DMSMCA
Daniel McIntyre
St. Matthews
Community Association

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Tuesday, March 10, 2009

The Case for Housing Improvement Zone Funding Access in Daniel McIntyre & St. Matthews

DMSMCA Introduction

We are DMSMCA (Daniel McIntyre/ St. Matthews Community Association), a Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (NRC) founded in 2007. DMSMCA is fully incorporated and has an elected Board of Directors made up of residents. We serve 15,000 residents living in over 4000 housing units in the two inner-city neighbourhoods between Victor St. and Ingersoll St., from Portage Avenue to Notre Dame Avenue.

DMSMCA currently receives funding from Neighbourhoods Alive for an Executive Director and a Community Development Coordinator whose work is split between 6 Priority Areas: Housing, Safety, Community Involvement, Parks and Recreation, Community Economic Development, and Infrastructure. We also receive operating funds and community grants from Neighbourhoods Alive for community project Small Grants. WHHI provides Exterior Housing Fix-Up grants which are primarily used by homeowners. In our first two years we have achieved notable fiscal success, passing our WHHI audit with flying colours and successfully allocating over 95% of housing grant funds and 100% of community project small grants.

We are currently the only NRC in Winnipeg that does not have a full-time Housing Coordinator, as this position is usually funded through joint funding between Neighbourhoods Alive and the City of Winnipeg. Our 5-year plan, based on resident consultations, specifies developing an HIZ partnership with the City of Winnipeg in order to meet the needs of our community.

DM-SM Community Information

Our population is very diverse, with a 18% Aboriginal population (more than double the City average) and a 38% immigrant population (also more than double the City average). Our average incomes are low, under $19,000 in 2001 based on the Census data. 24% of our residents' incomes come from government transfers.

In terms of neighbourhood characteristics, St. Matthews and Daniel McIntyre are very similar in composition. Daniel McIntyre, the larger northern neighbourhood, does have more crime and lower average incomes than St. Matthews. The far greater difference is seen not North-South but East-West. Arlington Street runs down

the middle of St. Matthews and Daniel McIntyre and both neighbourhoods are low-income but relatively stable on the west side, with homes built largely in the post-war period. On the older east side, built mostly around the turn of the last century, the neighbourhood is visibly decaying and crime-affected - critically so on many blocks of Victor, Toronto, Beverley, Simcoe, and Home Streets.

Because this Arlington east-west divide does not line up with neighbourhood boundaries, this focused area of need is not reflected in Neighbourhood Profile statistics. However it is reflected in Winnipeg Police Crime Stats, which show high levels of breaks and enters, robberies and vehicle crimes along Victor and Toronto between Ellice and Notre Dame, and around Simcoe, Beverley and Home at Sargent.

Housing Challenges

Daniel McIntyre and St. Matthews communities face serious housing challenges. Even on the more stable west side of Arlington, home values in DM-SM are still well below replacement cost despite the shortlived Canadian real-estate boom. Because of this localized home value suppression, many homeowners fear to invest in proper home maintenance for fear of not recouping their investment. Without proper management, this neighbourhood could easily slide back to the abysmal housing market values we saw ten years ago.

On the more troubled East Side, our urgent concerns include boarded and abandoned buildings (25-30 at any given time between Victor and Arlington alone), unsafe rental housing, a dearth of affordable rental accommodations, homes used for crime, as well as the related health and safety effects that come along with these conditions. This situation requires immediate action.

We at DMSMCA have a clear vision, informed by the community, for addressing these problems. We have built strong partnerships with residents, but with only two staff we currently lack resources to make a sufficient positive impact. However our organization is primed and ready for growth, and with adequate resources, including an HIZ partnership with the City of Winnipeg, we can turn DMSM into a success story.

Housing Goals

We have seen the hardship that simply subdividing HIZ funding dollars has caused for our sister NRCs. We believe that HIZ funding should be increased and must be maintained as a core City commitment until there are no longer housing problems in the Inner City. We are willing to start an HIZ relationship with a relatively modest commitment which would grow incrementally as we grow as an agency. We propose starting with $160,000 of annual HIZ funding but are open to alternate funding levels that will cover staffing and program costs. HIZ funding would also allow us to leverage additional funding from other levels of government and stimulate resident investment in the neighbourhood.

Our current housing programming gaps in DMSM include addressing rental needs, housing safety and derelict homes. By ensuring secure, stable homes for our most vulnerable residents, while simultaneously fostering community spirit and offering economic and recreational opportunities for adults and young people through our other program areas, we will be taking direct aim at the roots of antisocial behaviours in our community.

We would like to begin developing plans for rental improvement programs and looking into opportunities for new unit development in partnership with residents and construction and management specialists. We would also like to see some funding set aside to fund Inner-City-wide capacity building programs such as the Housing Training Initiative. There are many neglected resources in DM-SM that could be harnessed for the betterment of Winnipeg's Inner City. Designating DMSM as a Housing Improvement Zone will give us the momentum we need to achieve success.

Proposed Housing Improvement Zone budget for DMSMCA

Housing Staff Salary and Benefits (to be matched by NA! Funds)..... 30,000

Emergency/Liveability Small Fix-Up Grants for Residents (1000-3000) 20,000

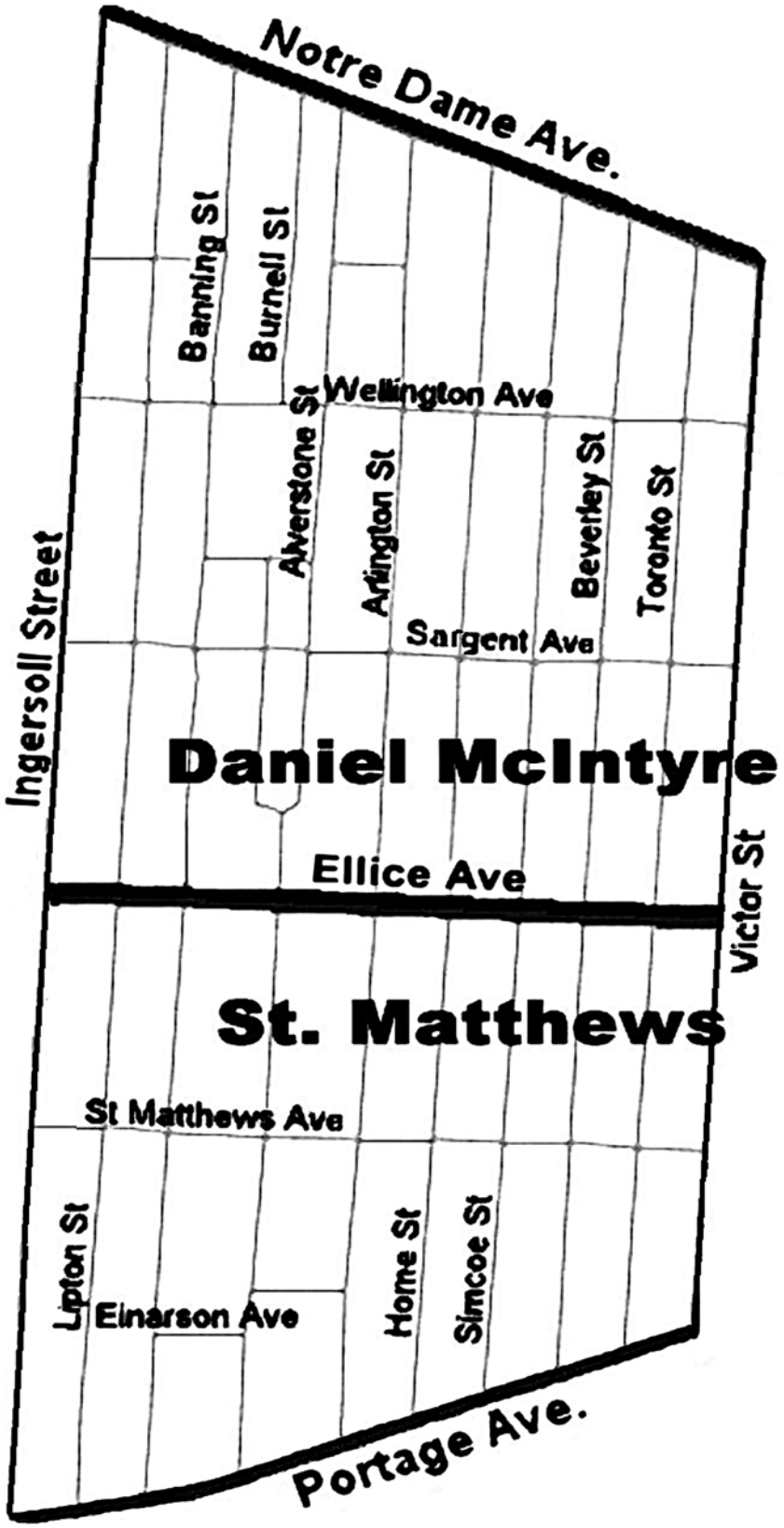
Secondary Suite Development Grants (1000-3000) 30,000

New Rental Unit / Rental Rehabilitation Project Development Fund 30,000

New Unit/Rental Rehabilitation supplemental funds 40,000

DMSMCA Share of HTI Inner City Home Maintenance Workshop Program 10,000

TOTAL.....$160,000


Notre Dame Ave.
Banning St
Burnell St
Wellington Ave
Alverstone St
Arlington St
Beverley St
Toronto St
Sargent Ave
Ingersoll Street
Daniel McIntyre
Ellice Ave
Victor St
St. Matthews
St Matthews Ave
Lipton St
Elnarson Ave
Home St
Simcoe St
Portage Ave.