

# **TORONTO** STAFF REPORT

---

April 20, 2006

To: Economic Development and Parks Committee

From: Brenda Librecz, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Subject: Parks, Forestry and Recreation Safety and Security Protocols  
All Wards

Purpose:

To provide information with respect to safety and security measures and protocols currently in place within Parks, Forestry and Recreation and initiatives underway to further enhance these measures and protocols.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report

Recommendations:

It is recommended that this report be received for information

Background:

At its meeting of January 31 and February 1 and 2, 2006, City Council requested that the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation report to the Economic Development and Parks Committee on safety and security protocols currently in place and any opportunities for enhancement, ensuring that these protocols are communicated across the City of Toronto.

Comments:

In 2005, the City of Toronto Corporate Security Unit, on behalf of Parks and Recreation – South and East Districts, conducted a preliminary security assessment to determine the range of security features currently in place at over twenty Parks and Recreation facilities. The Corporate Security Unit identified existing deficiencies and provided recommendations, where warranted, for additional security features or practices deemed necessary to provide Toronto Parks and Recreation facilities and its patrons with adequate and consistent levels of protection.

Measures to implement the recommended methods for improvements are currently underway. Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division staff are working towards the implementation of a consistent standard of safety and security for all recreation facilities operated by Parks, Forestry and Recreation across the City. Funding required for these ongoing facility audits and improvements will be included in the 2007 and future years' Capital Budget program.

Currently, there are numerous divisional and corporate policies in place to assist staff in dealing with critical incidents and with the safety and security of patrons of Parks, Forestry and Recreation programs and facilities. In an effort to strengthen our existing safety and security protocols, a divisional staff team in Parks, Forestry and Recreation, has been established to develop a Critical Incident Management Plan for the Division, which will strengthen existing safety and security protocols.

The team is conducting an analysis of corporate and divisional policies and procedures and is conducting research on the crisis management plans of other large Canadian and American municipalities and school boards to develop a set of best practices and protocols related to the handling of critical incidents and emergencies that may occur at our sites and facilities. The staff team is also looking at various ways and means of preventing crimes and violent incidents from occurring and developing conflict resolution and de-escalation measures that can be used by staff at our facilities.

In developing the Plan, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff team is collaborating with Human Resources staff, the Office of Emergency Management and Toronto Public Health. At a meeting on April 13, 2006, CUPE Local 79 raised security and safety of staff and the public as an important issue. They will be engaged throughout this process. It is anticipated that the Critical Incident Management Plan will be developed in the fall of this year, following extensive consultation with frontline Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff. A communications and training strategy is being developed concurrently for the roll out of the Plan by year end. It is essential that staff be well-trained in order to properly implement the Plan.

Another component of this work involves the development of crisis response and counselling protocols for Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff, along with members of the local community, who may be affected in the event of an incident occurring at one of our sites or facilities. Staff will be trained in both the crisis response and counselling protocols.

A new police protocol has been developed and staff will be trained in May 2006. The police protocol is an agreement between the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division and Toronto Police Services to work co-operatively to ensure the safety in our parks and recreation facilities. It is designed to maintain a good working relationship between police, staff and the community.

Conclusions:

Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in collaboration with the Corporate Security Unit in the Facilities and Real Estate Division, has conducted safety and security audits of recreation centres. Reports have been prepared which identify areas where improvements are needed and staff are currently in the process of implementing these improvements, to ensure a consistent standard of safety and security at our facilities. A divisional staff team is also developing a Critical Incident Management Plan that is based upon the “best practices and protocols” of other jurisdictions and which will provide staff with the necessary tools to either prevent or respond to critical incidents at Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites and facilities.

Contact:

Don Boyle  
Director, Community Recreation  
Tel: 416-392-7252  
Fax: 416-395-0105  
Email: dboyle@toronto.ca

Kathy Wiele  
Director, Divisional Coordination and Compliance  
Tel: 416-392-8184  
Fax: 416-392-5600  
Email: kwiele@toronto.ca

Brenda Librecz  
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation