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Catch da Flava

Special Catch da Flava Report on the SDP

Issue 13, Volume 2, Released May 23rd, 2024

Accomplishments of the Regent Park Social Development Plan (SDP)

(January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023)

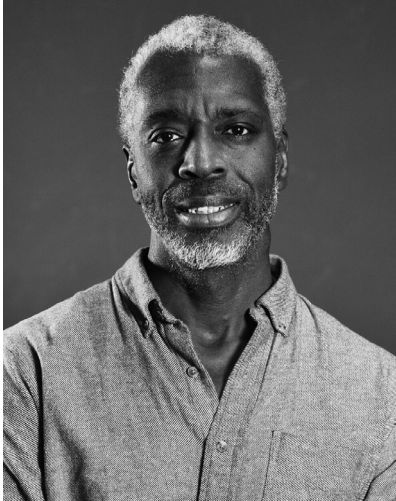
Editorial

Welcome to a special Catch da Flava issue of the Regent Park Social Development Plan (SDP)

When one thinks about the achievements of the SDP, the first thing that comes to mind is the work that the SDP did to successfully advocate to the City Council to secure \$500,000 in yearly funds to support various Regent Park initiatives over five years (beginning 2020 to 2025). To date, over 2 million dollars of funding has gone not only to support initiatives and projects managed by the SDP working groups but also to support other socially beneficial projects led or trusted by groups and organizations across Regent Park, many of whom have very little direct connection to the SDP.

The City of Toronto and the SDP network have both launched activities to evaluate the past four years of the SDP and they want your help. In this report readers will have an opportunity to learn about the major accomplishments of the SDP working groups and find out about what projects were funded under the SDP.

At the end of this newsletter, we provide a link for readers to tell the network what your opinions are about the SDP and how well it has served the community. If what you read interests you and you wish to participate further in our feedback sessions, we would like to invite you to attend any one of our online strategic planning sessions. Happy reading!!!



Adonis Huggins
Agency Co-chair of Communications Working Group



Murshida Samsun Mueen
Resident Co-chair SDP Communications Table

What is the Regent Park Social Development Plan?

The Regent Park Revitalization is changing Regent Park from a social housing neighbourhood, to a mixed-income and mixed-use community. In addition to the physical development of buildings, the revitalization includes a Social Development Plan consisting of community wide actions that engage new and old residents, and help everyone (including new and old residents) feel part of the community. The community wide actions revolve around safety, community building, employment and communication.

Why Is There a SDP Refresh and Strategic Planning Process?

Having completed four years of project activities, the membership of the SDP and the City of Toronto (the primary funder of the SDP) are both embarking on separate processes to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the SDP and its activities over the past four years. Although the City's Refresh process, involving the use of an outside consultant, is very different from the network's strategic planning, the common goal of both processes is to seek input and feedback from members and stakeholders of the SDP as well as from residents of Regent Park, on what is working and to identify the areas of needed change. The hope is that this information will be used by the City and SDP Stakeholders Table to guide the last year of the approved City funding for 2024, and collaborate on preparing new workplans for the next five-years beginning 2025.

Who Is Leading the SDP Strategic Planning Process?

The SDP Strategic Planning process is been led by a sub-committee of the SDP Planning Committee that meets weekly. The SDP Refresh is been led by the City of Toronto with the support of an external consultant.

What Are the Projects and Accomplishments of the SDP Working Groups?

In 2019, members of the SDP (the SDP Stakeholders Table) identified four priority issues that they wanted the network to focus on over next five years (2020 to 2025). They were: Lack of Employment, Safety Concerns and Issues, the need for more Community Spaces and Recreation activities, and better Communication and Information sharing.

Four working groups were established to address each of the four priority issues. The four working groups are The Regent Park Safety Network, Community Building Working Group, Employment and Economic Development Working Group and the Communications Working Group. The purpose of each working group was to come up with strategies, projects and activities that help address the issue that the working group was formed to solve.

The following is a list of the major accomplishments of the Safety Working Group for the period beginning January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

Regent Park Safety Network Working Group



(Community Police Officers with RPTV)

Monthly Meetings and Quarterly Meetings

- Held General Meetings every month focused on policing, dissemination of statistics on Major Crime Indicators, health and safety concerns, and related issues. Participation included Chris Moise and Kristyn Wong-Tam's offices, Toronto Police Services, City's Community Safety Unit and TCHC.
- Helped organize community quarterly presentations by Toronto Police Services.

Regent Park Community Safety Action Plan

- Distribution of the 2018 "Regent Park Community Safety Action Plan".
- Supporting the dissemination of the Youth Empowering Youth's Asset Mapping of Youth Resources.

Certificate Training Courses

- Partnered with Toronto Centre for Community Learning and Development (\$75,000 in SDP funding) to hold Certificate Training Courses on "Speaking with Confidence", "Stop the Bleed", First Aid, How to Facilitate a Meeting, and Advocacy Training.

Safety Audits

- Participated in neighbourhood-wide Safety Audits and "Community Buddy Walks"

Annual Celebration

- Celebration of '2023 Safety Milestone & Annual Summer BBQ celebrating safety

The following is a list of the major accomplishments of the Safety Working Group for the period beginning January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

Employment & Economic Development (EED) Working Group



(Ines at Regent Park Cafe at Daniels Spectrum)

The following is a list of the major accomplishments of the Employment and Economic (EED) Working Group for the period beginning January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

Monthly/Quarterly Meetings

- Monthly, moving to quarterly meetings, focused on entrepreneurship and employment to share information and opportunities with residents.

Regent Park Employment & Economic Community Research Report

- Received \$61,500 in SDP funding in 2020 to hire a Research Lead to develop the Regent Park Employment & Economic Community Research Report exploring resources and employment barriers for Regent Park residents.

Workforce Integrator Project

- Hired a Workforce Integrator in 2023 who led the project.
- 10 partners including employment service agencies, employer partners are participating and meeting bi-weekly. The goal is for all partners to be able to more easily share information about job seekers and job opportunities, increasing collaboration across the neighbourhood.
- In total 80 participants registered with the Workforce Integrator to receive

employment supports.

- Additional funding (\$89,338) secured to continue the program in 2024.

Entrepreneurial Pathway Projects

- Received \$65,676.00 in SDP funding in 2022 (trusteed by CSI) to help women develop, plan and market their businesses to other residents living in the neighborhood through various initiatives below.
- Night Market (2022) – focused on supporting Women’s Entrepreneur Group to showcase their goods and services to community members. Markets took place in July/August (3X a week)
- Hired Learning Series project lead in 2023 and implemented a Learning Series (2023) and mentorship project - focused on providing local emerging entrepreneurs with the knowledge and confidence to start, develop and grow their own business.
- 5 workshops for Regent Park Entrepreneurs engaging 45 entrepreneurs.
- 14 women entrepreneurs were connected with mentors.

Café Pop-Up Project

- Cafe Pop-Up Project (2024) - practicum program for entrepreneurs to learn about taking the next step in their business. Each entrepreneur received a Business Kit, training and access to a commercial kitchen and equipment.
- 10 entrepreneurs signed up for the project, with 7 actively involved in selling in the cafe
- 30 days of engagement (sales) in the Cafe, and 3 catering opportunities created
- 2024 Sales: February \$3,000, March \$4,500, April \$4,000

Community Building Working Group



(Sunday in The Park - annual Summer event)

The following is a list of the major accomplishments of the Community Building Working Group for the period beginning January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

- **Monthly Meetings**
Presentations by community groups, non-profits, and businesses about what they do and how they support the community
- **2022 and 2023 Sunday In The Park** - This annual neighbourhood festival featuring local vendors, a community BBQ, entertainment and activities. Received City SDP funding in the amount of \$66,000 in 2020 and \$40,000 in 2023 (trustee Neighbourhood Information Post).
- **Community Space Needs Report** - The report, published on March 18, 2022, is a resource informing the city of the community's need for office space, recreational space, prayer space and other programming spaces.
- **Access to Spaces Project** - Outreach to residents and agencies around making space available for grassroots group activities in the neighbourhood. In March of 2023, obtain office space for SDP members on the 3rd Floor of Daniels Spectrum; Received funding in the amount of \$58,000.00 (trusteed by Centre for Social Innovation).
- **Access to Recreation Spaces** - Coordinator and advisory group to focused on removal of systemic barriers and increase community access to recreational facilities in Regent Park. Received City SDP funding in the amount of \$70,280.00

(trusted by Young Street Mission).

- **Support for the Black History Month Celebration** - led by Children and Youth Services, RP Community Health Centre and held at the Daniels Spectrum in February 2023 and 2024.
- **Support for food security initiatives** - In August 2022, an inaugural meeting of the food security coalition to address food insecurity and promote the City of Toronto's food charter. Members of the coalition distributed food boxes filled to hundreds of Regent Park residents.

Communications Working Group



(Reports Kedar and Fred from Regent Park TV Weekly News)

The following is a list of the major accomplishments of the Communications Working Group for the period beginning January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2023.

Monthly and Quarterly Meetings

- Monthly meetings held during 2020 and 2021. Quarterly meetings held during 2023.

Regent Park Monthly Newsletter - Catch da Flava

- Launch of the Regent Park Monthly on-line newsletter (partnership between FOCUS and CSI) serving Regent Park in February 2021.
- 12 monthly on-line newsletters produced and disseminated on-line, yearly since February 2021 (36 publications).
- 2059 newsletter subscribers in December of 2023.

Regent Park TV Project

- Three Regent Park residents employed yearly to produce content for the newsletter and Regent Park TV (RPTV). Received SDP funds in the amounts of \$40,500 in 2020, \$51,316.00 in 2021, \$65,132.00 in 2022 (trusteed by Focus Media Arts Centre).
- 492 RPTV YouTube videos are produced to increase resident awareness of issues, opportunities and resources in the community.
- 69 Regent Park TV Weekly News shows produced. Launched in August of 2021, the video broadcast news shows provide two-week summaries of all the happenings of Regent Park.
- 1574 RPTV subscribers and 113,543 viewers of RPTV content (2020 to 2023).
- 35 youth provided with 8-weeks or more of media training related to RPTV.
- RPTV provides support to all on-line SDP Stakeholders Table meetings (4 times annually).

SDP Promotions Project

- Four residents provided with part-time (8 to 12 hours weekly) jobs in 2022, to promote SDP and its working groups through social media, posters and outreach activities. Received \$39,233.00 in SDP funds (trusteed by Focus Media Arts Centre).

Hello Neighbour App & Regent Park Social

- Support to Regent Park Social website in the amount of \$35,000 in SDP funds (trusteed by Centre for Social Innovation)
- Hello Neighbour App, is launched in March 2022. The mobile app is designed to help residents find out more about local community programs and services. The App is externally funded by Young Street Mission.
- Cumulated download of the App past 500 by Dec 2022
- Peak pageview in Oct 2022, reached 5,464 views

Regent Park Tech Library

- Tech Library, mandated to reduce barriers related to accessing technology, is launched in August 28, 2023, through external funding raised by CSI.
- 141 members of the community registered and completed 670 loans with the Tech Library.

What Are The Other Socially Beneficial Projects That Have Received City of Toronto SDP Funds?

The following is a list of socially beneficial projects funded by the City that have been

resourced by the SDP. These projects report directly to the City of Toronto's Funding Unit and are not considered projects of the SDP working groups.

Children Projects (ages 14 and under)

\$82,815.00 to Youth Enrichment Academy (2021 -a life skills project for children trusteeed by Regent Park Community Health Centre)

\$70,102.00 to Happy Mother Happy Children (2022 - a children's tutoring program)

\$100,000.00 to Regent Park Community Health Centre (2022 - a children's food security and nutrition program)

\$40,000.00 Parents of Black Children (2022- system navigation for Black parents and tutoring for Black students)

Youth Projects (ages 15 & over)

\$110,000 to Youth Empower Youth (2020 – a youth led research project trusteeed by Kiwanis)

\$72,900 to InfniGuard Security and Protection Services (2020 -a security training and employment project).

\$47,000 to Toronto Futbol Athletic Advancement (2020-a youth sports program)

\$85,986.00 to Building Leaders for Change (2021 -skill-building training and mentorship project trusteeed by Kiwanis),

\$58,880.00 Healing As One (2021- a safe space & youth employment project),

\$110,990.00 Youth Empower Youth (2021 – implementation of recommendations of youth led research project trusteeed by K iwanis)

\$66,125.00 to Toronto Futbol Athletic Advancement (2022 - a youth sports program with emphasis on young women)

\$100,000.00 to Youth Empower Youth (2023 – phase two of youth led research project trusteeed by K Kiwanis)

\$100,000.00 to Building Leaders for Change (2023 -skill-building training and mentorship project trusteeed by Kiwanis),

Women Programming Projects

\$70,780.00 to Women's Health Social Circle and Engagement Network (2022- workshops, trainings, and other supports for women trusteeed by Dixon Hall).

\$100,000 to The Street Haven at the Crossroads (2022 wrap-around services for highly

vulnerable women)

Other Community Projects

\$12,760.00 to Filipinos in Regent Park Community Group (2022 – to build the capacity of the Filipinos in Regent Park trustee by SEAS)

\$70,620.00 to Toronto Birth Centre – (2022 to build greater sense of community)

\$97,000.00 to Regent Park Film Festival (2023 to engage Regent Park residents in storytelling)

\$32,660.00 to Mothers of Peace Regent Park (2023 to support Cultural Bazaar, an annual outdoor community market in Regent Park put on in the evenings every Friday in the summer.)

Now We Want To Hear From You!

Which accomplishments or projects are you aware of?

Which accomplishments or projects do you feel were most successful and should continue?

Which accomplishments or projects do you feel needed improvement?

Which accomplishments or projects do you feel were unsuccessful?

What other activities and/or projects would you recommend?

What other comments do you have?

If you would like to have your voices heard for the strategic plan, please fill the questionnaire by clicking the following link: <https://forms.gle/gyew4DZ2wipN8Mck6>

On-line SDP Strategic Planning Sessions focused on the activities of the SDP Working Groups will held on:

Thursday May 23 from 5 pm to 7 pm

Thursday June 6 from 5 pm to 7 pm

All SDP working group members are encouraged to attend.

Futures SDP Strategic Planning sessions will be held focused on Youth, Seniors and Ethno-Cultural Groups in the Regent Park area.

If you would like to attend anyone of our on-line strategic planning sessions or have questions, feel free to reach out to Ismail Mohammed at sdp.regentpark@gmail.com.

SDP Strategic Plan

From The SDP Strategic Plan organizing group
To Working Group Cochairs

The SDP Strategic Plan process is now looking at the review of and future priorities for the Working Groups. This follows from the last stakeholders table meeting.

The Strategic Plan will help the SDP to:

- be current and relevant
- be effective
- have practical growth
- have clear partnerships

The strategic plan is to cover 3-5 years

The Strategic Plan is using a process that will have SDP members involved in determining the results.

There are meetings about the working groups' future direction on May 23rd and June 6th, 5 - 7 pm.

We ask that all working group members attend these meetings.

May 23rd and June 6th will use Zoom: [354 498 5532](https://zoom.us/j/3544985532)

Call Out To All Logo Designers!



The Regent Park Social Development Plan (referred to SDP) is looking to create a new logo. The winning entry will receive **\$100.00**. Submissions should be sent to Adonis Huggins (Focus Media Arts) at info@focusmediaarts.ca or Ismail Mohammed at sdp.regentpark@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions is Tuesday June 25, 2024.

Catch da Flava Print and Online Magazine is produced by the FOCUS Media Arts Centre in partnership with the SDP Communications Working Group.

For more information or to send submissions email us at:

info@focusmediaarts.ca

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