



## STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

### Providing Shade at Parks, Forestry and Recreation Sites

<b>Date:</b>	March 15, 2007
<b>To:</b>	Parks and Environment Committee
<b>From:</b>	General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

#### **SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to provide information on efforts being made by the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division to address shade at Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites and to provide information regarding the assessment of shade at city playgrounds. The Division has policy guidelines in place to assist with improving opportunities for both natural shade (trees) and constructed shade (shelters) wherever feasible. Consideration of shade is a component of the design process for new and retrofitted facilities and park sites.

With 833 playgrounds under the management of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, an examination of City playgrounds to determine which have sufficient shade and those that are deficient, is a large undertaking. Staff are developing an approach to this review and will report back, this fall, to the Parks and Environment Committee on the implications (both financial and operational) of undertaking this work.

#### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications.

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#### **DECISION HISTORY**

On January 23, 2007, the Parks and Environment Committee requested that the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation report on efforts being made by the division to address the provision of shade at Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites and provide information outlining the City playgrounds that have sufficient shade and those that are deficient in this area and to develop a strategy for shade coverage.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

In 2003, a Shade Policy Committee made up of city staff and health professionals from various external organizations developed a comprehensive shade policy for the City of Toronto. The policy outlined various health considerations in providing shade and presented guidelines for including shade at all city owned or managed sites.

On May 4, 2005, City Council considered a report from the Medical Officer of Health on the Shade Policy for the City of Toronto. During the debate, concerns were expressed about possible financial implications resulting from the adoption of the policy. As a result, City Council chose not to adopt the report and the policy was not implemented.

Subsequently, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division developed its own shade policy and design guidelines to integrate shade provisions into the development of new park and recreational facilities and retrofits of existing facilities, where feasible.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Policy Overview:**

The Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division considers shade opportunities in the design of any new or retrofitted site or facility. These considerations are integrated into the design / re-design wherever it is operationally feasible to do so. The objectives of the policy are as follows:

Shade provision at Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites will be increased, wherever feasible, as part of the Division's approach to designing and retrofitting its assets.

### **Short Term Objectives:**

- To increase the opportunities for UVR protection at Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites through education and promotion of shade strategies to appropriate staff members and to the general public where possible.
- To ensure that the provision of UVR protection is a consideration in the planning process with respect to the development of all Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites.
- To seek community advice and input to assist with planning of future shade creation activities as part of the division's regular capital program activities.

## **Long Term Objectives:**

- To provide city staff and the public with greater opportunities to access shade at all Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites.
- To implement, wherever possible, the UVR reduction strategies contained in the policy with respect to the future development or redevelopment of all Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites.
- To achieve continued and measurable growth in the number of UVR protection elements available at Parks, Forestry and Recreation sites
- To ensure UVR protection initiatives become an integral part of any new Parks, Forestry and Recreation development project.

In addition to these broad objectives, the Division's strategy provides staff with information related to overall shade planning, natural shade and tree selection, constructed shade (awnings, tents, etc.), the benefits of addressing shade in the design process and how to develop and conduct a full shade audit when necessary.

The policy provides a set of guidelines for staff to consider when undertaking the normal design process for construction or park improvement projects. However, the policy is not intended to place an additional financial burden on existing operating or capital budgets. Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff continue to review and update these guidelines to ensure they remain relevant and practical.

## **City Playgrounds:**

In order to fully assess the deficiencies that may exist at the 833 city playgrounds that are managed by Parks, Forestry and Recreation, staff will develop a strategy for conducting shade audits in consultation with the local community. Staff will report back to the Parks and Environment Committee, this fall, on this strategy and timelines for implementation.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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