TO: Mayor Rosen and Members of City Council

FROM: Bert Meunier, Chief Administrative Officer

PREPARED BY: S. Hickey, Director of Strategic Initiatives & Communications

DATE OF MEETING: 2004-04-20

SUBJECT: Federation of Canadian Municipalities – 2004 Highlights Report -Quality of Life in Canadian Municipalities

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

There is no recommendation associated with this report.

ORIGIN/PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a copy of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), “Quality of Life Highlights Report 2004”.

OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:

The 2004 Quality of Life Highlights Report, the third in a series, takes a detailed look at six indicators of quality of life in 20 Canadian municipalities that account for 40 per cent of Canada’s population.

This is the first time the City of Kingston has participated as one of the survey communities in the FCM’s Quality of Life Reporting System. Our participation in this initiative was identified as a component of Focus Kingston, our Community Strategic Plan, as a way to evaluate and monitor the effect of the Focus Kingston program on the quality of life in our community and in contrast to other cities in Canada. The report draws on data from the FCM’s Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS) and focuses on six Quality of Life factors: Local Economy, Natural Environment; Personal Goals and Aspirations; Fairness and Equity; Basic Needs; and Social Inclusion. The report also looks at underlying demographic trends affecting the 20 municipalities.

The report finds that, despite general improvements in rates of post-secondary education, employment growth and home-ownership, quality of life deteriorated for a growing number of people during the 1990s. In addition, improvements in income and poverty rates since 1996 have been offset by a growing income gap, housing affordability problems and changes to social programs.
Subsequent reports will be published by the FCM later this year to provide in-depth analysis of many of the topics highlighted in the current report.

Now that the national report has been released, the Strategic Initiatives office will analyse the data from a Kingston perspective and will prepare a report for Council that explains the implications at a local level. The Social Planning Council of Kingston and Area has expressed an interest in working with City staff and community stakeholders to review the data and develop a local report over the next couple of months.

EXISTING POLICY/BY-LAW:

Not Applicable

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Quality of Life Report is a Focus Kingston initiative.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no financial considerations related to this report.

CONTACTS:

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DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Focus Kingston Steering Committee

NOTICE PROVISIONS:

Not applicable

APPENDICES:

FCM- Highlights Report 2004 – Quality of Life in Canadian Municipalities

Bert Meunier
Chief Administrative Officer