

#### 4. AREA IDENTITY MAPPING

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The purpose of this report is to seek support for an exercise to establish 'area identity'. This will be the starting point for progressing Strategic Community Renewal Plans (SCREP's).

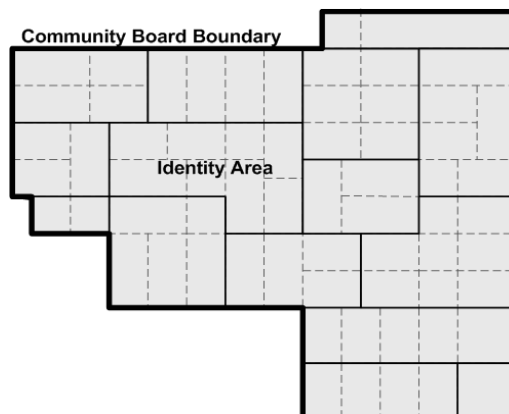
#### BACKGROUND

At its 3 March 2004 meeting this Committee supported a system of neighbourhood planning based on longer term Strategic Community Renewal Plans. This initiative is to replace and expand the current Urban Renewal Programme and Neighbourhood Plans. Funding for this initiative was requested through the Annual Plan Subcommittee, who supported the request. Once funding is confirmed the preparation of SCREP's can proceed. At the 3 March 2004 meeting this Committee resolved that "staff report back on 'area identity' on how this might be prioritised". This resulted from discussion about how the boundaries of SCREP's should be established and expenditure prioritised.

#### ESTABLISHING GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

In order to prepare plans for areas of the city it is first necessary to divide the city into areas. 'Urban Renewal' is concentrated on the older areas of the city and therefore if areas were to be defined from an urban renewal perspective, it would first be necessary to determine what was meant by 'older'. It would be possible to define older as say 'predominantly constructed prior to 1950'. However, determining the extent of an area for 'Community Renewal' may not best be defined by selecting physically older areas. In order for integrated physical, social and economic planning to take place it is important to ensure that a framework is established within which all fields of interest can operate.

It will not be possible to establish one set of area boundaries that suits all area based planning. Some plans (for roading or waterways for example) will have a linear boundary, others (such as social needs studies) may cover an extensive area or a confined area, or have a very ill-defined boundary. However, in order to establish a way of working together, a framework which can be used to organise information needs to be established. For administrative reasons it will be important to align the new planning boundaries with the Community Board boundaries. In order to make use of socio-economic data the census mesh block boundaries will also need to be utilised for establishing area boundaries.



**Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of one Community Board area divided into a number of Identity Areas**

It is suggested that the delineation of planning areas within Community Board areas, be based on the character and identity of areas. Each 'identity area' would be made up of a grouping of census mesh blocks.

In order to establish the boundary of each 'identity area' the following exercise is proposed, based on the body of work known as "mental mapping"<sup>1</sup>. Residents will be asked, through the City Scene or other means, to identify what they consider as 'their neighbourhood' by drawing a boundary on a map.

They will be asked what identifies it as their neighbourhood (eg where they can walk to, particular style of buildings, where their friends live, lies between the railway line and the main road) what they consider to be special about it (eg lots of trees, heritage buildings, close to the beach, friendly neighbours) and what they think are problems (not enough open space, too much traffic, difficult to walk to school). The results of this survey will then be used to ascertain boundaries, on the basis of which information will be mapped and collated.

<sup>1</sup> See for example: Thomas C Greene, Mental Mapping of Pleasantness and Planning Objectives in the Town of Brillon Landscape, St Lawrence University.

Information to be mapped will include City Plan zoning, larger community facilities, bus and cycle routes, boundaries of management plans, existing Neighbourhood Plans, community projects (such as New Brighton Task Force), large areas of vacant land, land in public ownership etc. Existing studies relevant to the area will be collected.

It is hoped that this area based information for guiding our city planning will be WEBMAP based at some stage, if not immediately.

#### **PROGRESSING STRATEGIC COMMUNITY RENEWAL PLANS**

Once a city wide map of identity areas has been established it will be necessary to determine for which areas strategic community renewal plans will be prepared.

#### **PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME - STRATEGIC COMMUNITY RENEWAL PLANS - FIRST STEP**

July 2004	Funding approved - seek necessary staff/consultants
July/August	Advise Community Boards and relevant Standing Committees of initiative
September/October	Mental mapping and community issues exercise
September - January 2005	Information collection and preparation of base information

#### **Staff**

**Recommendation:** That an area identity mapping exercise be endorsed.

#### **Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the staff recommendation be supported.