

HEALTHY CITY STEWARDSHIP CENTRE

Speech - City of Mississauga Council Meeting

October 27, 2004

Thank you, Madam Mayor and Members of Council. I am delighted to be here today to introduce the Healthy City Stewardship Centre to you, which I have been asked by Mayor McCallion to Chair. My name is Michael Bator and I am the Director of Education for the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board.

This past spring I was contacted by the Mayor's office with the invitation to join a group of community leaders, with the idea of focussing our collective efforts toward the betterment of both individual and community health in Mississauga. I am happy to announce that we now have an outstanding group of 15 members, who together represent a broad range of agencies, business and institutions. A few of the members may be in the audience this morning and I would ask that you kindly stand and be acknowledged as I go through the list:

Office of the Medical Officer of Health – Dr. Howard Shapiro
United Way Peel Region – Shelley White
AstraZeneca Canada Inc – Michael Cloutier
Peel District School Board – Jim Grieve
Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre – Lynn Petrushchak
Region of Peel – Roger Maloney
Credit Valley Hospital – Wayne Fyffe
Trillium Health Centre – Chris Power
University of Toronto at Mississauga – Ian Orchard
Peel Regional Police – Staff Superintendent Tom Allen
local Member of Provincial Parliament – Peter Fonseca
Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee – Louroz Mercader
City of Mississauga – Janice Baker and Mayor Hazel McCallion – Honorary Chair
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (myself, Michael Bator)

The idea for the Healthy City Stewardship Centre developed through the work completed over the past 5 years by Mayor McCallion and faculty members from the University of Toronto at Mississauga. Working together the UTM and the City developed the 'Mississauga Model' in collaboration with the World Health Organization's Kobe Centre programme for Cities and Health. The Model is fundamentally a framework that bridges the gap between research and policy-making at the municipal level. The benefit to the local community is derived by researchers providing municipal decision-makers with specific, evidence-based information about the health of the community. The City, UTM and the Kobe Centre formed a partnership to lay the foundations of this inter-active partnership model known as the 'Mississauga Model'.

Over the years, the City and UTM have agreed on 4 themes that relate to the stewardship of health which are:

- Healthy people
- Integrated communities
- Healthy eco-systems
- Effective social systems

The Mississauga Model has since been enhanced to link with a broader group of key community groups such as non-government organizations and the private sector to achieve larger community outcomes. The enhanced model also refers to the university becoming the core educational and research resource to the Stewardship Centre. This is the stage we are at now – we are putting the enhanced Mississauga Model into action in forming the Healthy City Stewardship Centre.

The 15 Stewardship Centre members have now met 3 times since spring of this year. We have developed our terms of reference and we have talked broadly about what we believe the Stewardship Centre can accomplish and how each member believes their organization can both benefit and support this endeavour. I can tell you that this group of people are excited about the gains we can achieve with our collective efforts. As Mayor McCallion said to our group, “We know we are all doing good work in the community, and we know that often we are working on the same issues, so if we focus our efforts and all start paddling in the same direction we will undoubtedly make more of an impact in the community.”

As I mentioned, our terms of reference have now been adopted and we are working to put them into an action plan which we expect to be completed by the start of the new year. The mandate is to create a Healthy Mississauga 2010 health development plan. The plan will include practical and measurable health targets that can be implemented at the local level. The Advisory Board will not only develop the plan but will help foster interest, co-ordinate and champion the plan into action. We will also be making an annual report to City Council and other organizations on our efforts and accomplishments.

As Chair of the Healthy City Stewardship Centre, I am inspired by the idea of having many key, decision-makers around one table, focussing on the same issues and collaborating on solutions together. We have UTM ready to complete research as required such as assembling data or helping to set measurement targets, we have key stakeholders for health, business, law enforcement, non-government agencies and youth. Finally we have members who help develop community policy, who will hopefully use our Healthy Mississauga 2010 plan to influence local policy in how we manage health.

As the Director of Education, I am increasingly dealing with issues beyond the school hallways and am in constant need of experts in various fields to help the educators best deal with these problems. I rely on many agencies throughout the year to best suit the scenarios that present themselves. However roadblocks still exist and inter-agency barriers still need to be removed. My hope is that the Healthy City Stewardship Centre may in fact, prove a prototype on how important municipal groups come together for change rather than stay independent. We are in a position to share our knowledge and our experience in improving the quality of life of Mississauga residents. The formation of the Healthy City Stewardship Centre allows us to collaborate on a new level, to pull together to make a bigger impact locally.

In closing, as I mentioned earlier, the Healthy City Stewardship Centre hopes to formalize the Healthy Mississauga 2010 plan over the next 2 months so we can launch the plan in the new year. Although we live in a wonderful part of the world there are still a long list of health issues and risks, both personal and in the community, that exist in our cities today. The Stewardship Centre members are now working hard on choosing initiatives that are relevant and timely for the City of Mississauga's residents.

Thank you again for your time this morning for me to outline the Healthy City Stewardship Centre for which I am very happy to serve as the first Chairperson.