were actively committed and diverse. However, the survey also indicated that the WVCCS suffered from a small number of members, low visibility of the WVCCS in the society, lack of financial resources, and minimal staff resources. The WVCCS outlined in its plan its initiatives to mitigate the weaknesses of the organization to better engage with the community⁶⁹.

The WVCCS provides an interesting example of how the conditions mentioned earlier in the paper regarding social cohesion can be met through a formal community organization with physical space. First, the WVCCS uses a method of determining its community by implementing a formal membership structure for events and initiatives but also by providing eligibility requirements for participation in meetings. This enables the WVCCS to identify members of the community who are interested in being involved and allows them to identify the issues and goals of these members. While this method may be useful for identifying a community, it may be exclusionary to those who are unwilling to pay the membership fees to join. Second, the WVCCS defines what it wants its community to look and feel like (the atmosphere). This enables the WVCCS to identify what its “ideal” community would be and to brainstorm,

⁶⁸ "The Mission and Vision of the WVCCS." West Vancouver Community Centres Society: Mission and Vision. West Vancouver Community Centres Society, n.d. Web. 4 Dec 2012.

⁶⁹ Brink, Barbara, and Sue Ketler. West Vancouver. West Vancouver Community Centres Society. "2011-2015 Strategic Plan." West Vancouver: 7, 2011.

develop, and implement programs, initiatives, and events to allow for the creation of this community (thus creating a model of neighbourhood cohesion). Finally, the WVCCS has a formal organizational structure that is manifested in a constitution that serves to legitimize the organization and enable it to command funding and donations from a variety of not-for-profit organizations, private companies, and the government.

The rationale behind choosing the WVCCS is that it provides an example of a stand-alone community centre that is supported by a number of partners. The WVCCS also provides an example of a formal organizational structure that is useful in mobilizing resources and people towards projects, initiatives, and programs. In addition, the creation of a formal organizational constitution, the WVCCS provides itself with a governance structure that can create greater legitimacy in the eyes of potential funders/ partners. This would allow for more collaboration between the community centre and the city in general and greatly increase the capacity of the community centre to engage with its city.

The General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres – Plan 2025

The General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) Plan 2025 is an initiative started by the GCWCC to support and sustain a volunteer base for recreation services, guide the delivery of recreation programs, and direct the development of recreation facilities⁷⁰. Plan 2025 is the GCWCC response to the City of Winnipeg's Recreation, Leisure, and Library Facilities Policy (RLLF) to reconfigure its recreation, library, and leisure facilities in a way that is more responsive to the needs of the locals. The City of Winnipeg has officially capped the size of community centre space and instead wishes to see the strengthening and optimization of

⁷⁰ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 5, 2009.

community centres in Winnipeg. The approach of the GCWCC is focused on the role individuals play in driving community centre programs which in turn drives the facilities. In other words, the GCWCC emphasizes that it is impossible to plan for facilities without an understanding of the programs that are to be run through those facilities and these programs cannot be planned without knowing the needs of the people that the programs are for⁷¹.

Currently, community centres in Winnipeg are not run by municipality workers but rather members from the community. Members of the Board of Directors are elected by members of the community they serve. It has been noted by the GCWCC that meeting the complex needs of the people of Winnipeg has become an increasingly difficult task and recruiting new volunteers for programs is also becoming an issue. Maintaining qualified staff is also becoming an issue due to financial constraints placed upon the organization itself. The GCWCC is mandated to provide a wide range of recreational and leisure programs that are suited to the needs of the residents living within their designated area. As such, it is acknowledged by the GCWCC that community centres need assistance in identifying demographic changes and that emerging trends within the community thus require collaboration and cooperation with service providers. However, it has been noted that establishing connections with service providers has been hampered by the inability of volunteers to meet during the average working day⁷². The GCWCC identifies the annual facility operating grant that community centres in Winnipeg receive from the City of Winnipeg which is the official owner and insurer of the facilities. However, despite being owned by the government community centres in Winnipeg are responsible for first line maintenance and

⁷¹ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 5, 2009.

⁷² City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 5, 2009.

administration costs including providing programming for the community and hiring staff for the facilities⁷³.

The GCWCC has divided up the city of Winnipeg into community centre districts. These districts were drawn out in close alignment with the boundaries of Winnipeg's various political communities. Each of these districts is then further divided into neighbourhood clusters which enable the collection of information through the city government. In addition, each district planning committee includes representation from each of these neighbourhood clusters when making decisions about community centre initiatives and plans⁷⁴.

Plan 2025 outlines a number of concerns for the community centres in Winnipeg. Of primary concern was the ability to recruit and retain volunteers and qualified staff. This was linked to insufficient funds commanded by the community centres themselves. There was also the concern that programming was not reaching out to the entire communities of Winnipeg as it has been solely focused on providing organized sports. The GCWCC acknowledged that community centres need to evolve their programming methods in an attempt to reach out to broader communities of the city of Winnipeg⁷⁵. Finally, the GCWCC acknowledged the need to develop suitable facilities for flexibility in providing programs to the citizens of Winnipeg. It is understood by the organization that the efficient use of pre-existing space needs to be accomplished and that a more contemporary mix of facilities is required to meet citizen needs⁷⁶.

⁷³ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 5, 2009.

⁷⁴ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 14, 2009.

⁷⁵ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 16, 2009.

⁷⁶ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 18, 2009.

Plan 2025 outlines its strategies for mitigating the problem of lack of volunteers and qualified workers. One such strategy involves the collaboration between community centres and the GCWCC to create resources such as how-to manuals and standardized job descriptions to better outline responsibilities of volunteers and workers⁷⁷. The GCWCC also emphasizes the staff model of community centres that is subject to periodic review by the GCWCC. The GCWCC also advocates collaboration with schools to set up programs whereby students are able to obtain community service hours or credits through work with a local community centre. There is also emphasis placed on improving communication and advertising of volunteer opportunities in community centres through newsletters and websites to better enhance community awareness. The GCWCC advocates the sharing of volunteers between community centres, the creation of full-time positions with attractive salaries within community centres, and the offering of training upgrade programs to better improve the skills and qualifications of volunteers⁷⁸. The GCWCC also understands that increased support will be needed from the City of Winnipeg government in the form of additional funding to allow community centres to further develop. Finally, the GCWCC acknowledges that efforts will be needed in terms of collaboration between community centres under one united Board of Directors. The goal of this is to build off of various strengths while addressing weaknesses of individual community centres⁷⁹.

Like the WVCCS, the GCWCC uses an overarching model of organization to integrate community centres across the city. This would seem to allow for greater coordination and sharing of resources between various neighbourhood groups but presents problems of financial

⁷⁷ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 24, 2009.

⁷⁸ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 24, 2009.

⁷⁹ City of Winnipeg. General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres. "Plan 2025 Phase Three: Action Plan and Recommendations." Winnipeg: 24, 2009.

sustainability. The model also allows for formal organizations at the grass roots level that serves to provide locals with a voice to aid in programs and initiatives. The biggest problems for the model are the lack of financial resources and adequate amounts of qualified volunteers and staff. This model and the goals of Plan 2025 serve to better create programs to reflect the needs of the population and represent a more bottom up approach to the development of neighbourhood cohesion. In addition, the plans to provide more adequate training and to create more official and standardized positions serves to better influence human and social capital of individuals which would play an important part in developing community capacity for programming. Finally, the GCWCC and Plan 2025 show how service providers such as the government can be integrated within a community centre project through the provision of funding. Although this means that the government officially owns these centres, the model in place allows for a more collaborative approach between community centre and government to programming and the maintenance and administration of individual community centres.

The rationale behind the choosing of the GCWCC and Plan 2025 is the role that local government can play in owning/ funding a community centre project. By taking a joint ownership approach, the GCWCC has ensured long term government financial support while still retaining a degree of autonomy for the individual community centres. This model could also be useful in allowing the George Street Community Hub project take on an open approach to community involvement that could prevent issues of inclusivity by being partially administered by a secular government institution. This could increase the range of groups who could be included in the project/ attending programs run by the community centre and greatly increase the size of the community and create more commitment of community members.

The Trinity United Church and Community Centre is located in London, Ontario. The Church describes its commitment to openness to everyone regardless of their religious beliefs or practices, sexual orientation, skin colour, marital status or any other individual aspects that might be rejected by other churches. The Church advocates that its one golden rule is "...to treat others as we want to be treated". The mission statement of the church emphasizes the importance the members place on creating a safe, non-judgemental, and intergenerational community through partnerships with the various people from across the city. Although the church places emphasis on the influence of Christianity, it also emphasizes the importance community plays in developing well-rounded individuals and will therefore treat anyone with kindness who wishes to join the community⁸⁰.

Trinity Church is involved in a number of partnerships in the city of London including Clean Air Group, the Young at Heart Group, the 210 Group, the 61st Beaver Group, and a number of artists in the city (website). The church and community centre runs a number of events and programs in addition to regular sermons and include youth recreation opportunities and workshops for people interested. The Church holds regular meetings to discuss what is working well and to brainstorm ideas for the future.⁸¹

The church runs a number of programs with its community centre which include piano lessons, community karaoke nights, youth programs, workshops, community meals, and volunteer opportunities through its community centre space. Many events are run in preparation for particular holidays. The Church provides monthly newsletters on its website which outline

⁸⁰ "Mission Statement." About Us: Mission Statement. Trinity United Church and Community Centre, Web. 4 Dec 2012 <http://goldenrulechurch.ca/?doing_wp_cron=1354653432.1765799522399902343750>.

⁸¹ "Mission Statement." About Us: Mission Statement. Trinity United Church and Community Centre, Web. 4 Dec 2012 <http://goldenrulechurch.ca/?doing_wp_cron=1354653432.1765799522399902343750>.

various events occurring in the church and the community centre and also advertises church initiatives for members to get involved⁸².

Trinity United Church and Community Centre demonstrates the initiative of a church to incorporate various members of a community through principles of acceptance and the desire to run programs for the needs of community members. It also demonstrates the use of pre-existing space within a church to run community programs and initiatives. The values and principles of openness and acceptance of Trinity United Church closely reflect those of the George Street United Church and serve as an interesting comparison. In addition, the Trinity United Church has already achieved the goal of using its space for community activities⁸³.

Synthesizing this information into a model of community development would see the following⁸⁴:

- 1) Identify what the community is for the people in the project. This involves a common identity. Developing a community project in a church is helpful as the community is already defined by the values of the members in the congregation.
- 2) The development of a model of governance for the community may help to more effectively coordinate resources and manpower and allow for more collaboration between organizations. Emphasis should be placed on the enfranchisement of members of the community in the decision making processes of the project, programs, and initiatives. The inclusion of other actors (such as government officials

⁸² "Mission Statement." About Us: Mission Statement. Trinity United Church and Community Centre, Web. 4 Dec 2012 <http://goldenrulechurch.ca/?doing_wp_cron=1354653432.1765799522399902343750>.

⁸³ "Mission Statement." About Us: Mission Statement. Trinity United Church and Community Centre, Web. 4 Dec 2012 <http://goldenrulechurch.ca/?doing_wp_cron=1354653432.1765799522399902343750>.

⁸⁴ "Mission Statement." About Us: Mission Statement. Trinity United Church and Community Centre, Web. 4 Dec 2012 <http://goldenrulechurch.ca/?doing_wp_cron=1354653432.1765799522399902343750>.

- or private business owners) is ideal for developing ideas for their integration in the community project.
- 3) Identify what the community wants to achieve based on values and common identity. This may be difficult to address to an entire community but understanding the values of the community gives a starting point for further understanding what the community wants.
 - 4) Creating programs that allow for personal development of human and social capital provides a number of positive effects for the community. First it may help to encourage commitment from community members since participation will help them to develop their own individual skills. Second, this may encourage members to use their skills they obtained to aid in the development of programs for the community.

Although these are quite simplistic recommendations, they may help to provide a direction to the development of community projects aimed at mobilizing community capacity for developing social/ neighbourhood cohesion in a community.

The rationale behind the choosing of Trinity United Church is that it provides a case study that closely reflects the George Street United community centre project. It demonstrates how pre-existing church space can be used to run programs for the community at large. This is crucial to the George Street Community Hub project because it also reveals issues that may arise when developing a community centre in a church space (i.e. possible problems of inclusivity to people who do not follow the Christian faith). Like George Street United Church, Trinity United Church has taken an open door approach to people with different beliefs. This may serve to help the development of programs that include a diverse range of people from the Peterborough community.

In summary, this literature review has sought to determine the theoretical definitions of community, neighbourhood cohesion, and community capacity building in addition to looking at models that have been used to achieve the goals of community capacity building and neighbourhood cohesion. Based on the research conducted, models aimed at building community capacity to engage in neighbourhood initiatives aimed at neighbourhood cohesion need to understand the needs of the community in order to gain a context or insight into what the community values. This can be seen with the WVCCS, and the GCWCC where the cities in which these organizations run have divided up the city into geographical sections to better define the communities thus allowing a compartmentalization of community issues and needs to more effectively implement programs and initiatives aimed at addressing these issues. This can also be seen with the Trinity United Church and Community Centre where common values are centred around acceptance and tolerance of diversity but with a strong influence of the principles of Christianity.

Effective community models have also demonstrated formal organizational and governance structures. These have allowed for much more effective programming from the organizations and have enabled the creation of legitimacy in the eyes of government and private sector partners. In addition, the formal organizational structures demonstrated by the WVCCS and the GCWCC have allowed for more effective resource and manpower sharing between individual community centres that has the potential of greatly improving the integration of various actors within projects. Although Trinity Church somewhat lacks an organizational model of governance, the pre-existing church organization serves as a useful foundation for organizing programs and events for the community.

Community initiatives and programs run through the community centre would need to place emphasis on tapping into pre-existing areas of human and social capital in order to bridge gaps between various community groups and identities to establish a common community identity. However, emphasis should also be placed upon supporting and developing the human and social capital of members to ensure long term success. With the WVCCS, the GCWCC the creation of official and detailed positions allows for the development of human and social capital by providing a somewhat occupational framework for participating members. In addition, the GCWCC offers an interesting approach for standardizing certain positions to allow for consistency across the city.

Finally, the Trinity Church and Community Centre model demonstrates the initiative of using pre-existing church space to build a community centre initiative. The successes of this model would be in the efficient use of pre-existing space versus constructing new buildings that are often costly initiatives. In addition, membership with the church provides an excellent source for common identity that allows members of the church to identify what they value and what programs they wish to see. The only foreseeable issue with this model would come from the fact that the community centre is located in a Christian church. Although this may be good for encouraging participation from Christian religious practitioners, it may also exclude people who do not follow the Christian faith. The Trinity United Church subscribes to the value to treat everyone in their community equally regardless of their religious views but the affiliation with Christianity may still be a hindrance on full community participation.

In conclusion, the definitions of community capacity building and social cohesion are often difficult to discern and their ambiguity makes it difficult to understand their concrete meanings. However, this ambiguity also allows for communities to understand what social

cohesion means to them and to define them in the way that best reflects their needs as individuals and as collective members of society. As demonstrated by this paper, there have been a number of initiatives aimed achieving these goals within a community. As such, the fluid nature surrounding the definition of social cohesion may be more of a blessing than a curse and understanding what a community values and what it wants must be placed within the hands of the members of that community.

Appendix #2: ACE (Active, Creative, and Engaged) Communities Toolkit for community development

STEP 1: IGNITE AND INVITE OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE

A community development planning process typically begins in one of two ways. The first is a crisis that becomes the impetus for action. The second is general discontent and the identification of gaps, needs, issues, or trends that aren't being addressed. There is a sense that things either aren't working, or could be working better, and that change is required. Questions are being asked by those who are often referred to as the "early risers" or "early adapters". What assets can we build on? What can be done better? What is it that's falling between the cracks? What can be strengthened in the community for greater benefit? How can sectors or silos work together more effectively? Those raising the issues and questions may be elected officials, citizens, government staff, community organizations, or representatives of the business sector. Regardless of the specifics, they are community leaders (who may not even see themselves as

leaders) who are interested and committed to addressing real needs, or trends rather than simply reacting to symptoms⁸⁵.

One or more of these community leaders typically ignites a discussion and invites others (often other early risers or early adapters) to plan. This small group may serve simply to get things started, secure funding or generate political action. However in some cases they may evolve to become a change management team or steering committee for the resulting initiative.

STEP 2: SHARE STRENGTHS AND SUCCESSES

Evidence suggests that community planning initiatives are more successful when initiated and built from strengths and successes rather than from a needs perspective. The viewpoint of a “glass of water half full” rather than one that is half empty reminds participants that even if the situation looks bleak, there is always much to celebrate. This emphasis on strengths and successes sometimes referred to as assets, means the initiative begins from a positive perspective. As such it empowers participants, builds trust and relationships and, perhaps more importantly, reinforces the concept that the “wisdom is within”⁸⁶.

STEP 3: RESEARCH YOUR COMMUNITY

To plan effectively, it is important that the initial participants work collectively to obtain a solid and objective understanding of the existing situation from a systemic or more holistic perspective. Consequently, a community scan that focuses at a relatively high level needs to be implemented in order to better understand the overall community as a system, to take its “pulse”,

⁸⁵ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

⁸⁶ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

and to zero-in on priorities. Typically this isn't an in-depth assessment but rather more of a review or scan of existing plans, ideas and research, conversations and interviews with key informants, and other forms of information. Unlike many who will want to drill to the details, this stage of the planning will appeal more to those who are “big picture thinkers” who intuitively examine the system without finding it to be intimidating. Community leaders are more apt to be those who are addressing real needs, issues, or trends rather than simply reacting to symptoms⁸⁷.

STEP 4: DEFINE PRIORITIES

Once the community research or scan is complete, one or several priorities will begin to emerge. The priorities could range from those that are very broad such as the need for a community vision, to those that are more narrowly-focused or project-based such as trial development, youth initiatives, health promotion etc. Defining the priorities will also help determine the planning approach and the type of plan needed. Plans also vary from those that are very broad to those that are more focused⁸⁸.

STEP 5: ENGAGE OTHERS WHO NEED TO BE INVOLVED

If a community leader is going to be successful in making a difference in his or her community it's a safe bet it won't happen without identifying and working with others early in the planning process. Today's issues are complex and will typically require knowledge and resources from varying sectors, organizations, businesses, and individuals. Engaging others will

⁸⁷ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

⁸⁸ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

lead to organizations, businesses, and other partners who have a vested interest in working together to address the community issues, gaps or needs that have been identified. Or, they can be people, organizations or businesses who have resources that will help resolve the challenges you want to address. Partnership is often referred to as two or more organizations sharing resources to reach a common goal. To ensure you have identified all potential partners, you may want to use more than one strategy to develop a partner profile and/or checklist to ensure optimal diversity and representation⁸⁹.

STEP 6: CREATE VISION, VALUES, AND PRINCIPLES

Vision

A positive vision of the future is essential for providing meaning and direction to the present. It serves as a beacon in times of change, empowering people to solve problems and accomplish goals. A vision is an expression of vivid possibilities or the ideal futures state that describes in a very broad sense, where you want to go. This vision can be communicated through a variety of means – a statement, a series of descriptions, or a graphic depiction of what success would look like in the target year.

An effective vision defines success, inspires motivation, and imparts stability while providing a link to the past and a commitment to the future. It is a compelling description of what you want to become and the impact you wish to make. To be successful, a vision must be truly “owned” by those involved. It should resonate with everyone and make them feel proud and excited to be part of something worthwhile and much bigger than themselves. Consequently,

⁸⁹ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

generating a vision means working with others to create a shared mental image that brings people together in common purpose⁹⁰.

Values and Principles

Strong, healthy and innovative organizations and communities are those that reach out to their stakeholders to involve them in identifying and living by their values. *Values* are those things that really matter to each of us... the ideas and beliefs we hold as being of special quality, worth and importance.

Values explain what individuals, organizations or communities stand for and what will be made a priority as decisions are made.

In times of rapid change, values become increasingly important as a filter for prioritizing as well as how we invest our time and resources. In a community values are the benchmarks or the rights and responsibilities of a community and its citizens. As such they shape the future of a community as they align and encourage us to work for a common understanding.

Guiding principles are the statements that give an organization or community the conduct that they wish to follow.

Guiding principles are built on the core values and can be thought of as the values in action.

Guiding principles can relate to or focus on the overall community or organization or on different levels. For example, they can relate to work processes, customers and users, services and products, employees, etc. Generally, guiding principles need to be broad enough to

⁹⁰ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

encompass the whole community or organization and allow operational guidelines to fall from them⁹¹.

STEP 7: DESCRIBE PURPOSE

A purpose or mission is:

The “reason for being” ie. for an initiative, project, even, organization, coalition, community etc. It describes the function, often becomes the public description, remains constant, and is simple enough to be readily articulated by every individual involved. The mission or purpose can be determined by answering the following three questions:

1. *What* key benefit or outcome do we deliver?
2. For *whom* do we do it?
3. *How* will we do it? (core programs, services or events)

When undertaking the development of a purpose or mission statement, include feedback and input from all stakeholders to ensure the process – and its outcome – are both comprehensive and representative of your “reason for being”.

STEP 8: IDENTIFYING OUTCOMES

Outcomes are the desired results or impact of a process, program, project or activity initiated by stakeholders. Outcomes are about individual, organizational and community change. They can include change in knowledge, status or condition, behaviours, attitudes or values, or

⁹¹ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

skills. Any activity can have more than one outcome, and some may even be unanticipated.

However, effective identification of desired outcomes is essential for successful planning⁹².

Outcomes answer these distinct questions:

- What will stakeholders and the community have that they don't have now? Or,
- What will be lost if this is not done? Always, begin with the end in mind.

STEP 9: DEVELOP STRATEGIES AND TAKE ACTION

Strategies are broad actions moving you towards your vision, purpose and outcomes. Strategies normally provide direction for the next two to five years and take more than one year to accomplish. Strategies start from “where the community or organization is” and move towards the outcomes wanted in the future. The strategies recognize and address the challenges that prevent communities from achieving their outcomes. Once a challenge has been identified and an initiative undertaken to achieve change by engaging other, generating a vision, establishing values, developing outcomes and measure, the identified strategies can be implemented by developing action steps, roles, costs and timelines.

STEP 10: LEARN, CELEBRATE, AND TELL THE STORY

It's time to review and renew your plan. Making the time to discuss your initiative on a regular basis always brings significant benefits. Holding a meeting to reflect on the successes and challenges will surface learning, stories and reasons for celebrating. It will also lead to new outcomes and strategies for continuing to move forward. Participants will also be inspired and energized by what you have achieved. Documenting your learning, stories, and reasons for

⁹² A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.

celebrating ensures an ongoing record of your project or initiative, a review and devaluation of what you have done, and strategies for improving the next plan. This documentation can be implemented in various ways. Celebrate often! Create fun and innovative ways to celebrate accomplishments along the way as well as upon the completion of major milestones or activities⁹³.

⁹³ A Toolkit for Community Leaders: Tools for Community Development. Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. 2008.