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Gearing Up for Action

Great plans are well on their way to becoming reality in Thunder Bay's Simpson-Ogden neighbourhood. ANC Thunder Bay selected its five project pool recipients back in February, sharing out \$80,000 in funding.



Now, ANC Thunder Bay has received notice that it was one of six projects from a field of 24 across Canada selected to move to Phase II of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation Building Resilient Communities by Engaging Youth Initiative. Phase II requires a detailed submission by Nov. 15, but if successful will provide \$100,000 in matched funding for youth initiatives in the neighbourhood.

With this influx of resources, the careful planning phase is now accelerating into the exciting action phase. Feedback from the neighbourhood and the city at large is very positive. Representatives from the project are meeting with Thunder Bay's Mayor and City Manager in August to explore how what has begun in the Simpson-Ogden area can be expanded and incorporated into long-term, sustainable City initiatives.



[Thunder Bay's Simpson-Ogden Neighbourhood: Gifts in Unexpected Places](#)

Related Links:

[More on ANC Thunder Bay](#)
[Visit the Simpson-Ogden website](#)

Resources

Building Strong Neighbourhoods: A Study Circle Guide for Public Dialogue and Community Problem Solving – This guide focuses on the development of study circles, but is a helpful tool for anyone wishing to establish community dialogues in an effort to address community issues. Topics include establishing neighbourhood connections, neighbourhood issues to consider, and methods and best practices for strengthening the community. Download this resource [here](#).

A Community Decision-Making Cycle – This model, by H.J Aslin & V.A Brown, outlines different stages of the engagement process and describes which community engagement tools can be used to assist each stage, as well as how to move the process forward through to action. This is a useful framework because it helps people match community engagement tools with the right stage of decision-making. More on this model [here](#).

ANC Updates – What’s New

Tamarack launches learning plan for ANC year 2

Working closely with all ANC neighbourhoods, partners and sponsors, Tamarack has developed five learning themes for year two:

1. *Peer Learning* – The best learning comes from each other so this year’s events and tools will provide lots of opportunity for peer-to-peer learning.
2. *Neighbourhood Revitalization* – Tamarack will support the dissemination of neighbourhood revitalization principles– both from those who are highly regarded in the field and from the learnings of the five ANC sites and project partners.
3. *Community Building* – The learning plan for this year will support the United Way’s strategic focus on community impact.
4. *Movements for Change* – ANC partners will have the opportunity to participate in Tamarack’s 2006 learning theme: Thinking like a movement, Acting like an organization.
5. *Vibrant Communities Learning* – Tamarack will invite ANC partners to participate in selected Vibrant Communities’ learning events and will make resources available to sites and national partners.

These five learning themes will be reflected in a range of activities including site coaching, tele-learning sessions, e-newsletters, website updates, tools and face-to-face learning events.

Four key streams for Caledon in 2006

Caledon Institute of Social Policy is looking forward to another year of working with partners interested in strengthening neighbourhoods.

Building on last year’s policy work, the Institute will focus on four key areas:

1. Policy papers that explore key questions raised in year one;
2. Writing community stories with a special emphasis on how neighbourhoods are addressing challenges in implementing their visions;
3. Working with government sponsors and partners to integrate learning from year one into their daily work, especially efforts to support the “communities agenda”; and,
4. Contributing to the development of a Neighbourhood Vitality Index.

Caledon will also be looking for opportunities to link ANC work with other ongoing initiatives at the Institute, particularly Vibrant Communities. Caledon is exploring additional learning opportunities with federal officials around the ways in which they can work more collaboratively to support comprehensive community efforts.

Activity in the first quarter focused on learning. In May, Sherri Torjman led a government session. Using presentation notes as a springboard, Sherri led a dynamic conversation with audience members about current research and thinking on the “communities agenda”. In June, Sherri co-presented the ANC story at the [World Urban Forum](#).

Neighbourhood Vitality Index to be launched

The ANC team is looking forward to completing and field-testing a Neighbourhood Vitality Index this year. Measuring progress in a format that blends quantitative and qualitative terms is an important goal of this project. This Index will be a significant contribution to this methodology.

All project partners met in June to complete the first draft of indicators.