

CITY OF HAMILTON

CORPORATE SERVICES
Information Technology Services

Report to: Chair and Members Corporate Administration Committee	Submitted by: Joseph L. Rinaldo, General Manager
Date: December 3, 2004	Prepared by: Shannon McKay 905-546- 2424 Ext. 3997

SUBJECT: Connect Hamilton – Create Community Project (CHCC) and Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network (CSPN) Status Report – (FCS03057(c)) – (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Status Report for the myhamilton community portal project and the Collaborative Seniors Portal Network (CSPN) be received for the information of Council and that the following specific recommendations be approved:

- a) That a Seniors’ Portal be implemented as part of the **myhamilton** community portal project and that the City participate on the Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network Steering Committee;
- b) That this portal be the first thematic portal following the rural portal and be available Fall 2005;
- c) That, in the absence of portal technology today, staff explore, in collaboration with the Federal and Provincial levels of government, a replicated solution similar to the implementation of **seniorsinfo.ca** in Brockville.

Joseph L. Rinaldo, General Manager
Finance and Corporate Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Corporate Administration Committee and City Council with updated information on the myhamilton Community Portal Project as it relates to the Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network (CSPN) initiative.

As it relates specifically to the Connect Hamilton – Create Community project, this report supplements report (FCS03057(b)) and the awarding of the vendor contracts for the Portal project. Since that time, the Portal Steering Community and Project Implementation Team have been working with the vendors to finalize the Project Plan, Project Charter and the Systems Feature List. The myhamilton community portal is expected to officially launch on **Friday, May 27, 2005**.

After numerous presentations, meetings and much discussion with key stakeholders, including the Seniors’ Advisory Committee over the past six months, it is being recommended that the City of Hamilton officially confirm its’ commitment to partner with the CSPN in the development of a local **seniorsinfo.ca** site. It is, however, recommended that our approach in the creation of this multi-jurisdictional initiative be as part of the **myhamilton** Community Portal Project with an anticipated launch of **Fall 2005**.

BACKGROUND:

The concept for The Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network (CSPN) was created by the co-chairs of the Canadian Seniors’ Partnership, Brian Ferguson, Assistant Deputy Minister with Veterans Affairs Canada, and Geoff Quirt, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat within the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

A major focus of the CSPN work is to explore and demonstrate the value and effectiveness of collaboration and partnerships in delivering integrated government information and services to seniors. It is also an initiative to better understand seniors and their requirements through their active participation from the beginning, and to demonstrate that e-government can be meaningful and worthwhile for all client groups.

In addition to seniors, the Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network can be used by families of seniors, caregivers, case workers, government support staff and other seniors’ service providers, as well as elected representatives who need to respond quickly and effectively to seniors’ information and service needs. For example, a staff person in an MPP’s office in Brockville can now use the Portal to access information from three levels of government and, as a result, provide a more complete and faster response to constituent inquiries.

City Council at its meeting held on Wednesday, March 24, 2004, approved the following motion:

Development of a Seniors' Web Portal

- (a) That in an effort to provide Seniors within our Community with access to information and services from all three levels of government and their service providers in a simple, logical "cross silo" fashion, that Council explore the development of a "Seniors' Web Portal" for the City of Hamilton in collaboration with the Federal and Provincial Government;
- (b) That the Seniors' Advisory Committee be provided with the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Staff have taken the necessary steps to execute the directions of Council with respect to the above-noted recommendation. Furthermore, staff are pleased to report that in an effort to ensure that the development of the Collaborative Seniors' Portal remains an important focus throughout the myhamilton portal implementation, the Seniors' Advisory Committee has appointed two representatives to the myhamilton Community Portal Authority. Now in the implementation phase, the project is well underway.

myhamilton Portal Project Update:

A gateway to community resources, **myhamilton.ca** will integrate relevant information sources and a variety of services including those provided by various levels of government. When complete, information, transactional capabilities and communication tools will be accessible by all residents as well as information seekers around the world.

myhamilton.ca will improve quality of life by providing:

- **General information access** in a convenient and easy manner
- **Transaction and E-commerce capabilities** – initially with local government
- **Participation and e-democracy** –to engage the public in consultative process
- **Local rural resources** – by encouraging and developing meaningful rural content, we seek to bridge the rural digital divide and increase rural participation in the use of the Internet

Q5 Highlights:

- Project Charter & Plan Complete (*Steering Committee – 09/16*)
- Project 25% Complete / Current Y-T-D Actual 24% of Budget (\$1.6M cash)
- Systems Feature List (SFL) being finalized
 - *Determines scope of deliverables / Guides construction phase*
- Development and Production environments approved by Network Services (*security, redundancy, scalability etc.*)
- Development environment hardware has been ordered

- User needs are being validated (*testing assumptions*)
- Standards and Policy Development is underway

Project Timelines:

Q1 9/03 – 11/03	Q2 12/03–2/04	Q3 3/04 – 5/04	Q4 6/04 – 8/04	Q5 9/04 – 11/04	Q6 12/04 – 2/05	Q7 3/04 – 5/05	Q8 6/05 – 8/05
MEDT Reporting.....							
Project Management & QA.....							
Communications.....							
			Policy & Standards Dev., Accessibility, Metadata, Membership etc.				
Procurement RFP/Vendor Selection							
		Engagement Contracts & SLA					
			Inception SFL				
				Elaboration - Network, Tech Plan, Acquire H/S			
				Construction Build, Training & Content Migration Plans and Priorities			
					Transition - Soft launch, Testing & Content		
						Deploy & Launch May 27, 2005	

CSPN Integration with myhamilton:

As the myhamilton portal implementation project lays the foundation for future developments in technology and infrastructure development, it aligns well with the Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network concept and other thematic sub-portals.

The Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network has only recently prepared a DRAFT Municipal Starter Kit to orient municipalities such as Hamilton in the process for moving forward with this horizontal government service delivery partnership. The timelines for both the myhamilton portal project and the CSPN portal software solution align well and afford numerous opportunities for shared resources, leveraged technologies and efficiencies across all levels of government.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES:

While it is evident that the common benefits far outweigh the alternative of not proceeding with this partnership, the development of a Seniors’ Portal for the City is best delivered as part of the **myhamilton** project when lessons learned and best practices can be applied and not in isolation nor in competition with such efforts.

Feedback from the Ontario Senior’s Secretariat revealed that the current proposed model for a federated government portal would introduce new challenges and potential conflicts with the City’s efforts to effectively deliver on implementing the **myhamilton** portal project. These include:

Partnership Commitment:

- Expected to confirm intent to partner with the Province and the Federal Government, through a formal process TBD (i.e., signing of an **MOU** or **Partnership Agreement**).
- No funding requirement short-term, however, long-term portal technology **may require cost-sharing**
- Provision of User support (i.e., telephone, counter) to manage inquiries pertaining to the local information and services offered through the portal

Resource Requirements: (approx. 5 ppl. ½ - 2 days/wk)

- Municipal Business Executive (appointed by the Mayor/City Manager) – attendance at monthly meetings
- Municipal Project Lead – attendance at weekly Project meetings
- Municipal IT Representative – to serve as part of the Project Team
- Municipal Content Lead – to serve as part of the Project Team to co-ordinate the identification, collection, aggregation, tagging, and maintenance of local content
- Municipal Community Contact – to engage seniors for focus group workshops and User Testing
- Municipal Communications Lead – to work with the other Communications Leads as required

Therefore, proceeding to implement a Seniors’ Portal as part of the **myhamilton** portal project is the preferred course of action. This strategy is being recommended as it provides staff at the City as well as stakeholders involved with **myhamilton** an opportunity to research and sufficiently plan for project governance, development and implementation resources as well as on-going management and maintenance support of the Collaborative Seniors’ Portal initiative.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Financial

Funding from the municipality is currently not requested. The CSPN does expect, however, that partner municipalities will contribute human resources and time to the initiative.

Staffing:

Implementing a Seniors’ Portal as part of the myhamilton community portal offers the best fit for knowledge integration, transfer and succession for City staff. Staff within the existing IT complement will provide the technical support for the applications. The full-feature content management system will enable staff in various departments to have more direct responsibility for publishing and managing web content.

Legal:

At this time, there are no legal implications. The Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network would eventually like to sign a CSPN/Municipal Charter to demonstrate executive partner commitment to the goals of the CSPN, however, no such Charter currently exists.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

Implementation of online services will be done in accordance with existing policies of departments involved.

CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES:

Consultation was undertaken with key staff from ITS, Public Health and Community Services Departments as well as with the Seniors’ Advisory Committee. Staff from the City have hosted three presentations from CSPN lead by the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat and continue to communicate regularly with this group to offer feedback and input into the Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network Municipal Partner Starter Kit.

Key Individuals Involved to date include:

- **Ted McMeekin**, M.P.P. Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister Responsible for Seniors
- **Maria DiFabrizio**, Executive Assistant for Seniors
- **Walter Bilyk**, Director, Technology & Business Solutions (Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism & Recreation) Community Services I&IT Cluster, Province of Ontario
- **Chris Morley**, PM, Collaborative Senior’s Portal, Ontario Seniors' Secretariat
- **Ron Broughton**, Seniors’ Cluster, Veterans Affairs, Canada
- **Diane Varga**, Manager, Public Education and Awareness Unit, Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- **Christine Swenor**, Director ITS / Co-Director myhamilton Portal Project
- **Ken Roberts**, Chief Librarian /Co-Director myhamilton Portal Project
- **Shannon McKay**, Coordinator, eGovernment, City of Hamilton / Senior Project Manager, myhamilton Portal Project
- **Maureen Harmer**, Acting Director, Healthy Lifestyles and Youth Branch, Public Health and Community Services
- **Bev Neill**, Manager, Municipal Service Centres, Customer Service, Corporate Services / **Seniors’ Advisory Committee** staff rep.
- **Sue Sherwood**, Acting Manager, Chronic Disease Prevention Adult Program, Public Health & Community Services

Connect Hamilton – Create Community portal project continues to involve the following community stakeholders:

Economic Development Department
Budgets & Finance Division, Corporate Services Department
Information Technology Services Division, Corporate Services Department
Legal Services Division, Corporate Services Department
Public Health and Community Services Department
Community Information Service
Hamilton Chamber of Commerce
Hamilton Community Net
Hamilton FibreWired
Hamilton Public Library
Industry Education Council
McMaster University
Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
Mohawk College

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

Best Practices – Best Value

Council will pursue best practices to lower the cost of government and ensure best value in service delivery. It is recognized that best value is not just a calculation of dollars; it also includes accountability, service quality, accessibility and other community priorities which must be taken into account as per Council policy.

A City of Growth and Opportunity

To secure a future of growth and opportunity for the City, Council commits to focus all available resources on economic development. In working with the Economic Development Department and the Tourism Board, the CHCC project will deal with initiatives that assist in growth of the community and in attracting tourists and businesses to the area. Initiatives such as virtual tours of this City, and online applications for services, permits and promotional packages, will enhance both of these areas.

Investment in Infrastructure

Council will pursue investment in strategic infrastructure necessary to attract and maintain business. Investment in Portal and E-Commerce infrastructure will enhance the City’s ability to conduct self-service business in “off hours” and thereby increase customer service to our residents.

Developing Partnerships for Hamilton with Other Levels of Government

Council will urge its government partners to take the steps necessary to support the city in its efforts. The CHCC project involves strong financial commitment and partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. The Collaborative Seniors’ Portal Network initiative involves Veterans Affairs Canada (Federal) and the Ontario Seniors’ Secretariat (Provincial).

Keeping Hamilton Connected

The CHCC project will help connect the citizens of Hamilton to “all things Hamilton”. Furthermore, many other communities around the province are also embarking upon

“Smart Community” portal projects and, as such, we are provided with an excellent opportunity for interaction, networking and collaboration between municipalities.

A Great City in Which to Live

To ensure that Hamilton remains a great city, Council commits to providing quality services that residents can rely on and to support the community’s quality of life.

Providing Quality Community Services

Council will work to provide quality community services, honoring community identity and varying needs and circumstances. The myhamilton.ca portal will help to provide information and services in one convenient and easy to use location for residents, visitors and businesses, available 24 x 7. The focus of the CSPN is on horizontal service delivery for seniors by providing easy access to information of greatest interest to seniors, their families, caregivers and service providers.

Putting Our Best Face Forward

Providing a “Smart Community” portal that provides a “one stop shop” for Hamilton, with a robust content management system to ensure community groups and individuals can contribute fresh content, says much about the progressive nature of the City of Hamilton.

Young Hamiltonians are Part of Being Great

Council will commit to building a new city that makes a place for its’ best and brightest – our children and grandchildren; young people need to feel that they have a role in making our City great. We are planning to involve Youth in the development and testing of the Portal and a “Youth Sub-Portal” will be developed in the future. We will apply those best practices and lessons learned in the development of the Seniors’ Portal.

A City Where People Come First

To harness the energy of the citizens of the New City of Hamilton and to fulfil our obligation to be open and accessible, Council commits to communicate clearly and effectively with the public; provide full information about services, their costs and how well they meet clear performance targets. Through the CHCC Project, the public will have increased access to City services and information.

New Opportunities for Public Input & Volunteerism

The portal will provide new and innovative opportunities to enable more people to share their views and contributions to the City, Council and its’ services. The Portal will provide volunteer associations another channel to attract new volunteers and collaboration tools to communicate and collaborate with their existing pool of volunteers.

A City That Spends Wisely and Invests Strategically

To get the best value for taxpayer dollars, and to ensure that we have the financial resources available to invest in our economic development and other community priorities, Council commits to increase the efficiency of our City government. The CHCC Project and Seniors’ Portal will work towards optimizing the systems that are already in place; integrating the existing systems to reduce processes, improve data integrity and reduce duplicating investments in technology; and corporate wide involvement in any new technology that will be implemented in the City.

Maintain Service Levels

Except where mandated by statutory obligation or to address priority infrastructure deficiencies, Council will maintain, but not increase, service levels until its economic development program is complete. The Portal will provide tools for content contributors to simplify web updates, thereby enabling service levels to be maintained while meeting increasing demands.