

Leadership Niagara Community Leadership Development Program 24-25 Project Proposal Executive Summary

Company name: The Corners Run Crew

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Company Mission Statement: Moderate Pace. Positive Space. Bigger than the run.

Organization Type: Unincorporated Community Group

Description of Project and Statement of Need:

The Corners Run Crew members are no strangers to donning high-visibility clothing, ensuring their watches and phones are charged in case something goes wrong while they're on a run, and generally staying alert for their own safety. However, $\frac{2}{3}$ women runners have reported feeling unsafe on runs due to verbal harassment, and multiple attacks - even murders - have been reported against runners in North America in recent years. With this constantly in mind, women, gender-diverse, and visibly-others Crewmates take additional precautions when they lace up, and still have received unwanted comments, been followed, and otherwise made to feel unsafe. With dark evenings and minimal infrastructure supporting road users other than drivers, and safety and equity as key to their vision of an active community, The Corners is looking to improve conditions and feelings of safety for all community members.

The project proposed is currently open-ended and in development, with The Corners - a fully volunteer-run group - looking for CLDP to support the creation of an awareness campaign and/or strategy specifically to focus on raising awareness for and changing public perception and action around gender-based violence against runners, and ultimately creating safer streets for all. This is related to amazing initiatives such as Gillian's Place's or YWCA Hamilton's "Walk a Mile in Her/Their Shoes", as well as Sexual Assault Centre of Niagara / the provincial "Take Back the Night", but with a spin towards fitness and community that might bring more folks on-board. This will require research or consultation, proposal, and ultimately development of materials and a plan to support the intended outcome of safer streets for all. Elements might include place-based information, tips for and exemplification of allies, awareness-raising efforts, establishment of "safe homes", and other strategies for runners. The Corners, and St.

Catharines overall, can encourage everyone to be active and feel safe, but we need help in order to make this truly bigger than the run.

Success Criteria:

Most of The Corners' feedback and measures of success are anecdotal, or in the form of recognition through remarks and awards from municipal leaders and partner organizations. With this initiative, we would hope to survey the Crew for their pre- and post-initiative feedback including feelings and awareness of safety, and to consider methods of gauging broader community awareness and participation in safety. Similarly, impact could be evaluated through surveying the broader community around awareness, attitudes, and action related to safe streets and gender-based violence. The Corners' leadership will be involved throughout, to ensure that these efforts are community-led and remain based on the Crew's involvement and intentions.