TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Cynthia Beach, Commissioner, Sustainability & Growth Group

RESOURCE STAFF: Lanie Hurdle, Director, Recreation & Leisure Services Department

DATE OF MEETING: 2010-04-20

SUBJECT: Community Garden Network Partnership and Grant Application

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In the past few months, City staff has been working through the development of a Community Garden Policy with members of the community. As staff worked through this process, it became apparent that even with a policy in place (which is scheduled for Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Community in April); there will still be a need for direct support for grass root groups that are trying to start community gardens in their communities. The City is currently supporting existing and development of new community gardens by providing access to municipal lands, maintenance of the land and through the draft policy, some financial support.

A number of services are not proposed to be provided by the City through the policy, as the staff assigned to this portfolio will have other community development responsibilities in the City. In order to bridge the identified gap in service and make well established and grass root community gardens successful, staff has been working with organizations such as the Loving Spoonful, Urban Agriculture Kingston and Kingston Community Health Centre. Collectively, the group identified the need to establish a community garden network. Many larger municipalities such as Ottawa have community garden networks which provide support to community gardens by providing workshops, awareness and insurance coverage umbrella.

City staff was recently informed that the Ministry of Health Promotion has a Healthy Communities Fund through which funding can be requested to help finance development of a community network pilot project. Grant requests are only considered if they are submitted in partnership with other organizations. In discussion with community groups, it was identified that the Loving Spoonful could take on the administration of the community garden network, the City can provide operational space and Urban Agriculture Kingston can provide expertise in the development of the community garden network.

The Healthy Communities Fund application deadline is April 30th. Staff and community partners have already started to work on details of this project and grant application to accelerate the process should Council agree to move forward with this partnership. The City in kind contribution is estimated at $11,000 which includes office space and office equipment. The $6,000 cash contribution would contribute to workshop resources and garden equipment/materials. The $6,000 is to be financed from the cultural equipment account in the capital budget which has about $28,000 remaining.
RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council authorize the Clerk and Mayor to sign a grant application to the Healthy Communities Fund in partnership with the Loving Spoonful and Urban Agriculture Kingston to establish a community garden network; and

THAT Council authorize staff to establish a partnership agreement, to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services, with the Loving Spoonful to provide access to the Memorial Centre for office space and other logistical support to a maximum of $11,000 in in-kind services and $6,000 in cash, to be funded from the capital budget, as part of the partnership and grant application.
AUTHORIZING SIGNATURES:

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<th>ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER</th>
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CONSULTATION WITH THE FOLLOWING COMMISSIONERS:

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<tr>
<td>Terry Willing</td>
<td>Community Development Services</td>
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<td>Denis Leger</td>
<td>Corporate Services</td>
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<td>Jim Keech</td>
<td>President and CEO, Utilities Kingston</td>
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(N/R indicates consultation not required)
OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:

The intent with the establishment of a community garden network is to promote sustainability of local food production and contribute to overall food security in the City. The community garden network would facilitate a number of services with existing and new community gardens which would include but not be limited to:

- Acting as interpreter for the community gardens policy for the community. This includes gardeners in existing community gardens, as well as individuals interested in starting new gardens.
- Creating a user-friendly “how to start a community garden” document specific to Kingston. This resource will be provided online.
- Creating and maintaining an online presence and resource hub linking to related sites in the City and elsewhere.
- Acting as a resource for technical gardening support for new community gardens as needed or helping gardeners find other resources in the community to assist with this. (Master gardeners etc.)
- Developing and coordinating public information sessions about community gardening.
- Helping with the planning and promotion of hands-on workshops in community gardens.
- Organizing events such as the community garden bike tour.
- Assisting new gardens to meet the guidelines and rules laid out in the policy document.
- Assisting and advising new gardens in developing a governance structure, fee structure etc. if needed.
- Taking on inter-garden correspondence about events, policy guidelines, granting opportunities etc.

The proposed partnership which is detailed in the grant application and which requires an agreement between the Loving Spoonful and the City includes the following roles and responsibilities:

1. Administration of community garden network is to reside with the Loving Spoonful. This will enable more community outreach and work with grass root groups.
2. Administrative space is to be provided at the Memorial Centre. Staff reviewed the need for office and meeting room space (taking into consideration the relocation of the Church Athletic League) and has identified office space available as well as access to meeting space. Staff believes that this will be an added service which supports the notion of creating a community centre on this downtown site where activities take place all year around.
3. Expertise and information/resources will be provided through Urban Agriculture Kingston.

This pilot project would also be done in collaboration with the Kingston Community Health Centre and other community gardens.

EXISTING POLICY/BY LAW:

N/A
NOTICE PROVISIONS:

N/A

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

N/A

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The grant application will require an in kind contribution from the City of about $11,000 and $6,000 in cash to be funded from the Recreation and Leisure capital budget.

CONTACTS:

Lanie Hurdle, Director, Recreation & Leisure Services Department 613-546-4291 ext. 1231

OTHER CITY OF KINGSTON STAFF CONSULTED:

Lynda Breen, Supervisor, Recreation Services
Leslie Kimble, Assistant Supervisor, Community Development
Luke Follwell, Manager, Recreation Facilities

Others Consulted

Susan Belyea, Loving Spoonful

EXHIBITS ATTACHED:

N/A