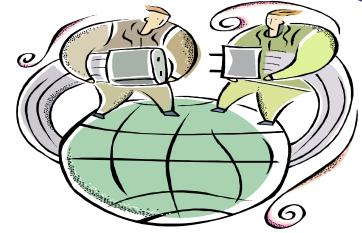


COMMUNIQUÉ



Network of Nonprofits News

1. Background

Many of you have been involved in dialogues with the Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries to explore the development of a **network to mobilize the local nonprofit sector**. A local network would operate for nonprofits similar to how a Chamber of Commerce operates for the business sector. Parallel efforts to mobilize the nonprofit sector are currently being discussed on a provincial (Strengthening Voluntarism in Ontario: Collec-

tive Action on Common Issues) and national level (Voluntary Sector Initiative, Voluntary Sector Awareness Project, etc.).

To kick-start this effort locally, we secured initial funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to host community dialogues on issues pertinent to the nonprofit sector. To date, efforts have included: hosting several dialogues with stakeholders, leaders and sub-sectors of local nonprofits as well as collecting minimal best practices information from other similar net-

works. We have heard general support for moving forward with this network development as constituents told us that a mobilizing and coordinating body would be of benefit.

2. Who would be involved?

Nonprofits operate in many areas: health care, faith, social development, sports and recreation, arts and culture, environment, and community development. Staff and volunteers will be welcome to participate.

Call for mobilization:

"The sector needs to take action, but it... neither has the capacity to mount a change initiative nor does it have the umbrella organization that can speak to its concerns... The most feasible course of action is... to form a coalition of interested parties... to mount a campaign... to experience the impact of joint action and help the sector understand the important role its collective voice has in creating compassionate, creative and sustainable communities..."

(Lynn Eakin, November 2006, *Advancing the Non-profit Sector in Ontario*, p. iv, available at www.lynneakin.com)

3. Purpose/role of network

A local network of nonprofits would act as a convening force within the sector as a whole. Every nonprofit works to improve the quality of life in our community but often operates in isolation or with only a few similar organizations. Mobilizing the sector will enhance coordination, cohesion, and overall capacity. Our local network would work to:

- increase awareness of the sector
- build a strong sense of community
- promote social inclusion
- organize the sector
- define a common agenda
- advocate for the sector or for needs of the community
- build leadership
- share knowledge and best practices
- build accountability and quality standards
- enhance local communication
- build individual and collective capacity

Listserv for nonprofit techies

The SPC has created a listserv for those fulfilling technology functions within nonprofits. This tool can be used to share useful information, tips and resources of benefit to technology staff or volunteers. If you are interested in joining, please contact Wendy Adema at the SPC.



Important Update for All Non-profit Organizations – Reforming the Ontario Corporations Act:

The following is taken directly from the Ontario Ministry of Government Services website at www.gov.on.ca/MGS/en/AbtMin/132784.html:

The Ministry of Government Services is undertaking a project to review and reform the Ontario Corporations Act (CA). The purpose of the project is to develop a new legal framework to govern the structure and activities of charities and not-for-profit corporations. The purpose of this discussion paper is to invite comments and suggestions from stakeholders and from the public regarding the reform of this important legislation.

4. Next Steps for Network

- continued from page 1

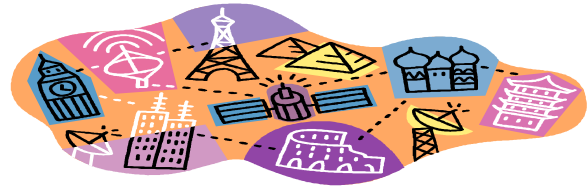
From local dialogues and discussions with other Ontario nonprofit networks, it is evident that initial outside investment by funders is required to formulate a network from conception through to functional operations. The Social Planning Council has submitted two proposals to fund this development work. One three-year proposal was submitted to the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation to support the general development of a network to meet objectives outlined above. Part of this effort will include designing the network to meet local sector needs and to plan for sustainability.

The second three-year proposal was submitted to the Ontario Trillium Foundation to create an electronic presence for the local nonprofit network. This includes creating a local clearinghouse webpage with relevant information to the nonprofit sector. The website will host and facilitate tools for nonprofit dialogue and learn-

ing. As well, it will create other means to distribute and share information of relevance to the sector. We know that technology is key to efficiency and effectiveness, yet many nonprofits lag behind due to resource constraints. This webpage project, as part of the broader network, will use technology to first begin to bring people together who may not necessarily cross paths, and then using innovation and technology consider ways and means to increase success for their organisations.

The SPC has had discussions with the United Way of CND to determine possible synergies with their Volunteer Services program.

The SPC will keep you informed on the progress of this network development.



VALUeS > ADDeD

The Impact of Canada's charities and nonprofits is bigger than you think!

There are over 161,000 charities and nonprofits operating in Canada today. These organizations employ 2 million paid employees and utilize 1.8 million volunteers. The nonprofit sector annually contributes \$112 billion to the Canadian economy (8% of GDP, bigger than the oil and gas industry). When combined, charities and nonprofit organizations make a remarkable difference in the quality of life of millions of people. These groups help define the very essence of community through art, culture, sport, health care, social services, research, advocacy and a deep, genuine commitment to others and to the world. Added together, the sector is the heart, spirit, and passion of a nation made great by living human values.

The Values Added campaign promotes the values added by the nonprofit sector. To participate, go to www.valuesadded.ca

Continued from page 1— Reforming...

... from Ministry's website www.gov.on.ca/MGS/en/AbtMin/132784.html :

Additional discussion papers will be released in the future to generate feedback on more specific issues. The Ministry intends to use the results of these consultations to develop new not-for-profit legislation.

The current Corporations Act provides the statutory framework governing the creation, governance and dissolution of not-for-profit corporations, including charitable corporations. In addition, it provides the legislation under which insurance companies in Ontario are incorporated and find their basic corporate governance rules. It should be noted that the CA is an organizational statute, and not a regulatory statute. In other words, enforcement of the rights and duties under the statute lies primarily with the corporation, its directors

and its members. Hence, the focus of this consultation is not on the regulation of charitable or other not-for-profit corporations.

This paper requests comments on broad issues relating to new not-for-profit legislation, including the following:

- Structure of a new not-for-profit Act
- Incorporation process
- Definition of not-for-profit corporation
- Classification system
- Corporate powers and capacity

Other issues: directors' liability, financial disclosure, members' remedies.

The ministry has provided some background material and questions for consideration in their consultation paper found on the website.

People are asked to respond by **July 31st, 2007** electronically or in writing.

Useful Websites for Nonprofits:

Charity Village – www.charityvillage.com – Canada's super site for the nonprofit sector --- 3,000 pages of news, jobs, information and resources for executives, staffers, donors, and volunteers.

Canadian Centre for Philanthropy – www.nonprofitscan.ca – Canada's nonprofit knowledge base and home of the Imagine Canada as well as the John Hodgson Library.



Social Planning Council
of Cambridge and North Dumfries

This Communiqué was compiled by the SPCND
150 Main Street, Cambridge, ON, N1R 6P9
Phone: 519-623-1713; Fax: 519-621-6220
www.socialplanningcouncil-cnd.org

The SPC builds and strengthens our community through social change, innovation, research and facilitation.