

Consolidated Clause in Economic Development and Parks Committee Report 1, which was considered by City Council on January 31, February 1 and 2, 2006.

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**Enhancing Tourism in Toronto With a
Recreational Vehicle Campground (All Wards)**

City Council on January 31, February 1 and 2, 2006, adopted this Clause without amendment.

The Economic Development and Parks Committee recommends that City Council adopt the staff recommendations in the Recommendations Section of the report (January 9, 2006) from the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

Purpose:

To provide an update on opportunities for enhancing tourism in Toronto with a Recreational Vehicle Campground.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

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

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, working in conjunction with the Tourism Unit of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, prepare a comprehensive report exploring additional opportunities on how to further attract Recreational Vehicle tourism to Toronto, to include:
 - (a) the results of an industry consultation with relevant stakeholders that would specifically address the market potential of augmenting Toronto tourism infrastructure to include Recreational Vehicle specific facilities near the downtown core;
 - (b) the identification and analysis of potential locations for Recreational Vehicle specific facilities near Toronto's downtown core with access to public transit and the ability to provide the necessary support amenities required to accommodate Recreational Vehicle camping;

- (c) an analysis and summary of research on competing campgrounds within the Greater Toronto Area, including City of Toronto, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and Ontario Parks campgrounds;
 - (d) the results of an industry consultation that would specifically address the possibilities for and market potential of augmenting the Toronto Recreational Vehicle tourism infrastructure by way of increased promotion and development of the Glen Rouge Campground;
 - (e) an analysis of a 2005 Glen Rouge Campground camper survey, and a summary of results from the previous years;
 - (f) a set of additional ideas, collected from relevant stakeholders, on how to effectively promote Toronto as a prime camping destination for Recreational Vehicle camping enthusiasts; and
 - (g) a set of staff recommendations outlining the next steps to be taken in order to further attract Recreational Vehicle tourism to the City and report back to the Economic Development and Parks Committee in 2006; and
- (2) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

At its meeting on September 28, 29 and 30, 2005, City Council, in response to the notice of motion J(4) "Enhancing Tourism in Toronto with a Recreational Vehicle Campground", requested that the Deputy City Manager and the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, working in conjunction with Tourism Toronto, prepare a report for Council that addresses how the City could attract Recreational Vehicle tourism to Toronto.

Specifically, staff were instructed to include in their report: suggestions for potential Recreational Vehicle campground sites near the downtown core that would be easily accessible to public transit; an assessment of properties that could accommodate Recreational Vehicle campsites, providing access to utilities such as electricity, water and sewage disposal; and ideas on how to effectively promote Toronto as a prime camping destination for Recreational Vehicle, trailer and motor home enthusiasts. Additionally, Council directed staff to contact relevant industry stakeholders to request their input.

Comments:

The Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division has been active in the realm of Recreational Vehicle tourism for the past few years. Nestled in a wooded valley within Rouge Park, at the eastern edge of Ward 44, Parks, Forestry and Recreation operates the Glen Rouge Campground, a riverside campground that offers safe, peaceful and relaxing facilities to camping tourists. Acting on recommendations sought from industry experts in 2002, Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff carried out minor improvements to the campground's infrastructure and available services. These changes, combined with increased promotional efforts, have resulted in an increase to the campground revenues by almost 50 percent over the past three years.

The Campground has 124 sites designed to support every form of camping, from backpacking to family Recreational Vehicle camping. The majority of sites are pull-through with 15 and 30 amp service, while others are regular unserviced or specially designed backpacker/touring-cyclist campsites. The campground offers access to public telephones, clean washrooms and showers, a dump station and laundry facilities. It is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, throughout the camping season.

Glen Rouge Campground is also an ideal base from which to explore the City of Toronto. The Campground is conveniently located near Highway 401 and TTC and GO public transit, allowing for easy access to the downtown core and the many tourist attractions that it offers.

The request to report back on possibilities for enhancing Recreational Vehicle tourism within Toronto presents the City with a great opportunity to perform a thorough environmental scan, market evaluation and industry consultation that would address the potential of augmenting Toronto's tourism infrastructure to include additional or improved Recreational Vehicle services and facilities near to public transit and the downtown core.

By investigating the unique opportunities present in both the development of a new Recreational Vehicle campsite and the increased development of the Glen Rouge Campground, staff will be able to establish an effective set of actions that will ensure that both ventures highlight and complement each other.

Conclusion:

The request to report back on possibilities for enhancing Recreational Vehicle tourism within the City of Toronto presents a great opportunity to perform a thorough environmental scan, market evaluation and industry consultation to address the market potential of augmenting Toronto's tourism infrastructure to include additional Recreational Vehicle services and facilities near the downtown core.

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