

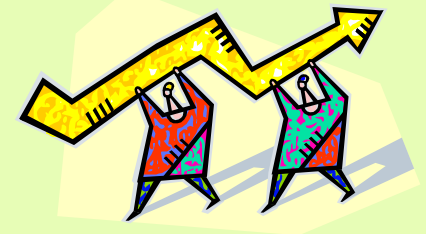
Scarborough Village Community Garden

Parks & Environment Committee

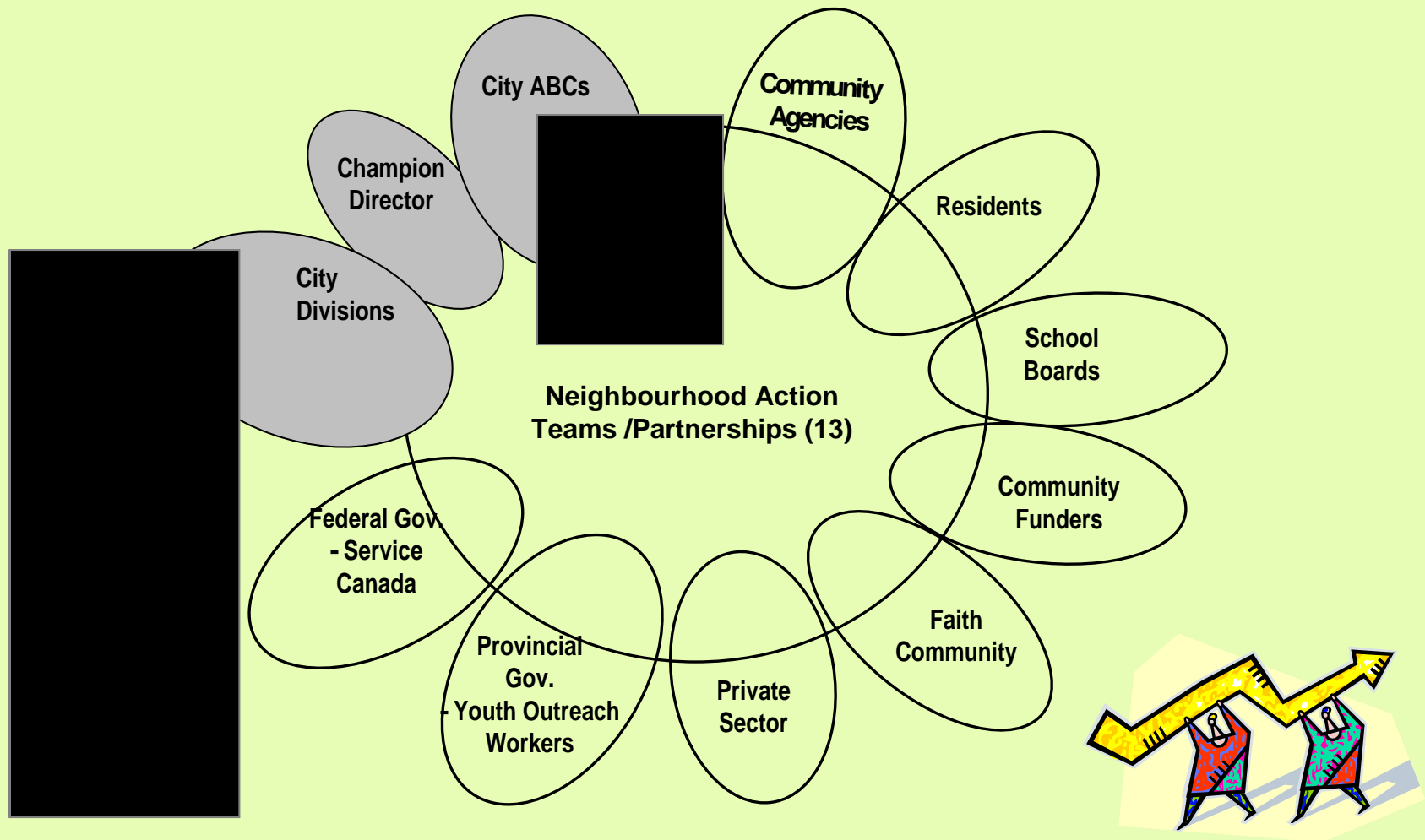
April 20, 2009

Neighbourhood Action: Local Structures of Collaboration

- The City established **local Neighbourhood Action Teams (NATs)** to **identify opportunities, coordinate investment** in new and enhanced service infrastructure and **build community** capacity at the neighbourhood level.
- NATs were initially comprised of relevant City divisions and have now developed into **Neighbourhood Action Partnerships (NAPs)** with representatives from **school boards, local institutions, community agencies** and **residents**.



Neighbourhood Action Partnership Structure



Scarborough Village NAP

- **NAT Membership**

- Parks, Forestry & Recreation
- Toronto Public Health
- Toronto Employment & Social Services
- Children's Services
- City Planning
- Economic Development, Culture & Tourism
- Toronto Community Housing
- Social Development, Finance & Administration
- Toronto Public Library
- Toronto Police Service

- **NAP Membership**

- Westhill Community Services
- YouthLink
- United Way (Action for Neighbourhood Change)
- TCDSB
- TDSB
- Residents
- East Scarborough Boys & Girls
- YWCA
- Centennial College
- Service Canada



Community Gardens: One Strategy to Address Food Insecurity in Toronto

- Access to adequate amounts of nutritious food is central to ensuring **equality and inclusion** for all Toronto families.
- Large numbers of families regularly use food banks.
- Several groups are especially vulnerable, including lone parents, recent immigrants and ethnoracial communities.
- Household food insecurity is associated with **poorer physical, mental and social health**.
- Food is also a **powerful animator of communities**, bringing people together in celebrations of community and diversity, an important part of the city's culture.



Scarborough Village Community Garden Workgroup

- In March of 2008 The Stop staff running the Food Animators Program with TCHC residents at 3171/3181 Eglinton Ave. E. approached the Scarborough Village NAP to set up a community garden workgroup.
- The Scarborough Village Community Garden Workgroup began meeting in Spring, 2008.
- This workgroup is **chaired by a local resident**, with the participation of Toronto Public Health, Action for Neighbourhood Change, and other interested community agencies.
- The workgroup has been working with **TCHC, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, TDSB and TCDSB** regarding potential garden sites, reviewing best practices for community gardens and liaising with other community garden facilitators in Scarborough priority neighbourhoods.



Fiskars' Opportunity

- In March 2009, the **Toronto Office of Partnerships** negotiated a **partnership opportunity** to create a community garden in a Priority Neighbourhood
- Fiskars, an international garden and tool company, approached the City of Toronto to partner with them on their community garden initiative, **“Project Orange Thumb”**.
- The “Project Orange Thumb” program creates, develops and executes Community Garden makeovers in underserved communities.
- The City put forward four potential sites, which Fiskars staff visited and assessed on March 3rd.
- After careful consideration, **Fiskars chose the Scarborough Village** site based on their criteria, the location and food insecurity issues of the local community.
- This investment has an approximate value of **\$100,000 USD** which includes all associated planning fees, travel, green goods, hardscapes, royalties, rentals, associated salaries and incidentals.



Cornell Campbell House

- The proposed Scarborough Village Community Garden plot is located **adjacent to Cornell Campbell House**. The garden will be a minimum of 50' x 50'.
- On April 6th, a **design charette hosted by Councillor Brian Ashton**, Ward 36, PF&R staff and the Fiskars Garden Designer – Joe Lamp'I, host of Fresh from the Garden, was held with 25 community residents in attendance who gave their input on a draft design.
- On May 27th, **resident volunteers will work in partnership** with City staff and Fiskars staff to build the community garden.
- The makeover will take place from 8 am and will culminate with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 4:45 pm with the Mayor and Councillor Ashton.



Next Steps

The Scarborough Village Community Garden workgroup will:

- **build effective, cross-sectoral partnerships** to support the work of the Fiskars-funded Scarborough Village Community Garden.
- **look at funding opportunities** to support sustainable Community Garden initiatives (i.e. Social Investment Fund, Live Green, Metcalfe Foundation, etc.).
- **Work with Toronto Employment & Social Services' Investing in Neighbourhoods Program** to employ a local resident as the Scarborough Village Community Garden Convenor. TESS is supportive of the Westhill Community Services/ANC office application to host this position. The position should be in place by May 27th.



Next Steps

- As this first community garden opportunity begins in Scarborough Village, residents are hopeful that **other green spaces can be accessed.**
- The community garden workgroup will be **exploring potential rooftop gardening options** in the Mayor's Tower Renewal site at 215 Markham Rd.
- The Fiskars grant has been a **catalyst for discussion and engagement around social entrepreneurship** opportunities for residents linked to food security initiatives, garden-to-kitchen program options, and the potential of resident training at the **proposed Horticultural Centre of Excellence** at the Cornell Campbell Homestead.

