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Subject: **Information Report Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program Update 2020 (RM 64/2019)**

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Recommendations:

1. That the report titled: **Information Report Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program Update 2020 (RM 64/2019)**, to the Committee of Council Meeting of June 23, 2021, be received.

Overview:

- **The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program aims to improve civic engagement and empower residents to play an active role in enhancing their communities.**
- **In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program was delivered virtually in 2020 for 15 neighbourhoods across all 10 Wards with the support of the Region of Peel, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Credit Valley Conservation and Peel Regional Police.**
- **The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the 2020 program and outline next steps.**

Background:

Recommendation 3-1 of Vision 3: Neighbourhoods of the “Brampton 2040 Vision – Living the Mosaic” (Vision) recommends a “Complete Neighbourhood Audit” (hereto referred as the “Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program”) “to systematically update and

revitalize existing neighbourhoods to ensure the full provisions for comfortable sustainable living”. In May 2019, Brampton City Council made the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program permanent (Resolution PDC070-2019). Planning Staff were directed to complete neighbourhood evaluations in all Brampton neighbourhoods during the current term of Council, with the objective of developing an understanding of neighbourhood needs and connecting residents to existing resources and programs. Staff was also directed to identify and prioritize which neighbourhoods will require specific action plans, and create a collaboration strategy with other internal departments and partner agencies.

From June to October 2019, the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program team conducted eleven neighbourhood audits across all ten Wards. Through collaboration with multiple City departments, partner agencies, and Brampton City Council, the Program engaged over 2000 residents. Approximately 500 residents participated in the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program from start to finish, including a walking tour, survey, and workshop.

The findings and high-level analysis from the 2019 Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program were presented at the City Council meeting of July 8, 2020 in a report titled Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program Progress Report – 2019 Community Heartbeat (Resolution C269-2020).

Current Situation:

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program was delivered completely online in 2020. The virtual shift was implemented and conducted with public health and safety as the top priority while still achieving the objectives of the Program.

To adhere to, and be consistent with, Public Health guidelines, staff replaced traditional engagement tactics typically deployed through the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program with online methods. Traditional methods included, but were not limited to, in-person walks, workshops, as well as presence at City or partner-led events, recreation centres, and places of worship. These tactics were modified to support the online shift, but most importantly, to stay committed to better understanding existing neighbourhoods, determining strategies to address needs, and connecting residents to resources while empowering them to lead change in their neighbourhood. The program explored multiple avenues to facilitate meaningful participation among residents, and the best ways to engage with all community stakeholders in a virtual setting.

Between August to December 2020, the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program team delivered 15 online neighbourhood audits across all ten Wards. Neighbourhood tours were video recorded and released to the public on a bi-weekly basis. Residents were encouraged to watch the videos, take the walk themselves where possible, and participate in the online neighbourhood survey and virtual mapping function. The

Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program engaged over 3,500 residents online. More than 500 residents participated in all segments of the program, which consisted of a digital survey and online mapping tool:

- 3500+ (total visits to website)
- nearly 6000 total video views
- 400+ completed surveys
- 400+ comments added to neighbourhood map

Results from the 2020 program varied across each neighbourhood, however, several consistencies appeared. The themes of community building, accessibility, public space and community hubs, active transportation, and safety were a focus for residents. The detailed results are available in the 'Resources' section of the Program webpage: www.brampton.ca/neighbourhoods. The 2020 Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program Progress Report, which provide a high-level analysis, and Ward-by-Ward breakdown of the 2020 results, is attached as Appendix A to this report.

Partnerships and Opportunities:

The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program continues to rely on collaboration between City departments in new and innovative ways. The program is directly integrated into and/or the delivery of various projects, strategies and Master Plans, such as:

- Age-Friendly Strategy
- Brampton Grow Green Environmental Master Plan
- Culture Master Plan
- Housing Brampton Strategy
- Integrated Downtown Plan
- Official Plan Review: Brampton Plan
- Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plans (SNAPs)
- Tourism Strategy

Staff is in the early stages of working with the Advance Brampton Fund team to discover program synergies and establish future opportunities for neighbourhoods and communities to organize and gain access to funding. Staff will continue to work with staff leads for the various city initiatives mentioned and provide ongoing support to realize project deliverables.

The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program team also continues to work alongside the following external agencies and formalized program partners:

- Region of Peel - Public Health (ROP)
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)
- Credit Valley Conservation (CVC)
- Peel Regional Police (PRP)

Each program partner is involved in various capacities on an annual basis with the potential for expanded roles in following years. Other external agencies, such as Sheridan College, are contributing on a resource availability basis.

With the help of the Brampton Sponsorship Team, corporate sponsors contributed to the Program in 2020, with Enbridge Gas and Alectra providing \$5000 total in sponsorship. In 2021, Enbridge Gas and Alectra have expanded their contributions, offering \$5000 each, for a total of \$10,000 in sponsorship to help fund the program. These partnerships and investments are a testament to the value of the program.

Moving the Program Forward:

The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program was recently moved to the newly established Community Safety & Well-Being Office within the Community Services department. This shift will contribute to the ongoing success of the program and reinforce the dedication towards the Healthy and Safe City Term of Council Priority by addressing and implementing neighbourhood level interventions. The move will also strengthen the interdepartmental collaboration with groups such as Recreation, Parks Maintenance and Forestry, Service Brampton, and Performing Arts.

Moving forward into the program in 2021, the lens of community safety will be enhanced through the delivery of the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program and become a key pillar of the program. This includes the support and mobilization of neighbourhoods to develop resident groups and associations, continued monitoring and delivery on short-term actions supported by Service Brampton, and the overall education around keeping individuals, neighbourhoods and communities safe with the assistance of Peel Regional Police partners. Through internal and external collaboration, including working alongside residents who represent various citizen-advisory committees to act as community champions, continued growth within existing network of stakeholders, and leveraging the Region of Peel's Community Safety & Well-Being Plan, staff will empower communities and inform service deliveries and investment around the theme of safety.

Staff is expected to complete all neighbourhood evaluations in Brampton neighbourhoods by Q4 of 2022. Following this process, staff will develop criteria to prioritize neighbourhood action plans beyond 2022. Staff will continue to offer toolkits, information sessions, and support to mobilize communities throughout the process. While staff seek innovative approaches to keep our communities informed and engaged during COVID-19 and in a virtual world of engagement, the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program will continue to help bridge local neighbourhood interests and build community capacity. Building and establishing community and community networks is especially important for challenges many might face during and following the pandemic.

Staff will continue to report annually on the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program by way of the annual Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program Progress Report. This approach ensures that to-date progress is tracked and communicated in a digestible format for the public Council, internal staff, and external agencies.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications directly associated with the recommendations of this report. Staff will ensure any additional resources required for this program will be incorporated in the 2021-2023 Budget Submission, pending Council approval.

Other Implications:

There are no other implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

Term of Council Priorities:

The migration of the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program to the newly established Community Safety and Well-Being Office directly fulfills the “Brampton is a Healthy and Safe City” Term of Council Priority. Engaging residents in meaningful ways to identify neighbourhood needs allows the Office to develop and implement initiatives to build capacity and empower.

In addition, the report aligns with the *Brampton 2040 Vision: Living the Mosaic*, in particular Action #3-1, establishing a Complete Neighbourhood Audit to systematically update and revitalize existing neighbourhoods to ensure the full provisions for comfortable sustainable living.

Conclusion:

As community safety and well-being is the responsibility of multiple stakeholders, the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program intertwines efforts of various City departments, external agencies, and community organizations to achieve this common goal. The Program will continue to raise awareness, gather feedback, and stimulate action at the neighbourhood level to reinforce community belonging and participation for all.

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Attachments:

Appendix A – 2020 Nurturing Neighbourhoods Program Progress Report