

Directional Signage for Centennial Park and 401 Mini Indy (Markland-Centennial and Rexdale-Thistletown)

(City Council on December 14, 15 and 16, 1999, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Etobicoke Community Council recommends the adoption of the joint report (December 2, 1999) from the Director of Transportation Services, District 2, and the Director of Parks and Recreation, West District.

The Etobicoke Community Council reports, for the information of City Council, having requested the Director of Transportation Services, District 2, to continue to explore possible locations for directional signage for the indoor 401 Mini Indy site.

The Etobicoke Community Council submits the following joint report (December 2, 1999) from the Director of Transportation Services, District 2, and the Director of Parks and Recreation, West District:

Purpose:

To report on the installation of directional signage on City roads for the Mini Indy sites at Centennial Park and Stoffel Drive.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

If approved, the City's initial cost would be \$1,000.00 for guide signage and an annual fee of \$1,250.00 for the Canadian TODS Ltd. freeway signage. The initial installation and annual fees can be accommodated in the annual Parks and Recreation Operating Budget.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) directional signage to Centennial Park indicating the city and private recreational facilities available (Mini Indy Go Karts, Olympium, Golf Centre and Soccer City) be installed at approximately 12 locations subject to the location approval of the Director of Transportation Services, District 2;
- (2) the cost of the sign installations and the annual fee paid to Canadian TODS Ltd. be shared by the City and its partners at Centennial Park with funding to be provided from the Parks and Recreation Division's Operating Budget;
- (3) directional signage for the indoor Mini Indy site on Stoffel Drive be addressed in the future within the context of the attractions signing policy requested by the Economic Development and Parks Committee; and
- (4) Council authorize and direct the appropriate staff to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The Etobicoke Community Council at its meeting held on November 9, 1999, adopted the following recommendations:

- (1) referred the aforementioned communication to the Director of Transportation Services, District 2, and the Director of Parks and Recreation, West District, with a request that they submit a joint report to the next meeting of the Etobicoke Community Council to be held on December 2, 1999, with respect to the resolution of directional signage on City roads for both the Centennial Park and 401 Mini Indy locations; and
- (2) requested the Director of Parks and Recreation, West District, to advise Canadian TODS Limited of the City of Toronto's interest in reserving Tourism Oriented Directional Signage to promote Centennial Park and the Mini Indy.

Mr. Ross McMullen of Centennial Park Mini Indy (CPMI) appeared before the Etobicoke Community Council in connection with this item.

Comments:

Centennial Park attracts between 1 and 1.5 million users per year. There are a number of municipal and privately owned facilities in the park. The main municipal facility is the Etobicoke Olympium, which is known nationally for its facilities. To enhance the recreational facilities at the park, the City has entered into partnerships with private operators to provide the following facilities:

- (1) Centennial Park Mini Indy;
- (2) Centennial Park Golf Centre; and
- (3) Soccer City.

The City has agreements with the private operators and receives significant annual revenue. For example, the City is currently partnered with Centennial Park Mini Indy (CPMI) under a 25-year lease (1995-2020) which allows CPMI to provide go-kart rental and related recreational opportunities within Centennial Park.

The current leases do not require the City to sign the private facilities from the external road system. The leases contemplate signage on park roads and at the entrances to Centennial Park, on the park proper.

Staff and the private partnerships see enhanced public exposure for all aspects of Centennial Park through the introduction of directional signage on the freeway system through Canadian TODS Limited Tourism signage and on the local roads system.

At this time, apart from on-site signage, Centennial Park is only signed at one site on the external road system. There are signs at the intersection of Bloor Street West and Renforth Drive. Given the extensive public and private partnership facilities at this site, it is appropriate that additional directional signage to the park be provided. This signage could indicate both the City and partner facilities. A proposed sign is shown in Attachment No. 1.

The Tourism Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) Program is administered by Canadian TODS Limited under the supervision of the Ministry of Transportation and the Ministry of Tourism. Centennial Park qualifies as a major attraction under the existing general criteria as outlined by TODS. Staff have identified two freeway sign locations on Highway No. 401 where signs would be installed under the TODS program and 12 local road sites. The proposed sign locations are shown on Attachment No. 2. Staff have contacted TODS and have been advised that there are sign sites available. City and TODS staff will be inspecting the sites next week. There can be no reservation of sites and TODS requires the authorization of City Council for the directional signs on the local roads before it will enter into an agreement.

Mr. Ross McMullen, on behalf of CPMI, has been requesting directional signage on the surrounding roads for his operations at Centennial Park and on Stoffel Drive over a number of years with particular emphasis on the 401 Mini Indy site on Stoffel Drive. While there are some linkages, staff feel that the signage issues can be separated.

Although the lease with CPMI does not deal in any way with the 401 Mini Indy site, which is an indoor year-round location; Parks and Recreation staff feel that there are some synergies between the sites that supports the seasonal operation at Centennial Park. This is via cross-promotional opportunities geared to attract specific clientele age groupings. Future success at the 401 Mini Indy location may have some impact on the ongoing financial viability of the Centennial Park Mini Indy operation.

Mr. McMullen is requesting nine guide signs on Carlingview Drive and on Dixon Road. He had previously received approval from the former City of Etobicoke staff for two signs on Kelfield Drive, which was a local City of Etobicoke street. The requested locations are also shown on Attachment No. 2, as are the two existing sign locations. Requests for signs on Dixon Road had previously been turned down under the attractions signing guidelines of the former Metropolitan Toronto. These guidelines are still applicable at this time. Mr. McMullen has indicated that TODS will not approve signs on Highway No. 401 for the 401 Mini Indy until directional signing on Dixon Road is approved.

The Economic Development and Parks Committee at its meeting on November 8, 1999, adopted the following recommendations:

“(b) Tourist Destination Signage

The Economic Development and Parks Committee reports having:

- (1) referred the matter of signage to the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism with a request that he report back to the Committee, in consultation with Transportation staff and TEDCO, on signage throughout the City of Toronto, the said report to include signage on the 401/Don Valley Parkway indicating direction to the Portlands and various attractions at that location;
- (2) requested Mr. Sprackman, The Docks Waterfront Entertainment Complex, to provide staff with a list of suggested locations for signage providing direction to the Portlands area; and
- (3) received the following communication:

(September 15, 1999) from Jerry Sprackman, The Docks Waterfront Entertainment Complex, requesting permission to address the Economic Development and Parks Committee in regards to the Tourist Destination Signage.”

Given that there is no direct linkage between the City of Toronto and the 401 Mini Indy, it is appropriate that the request for directional signage on the local roads be dealt with in the context of the requested policy on attractions signage.

Conclusions:

Centennial Park is a regional facility that warrants additional directional signage under the TODS program and on City roads. The City has partnered with a number of private operators to enhance the park as a recreational destination and these facilities should be recognized on this directional signage.

While there may be some synergies between the Centennial Park Mini Indy and 401 Mini Indy on Stoffel Drive, the request for signage should be dealt with in the context of a city policy for attractions signing which has been requested by City Council.

Contacts:

John W. Thomas, P.Eng., MBA,
Director Transportation Services, District 2
Tel.: (416) 394-8341 Fax: (416) 394-5416

Don Boyle
Director of Parks and Recreation, West District
Tel.: (416) 394-5723 Fax: (416) 394-8935

The Etobicoke Community Council reports, for the information of Council, also having had before it, during consideration of the foregoing report, a communication (November 29, 1999) from Mr. Ross McMullen, 401 Mini Indy, providing background information which indicates that the request for signage meets both the City's and the Ministry of Transportation's criteria.

(A copy of each of Attachments Nos. 1 and 2, referred to in the foregoing report, was forwarded to all Members of Council with the agenda for the Etobicoke Community Council meeting of December 2 and 3, 1999, and a copy of each is on file in the office of the City Clerk.)