That, on the recommendation of the General Manager of Community Services, and with regard to the Strengthening Neighbourhoods Initiative – Kipps Lane Strategy that the following actions BE TAKEN:

i. The actions taken to date by the civic administration in the development and implementation of the Kipps Lane Initiative BE AFFIRMED;

ii. The projects identified in the 2009 work plan BE ENDORSED; it being noted that these projects will be implemented within the 2009 budget for the Kipps Lane initiative; and,

iii. The citizen members of the Kipps Lane Resident Working Group and the youth involved in Represent: Youth Voices of Kipps Lane BE COMMENDED for the efforts to strengthen the Kipps Lane community; it being noted that the Working Group will be reporting back further to CPSC in late 2009 on its plans for the neighbourhood and the youth will update CPSC on a regular basis.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

- Alternative to the Local Area Council Model Recommended in the Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan (September 13, 2004);
- Social Policy Framework for the City of London (April 3, 2006);
- Departmental Restructuring (July 19, 2006);
- Neighbourhood and Children’s Services Division Strengthening Neighbourhoods Initiative: Kipps Lane Strategy (May 7, 2007); and,
- Strengthening Neighbourhoods Initiative: Kipps Lane Strategy Update (October 27, 2008).

BACKGROUND

The Kipps Lane Strategy is fundamentally about helping residents work to improve the quality of life in their neighbourhood

Background

On May 14, 2007, City Council endorsed the Strengthening Neighbourhoods Initiative: Kipps Lane Strategy. Through the 2008 municipal budget process, Council approved a service growth request of $180,000 to support the Kipps Lane Strategy’s key building blocks: community development, recreation programming and youth mentorship. At the outset of the Kipps Lane Strategy, civic administration identified both short and long term initiatives to accomplish the following outcomes:

- Increase the knowledge of the neighbourhood about their community and the programs available;
- Increase opportunities for people to participate in a wide range of recreational, social and educational activities;
- Increased opportunity for community members to be involved and engaged in their neighbourhood – reduced isolation;
- Build community leadership for the long-term; and,
- Build a stronger and more vibrant neighbourhood where all individuals feel safe and proud to live there.

In addition, civic administration identified an asset based approach for the Kipps Lane Strategy. John McKnight, a leader in neighbourhood development states that asset-based community development builds on the resources that are found in every community. The goal of this approach is to empower communities by giving residents the tools and resources they need to address their own priorities through their own organizations. Our work is guided by the following key principles:

- **Resident engagement:** Empowering individuals and groups of people to effect change in their own community
- **It takes time:** Action that is purposely directed toward altering local conditions in a positive way is not immediate.
- **Strategic Building Blocks**: Our strategy is built on 3 building blocks to build and sustain community; community development; recreational programming; and youth mentorship.
- **Partnerships**: We recognize the value of working with our community partners to continually grow and cultivate opportunities at the neighbourhood level.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress that has been made to date.

**Highlight of Key Neighbourhood Initiatives (see Appendix 1 for additional details)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>May 2007</th>
<th>Community Development ($40,000)</th>
<th>Recreation Programming ($40,000)</th>
<th>Youth Mentorship Initiative ($100,000)</th>
<th>Community Partnerships/Community Infrastructure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring/Summer 2007</td>
<td>Community development staff locates to neighbourhood: building relationships</td>
<td>Pilot no-cost summer playground programs at Northbrae (Energizer)</td>
<td>Pilot free swim passes and transportation to city pool</td>
<td>Pathways Graffiti Removal in Northeast (youth employment)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Public meeting held in neighbourhood</td>
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<td>Kips Lane identified as location for Child Care and Community Hub as part of COL's Best Start Plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stakeholders meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter 2007</td>
<td>UWO nursing placement students explored needs of older adults</td>
<td>Extended Northbrae SOOT program for youth</td>
<td>Pilot Targeted Youth Leadership program</td>
<td>London Intercommunity Health Centre's outreach workers employed to engage youth in northeast</td>
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<td>Spring 2008</td>
<td>Local residents hired to conduct door-to-door survey, over 1 in 4 households responded</td>
<td>Extended Northbrae SOOT program for youth on an ongoing basis</td>
<td>Targeted Youth Leadership programs expanded (ongoing)</td>
<td>Community Partners clean up near Thames River of bulky garbage and litter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 2008</td>
<td>Mapping of the neighbourhood</td>
<td>Pilot no-cost summer playground programs at multiple locations in the neighbourhood</td>
<td>Targeted Leadership Program</td>
<td>Adelaide Bridge Mural Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Survey results analyzed and Report completed</td>
<td>Free swim passes and transportation to city pool</td>
<td>Summer training and employment opportunities for youth funded by YOU</td>
<td>Community Garden opens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>Formation of Kipps Lane Resident Working Group</td>
<td>Life Resource Centre open gym for male youth (soccer) and female youth (volleyball)</td>
<td>City staff hired to develop Community Economic Model for Youth</td>
<td>Child care (56 spots) facility built attached to Northbrae Elementary School as part of COL's Best Start Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter 2008</td>
<td>Resident-led process to create a vision and identify priority areas for action in the neighbourhood</td>
<td>No-cost Babysitting Course (with marketing for employment component)</td>
<td>Community development staff locates to: neighbourhood; building relationships: youth, schools, businesses, key stakeholders</td>
<td>Northbrae Community Hub operated by YMCA and a coalition of service providers opens (COL provides $20K in operating)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>COL provides 5 staff for Northbrae SOOT program for youth on an ongoing basis</td>
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<td>NELCE resident sub-committee formed to inform park plans for Ed Blake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2009</td>
<td>Resident-led process to develop a detailed Neighbourhood Action Plan (see Appendix 2 for additional details)</td>
<td>No-cost COL drop in recreation programs Saturday mornings at the Northbrae Community Hub</td>
<td>Youth Photovoice Project completed (see Appendix 3 for details)</td>
<td>Ed Blake Park Redevelopment</td>
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<td>Extended Targeted Leadership Program</td>
<td>Youth Job Fair held Introduction to Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Life Resource Centre expands presence to include 2 portables (COL providing $12K)</td>
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<td>Summer 2009</td>
<td>Proposed implementation of Neighbourhood Action Plan to begin</td>
<td>Summer playground programs offered in multiple locations</td>
<td>Summer Company Program developed</td>
<td>Local residents (Kipps Lane Resident Working Group) have been invited to sit on the Northbrae Community Hub Steering Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residents to report back to CPSC in Fall 2009</td>
<td>Free swim passes and transportation to city pool</td>
<td>Social Enterprise opportunities developed for local youth</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Sports leagues expanded</td>
<td>Mentorship Program piloted in Fall 2009 in partnership with UWO, LUSO</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Babysitting Course offered</td>
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Why Kipps Lane?

City staff developed this strategy to engage individuals, youth and families in the Kipps Lane area of London to participate in enhancing their neighbourhood's capacity and vibrancy. The Kipps Lane area of London has some of the highest risk indicators related to health, education, family and individual well-being. Poverty is a major determinant of health, well being, and self-sufficiency. Initial findings suggested that this neighbourhood is underserviced in areas of recreation programming, facilities and other services.

The London Police have stated that crime in the Kipps Lane area is similar to that of neighbourhoods across London. They have not added additional police to this neighbourhood however the Community Response Officers have met with residents, encouraging the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch and Block Parent programs. In addition, residents on the Kipps Lane Resident Working Group's Safety Committee will be focusing on educating their neighbours using the Crime Prevention program in partnership with the London Police.

The Kipps Lane Strategy is a pilot initiative for the Community Services Department to undertake an asset based community development approach in a specific neighbourhood. It is our intention that our learnings will guide us as we move forward to other neighbourhoods in the future. The Kipps Lane Strategy also formed the basis of the city-wide “London Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy” that is currently underway, engaging more than 100 residents across the city.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

All activities for 2009 have been included in the 2009 departmental budget.

CONCLUSIONS

Residents are the heart of change in communities. The Kipps Lane Strategy is creating more opportunities for community members to be involved and engaged in their neighbourhood, to develop as community leaders, and to work collaboratively to build a stronger, more vibrant neighbourhood where everyone feels safe and is proud to live, work and play. Residents are working hard to improve the quality of life in their neighbourhood now and for future generations.

PREPARED BY:

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Department of Community Services
Manager, Community Partnerships & Funding

SUBMITTED BY:

RECOMMENDED BY:

Lynne Livingstone, Director
Neighbourhood and Children Services
Department of Community Services

Ross L. Fair
General Manager
Department of Community Services

cc: Councillor Stephen Orser
Councillor Bernie MacDonald
Kipps Lane Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy: Short and Long Term Strategic Initiatives

Below is an example of activities that have been taking place in the Kipps Lane neighbourhood since May 2007:

Community Development

- City staff from Neighbourhood and Children Services has a base of operation in the Kipps Lane neighbourhood at the Northbrae Community Hub.
- This past summer and fall, the City of London offered subsidy and registration opportunities directly in the neighbourhood (Northbrae Public School) for parents to register for Spectrum activities.
- Multiple partners responded to residents concern of bulky garbage and litter in the forested area near the Thames River pathway. Sir George Ross High School staff, the Police's COR unit, Pathways Clean UP Crew, City of London and concerned residents increased the cleaning of a forested area and the monitoring of youth in that area of Kipps Lane, near the Thames River pathway.
- In the summer of 2008, a 70 foot mural locate under the Adelaide Street and Kipps Lane bridge was completed by youth residents of Kipps Lane hired by LUSO and paid by Summer Jobs for Youth program from Youth Opportunities Unlimited. City staff from Neighbourhood and Children's Services, Environmental Services and Parks Operations, helped to facilitate this initiative.
- City staff facilitated coordinated training opportunities to local youth involved in local employment programs in their community.
- London Resource Centre, the City of London and St. Lawrence Church worked together to build a community garden for residents in the spring of 2008.
- Residents from the Kipps Lane neighbourhood have joined together to form the Kipps Lane Resident Working Group. This group has nominated a resident Chair, and 8 residents have taken leadership positions to address the main priorities in the neighbourhood.
- A subcommittee formed from the Kipps Lane Resident Working group has organized monthly socials to grow the interest in the Kipps Lane Initiative.
- Residents have been invited to participate on the Northbrae Community Hub Steering Committee.

Recreation Programming

- The City of London developed and ran a new children's summer program in the summer 2007 giving more recreation opportunities to children and youth at no cost. This program, Energize, was adapted in 2008 to reach out to the neighbourhoods within Kipps Lane by moving to different local green spaces each day. In 2007 there were 36 children visits. This grew to over 260 children visits in 2008.
- There was an increased graffiti removal and loose litter removal effort over the last 2 summers with a youth employment program offered by Pathways Skill Development Centre.
- For the last 2 summers, the City of London has offered residents free swim passes and transportation to North East Pool. Each summer, 150 passes were distributed.
- There is an ongoing partnership with Northbrae Public School, the City of London and LUSO Community Services to offer SOOT (Stay Out of Trouble). This is a drop in recreation program that was expanded in 2007, 2008 and again in 2009 to meet the gap identified by students and parents regarding the lack of affordable and safe activities in the neighbourhood.
- The City of London secured space for the Life Resource Centre to run a weekly night of open gym for soccer at Sir George Ross High School which attracts about 40 students. This program has an outreach component with an effort to reach newcomer youth.
- Similar to the soccer program, volleyball is offered for female teens one night a week.
- The City has provided the opportunity for children to enjoy roller skating at North London Optimist Community Centre.
- The City of London's Targeted Leadership Program for youth has offered 2 sessions and has just begun its 3rd session for youth residents of the Kipps Lane neighbourhood at no cost. This program is offered at Northbrae Public School, targeting youth who reflect the diversity of the neighbourhood and increases the likelihood of them becoming employed in a City recreation program. In 2007, there were 10 youth engaged, and in 2008 this grew to 27 youth. In 2009, the City of London's Targeted Leadership Program for youth held its 3rd session for youth residents of the Kipps Lane neighbourhood at no cost.
- The youth who have benefited from the Targeted Leadership Program held at Northbrae school keep connected through a weekly youth program.
- Since the fall of 2007, London Intercommunity Health Centre's outreach workers have been employed to engage youth in northeast London who are at risk of dropping out of school, becoming involved in gang and other related activities, etc.
- This winter the City of London offered a free babysitting course for students living in the Kipps Lane neighbourhood. This course included a marketing component to help young people become employed.
- City staff provide a free recreation program every Saturday morning at the Northbrae Community Hub for children 5-8 years of age. The Parent and Tot program at Northbrae Hub focuses on children ages 2 -4 as a time to bond with their caregiver(s). These programs are at full capacity.
- The City of London and community volunteers offered a cards program for older adults (located in Silvers Restaurant). This program was developed in response to the need we heard from conversations with residents in the community.
Recreation Programs Planned for Summer 2009

- City staff will be offering a School Playground Program at Northbrae Public School for children ages 6-8 in the morning and ages 9-12 in the afternoon Monday to Thursday throughout the summer.
- An Outdoor Sports League will take place for area youth during daytime hours at Northbrae Public School. This league will focus on sports (soccer and basketball) and nutrition.
- Evening Sports Leagues will be offered for area youth.
- City staff in partnership with Beacock Library will offer a walking/hiking club twice a week for local youth.
- Swim passes will once again be available for 200 children and youth and 100 adults to use the northeast pool. A Thursday afternoon swimming trip to the northeast pool for children, youth and families will also be offered at no cost.

Youth Mentorship Initiative

- City staff facilitated coordinated training opportunities to local youth involved in local employment programs in their community.
- London Resource Centre, the City of London and St. Lawrence Church worked together to build a community garden for residents in the spring of 2008.
- Youth entrepreneurship program is being designed in partnership with the Small Business Centre and the London, Middlesex Elgin Oxford Local Training Board. A pilot entrepreneurship workshop was held over March Break at the Northbrae community hub with 7 young people attending. Ongoing work will result in a micro credit entrepreneurship program offering small loans to 5 – 10 young people in the neighbourhood to start their own business.
- Youth in Kipps Lane organized a neighborhood Clean and Green Day in April 2009. They completed a funding request to the United Way and were successful in receiving $750.00 to assist in promoting and hosting the neighbourhood clean up and celebration. The youth were supported by City and community agency staff.
- City staff facilitated coordinated training opportunities to local youth involved in local employment programs in their community.
- Over 65 youth have participated in an engagement/leadership development project called "Represent - Voices of Kipps Lane". The project uses photography to enhance communication between young people about their neighbourhood: the assets, the challenges and their hopes and dreams. Once a week for 13 weeks, young people met at the Northbrae hub. To inform ongoing planning and development, the results of the project will be presented to the community, the Kipps Lane Resident Working Group and London City Council.
- A mentorship program between University of Western Ontario students and Kipps Lane youth is currently being designed in partnership with local youth leaders, the University Students Council and LUSO Community Services. The program is expected to begin in the Fall of 2009.

Programs Planned for Summer 2009

- In partnership with LUSO Community Services, and the Beacock Branch of the London Public Library, a casual job program targeting young people between the ages of 12 and 15 will offer opportunities for younger youth to earn money over the summer.
- In partnership with Junior Achievement London, the "Company Program" will be offered at the Northbrae hub for young people aged 13 - 18 offering up to 20 young people in the Kipps Lane neighbourhood the opportunity to take part in running all aspects of a business including product design, sales and marketing, maintaining a balance sheet, and teamwork. This program includes regular contact with mentors, currently in business in London.
- Up to three social purpose enterprises employing up to 15 young people are planned in the neighbourhood including: a local farmers market, a roller skate maintenance company, and a communications/promotions company.

Community Partnerships/Community Infrastructure

- A physical addition to Northbrae Public School has seen an added Child Care offering 56 spots to the Kipps Lane community opened in December, 2008, located in the Kipps Lane neighbourhood as part of the City of London's Best Start Plan.
- In addition, this added a Neighbourhood Hub which is operated by the YMCA of South Western Ontario in partnership with a coalition including: The Boys and Girls Club of London, Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex, The City of London, Family Networks, London Urban Services Organization (LUSO), Merrymount Children's Centre, Middlesex London Health Unit and Pathways. This Hub opened in January 2009.
- City of London staff volunteered their time to build a new playground (Community Heroes Playground) in Adelaide Wells Park in the fall of 2007.
- Redevelopment of Ed Blake Park in 2010: Residents are working in cooperation with city staff on park design.
Kipps Lane Resident Working Group Neighbourhood Action Plan (progress to date)

STRENGTHENING NEIGHBOURHOODS INITIATIVE: KIPPS LANE STRATEGY

KIPPS LANE RESIDENT WORKING GROUP

Residents are the heart of change. Priorities and strategies must be resident-led in order to take into account local knowledge and expertise, and to be sustainable. The Kipps Lane Resident Working Group is a group of residents who are engaged in their neighbourhood and who have been meeting regularly to:

1. Form a vision for their neighbourhood
2. Set of priorities for their neighbourhood
3. Develop a Neighbourhood Action Plan for the Kipps Lane Neighbourhood

Neighbourhood Priorities:

1. Safety
   To increase our feeling of safety and celebrate our diverse and positive voices.

2. Transportation
   To increase opportunities for all residents in Kipps Lane to travel to their destinations easily, safely and in a convenient manner.

3. Neighbourhood Maintenance
   To provide a physical environment which is appropriate and attractive to residents, through maintenance and improvements

4. Physical Structures, Programs and Services
   To ensure that programs and services are available and meet the needs of Kipps Lane residents and have physical structures appropriate for those programs.

5. Information and Community Engagement
   To increase opportunities for Kipps Lane residents to be involved and engaged in their neighbourhood through the use of communication and information.

6. Environment
   To create a new environmental standard in Kipps Lane for the City of London by changing people’s behaviour to create attractive places to live.

Neighbourhood Action Plan:

The Kipps Lane Resident Working Group are currently developing a detailed Neighbourhood Action Plan that will be comprised of initiatives/events/projects with associated timelines, resources required, leads/partners and measures. The Plan will contain achievable actions that are spread out over the next 5 years and may also include a list of items for future years.

Residents and Community Services staff will report back to CPSC upon completion of the detailed Neighbourhood Action Plan this fall.
Kipps Lane Youth Photovoice Project

Photovoice is the term used for a participatory method of community engagement that uses photography and journaling to create conversations around individual perception and reality related to a social issue or a geographic location. Photography and journaling encourages all people involved to engage in conversation and helps overcome barriers such as literacy level, ability to converse in English, or comfort with speaking in public.

In January, 2009 the City of London partnered with LUSO Community Services to create "Represent: Youth Voices of Kipps Lane" a photovoice project in the Kipps Lane neighbourhood. 65 young people, representing a diverse range of age, and background from across the area responded to the invitation to participate.

The project had three goals:
1) To develop relationships with young people in the neighbourhood
2) To work with young people to explore their neighbourhood using photography and journaling
3) To communicate that experience and their ideas to others in the community

Over 14 weeks these young people met once a week to talk about what they saw as strengths in the neighbourhood, some of the challenges, and to dream of solutions and things that they could do together. They were supported in this process through staff at the City of London, LUSO Community Services, and volunteers from the University of Western Ontario and King's University College.

The results are spectacular, the young people identified themes within their pictures that contained both strengths and challenges, and through discussion started to think about not only what needed to change, but their role in making that happen.

One example of youth lead projects that were initiated by the group is the Clean and Green day held on April 18th. A group of young people applied for a United Way Youth in Action grant to sponsor an Earth Day river trail cleanup and community barbeque. Over 120 residents of all ages and backgrounds attended the day, collecting over 40 bags of garbage and making new friends.

The solution focus and personal empowerment themes present throughout the Photovoice project ensures that this will not be the last project. Represent: Youth Voices of Kipps Lane lays out a process, grounded in relationship and personal responsibility that will help guide the ongoing work of the Kipps Lane Youth Mentorship Initiative in the coming months.