

January 14, 2008

To: Community Development and Recreation Committee

From: Community Development and Recreation Committee

Subject: Improving Access to Recreation: "Everybody Gets to Play"

Decision Advice and Other Information:

The Community Development and Recreation Committee on January 14, 2008:

1. deferred hearing speakers on this item to a special meeting of the Community Development and Recreation Committee to be held on Wednesday, January 23, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.;
2. deferred Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the report (December 28, 2007) from the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to the February 21, 2008, meeting of the Community Development and Recreation Committee, with a request that the Chair of the Community Development and Recreation Committee convene a special meeting of the Committee for the purpose of hearing from the public on the proposed policy and program directions set out in this report;
3. requested the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to report to the special meeting of Community Development and Recreation Committee to be held on January 23, 2008, on:
 - a. the current cost to deliver each City program, the fee for the program, the percentage of subsidy and the cost for a similar program in the municipalities used in this report to compare subsidies, and in particular Markham and Brampton;
 - b. all data that Parks and Recreation Staff have to ascertain who the users of the Priority Centres are, the numbers of seniors, youth and children, their income level and whether these families can afford to pay increased user fees or whether they will no longer be able to continue to attend these programs; and
 - c. opportunities that are available to work with other sport organizations and funding partners to advance the delivery of affordable or free sports programming in Toronto;

4. requested that the proposed consultation process on the “Everybody Gets to Play” policy:
 - a. include consultations with young people, specifically:
 - i. sessions with the graduates and staff of the leadership programs currently being offered;
 - ii. sessions with youth users of the existing “priority centres”; and
 - b. be held in different neighbourhoods throughout the City, including “priority neighbourhoods”;
5. requested the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to:
 - a. submit a report to the Community Development and Recreation Committee on February 21, 2008, on:
 - i. an assessment of the impact of the proposed increased fees on program enrollment;
 - ii. an analysis of the level of eligibility for the Welcome Policy of residents in priority centre neighbourhoods;
 - iii. a profile comparing the current and proposed free vs. fee-based programs at all 21 priority centres;
 - iv. a summary of possible approaches to streamline Welcome Policy eligibility assessment using an interdivisional model;
 - v. resource and staffing needs in order to ensure successful implementation; and
 - vi. the profile of users of the Welcome Policy and enrollment in priority centres in individual wards;
 - b. establish a priority centres table to provide input during the consultation period, if possible, and guide planning during the implementation phase; and
 - c. consult with equity-seeking groups and include this information in her supplementary report to the February 21, 2008, meeting of the Community Development and Recreation Committee; and
6. referred the communication (April 25, 2007) from the Board of Health to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, for consideration as part of the supplementary report to be submitted to the Community Development and Recreation Committee on February 21, 2008.

Background:

The Community Development and Recreation Committee on January 14, 2008, considered a report (December 28, 2007) from the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation entitled *Improving Access to Recreation "Everybody Gets to Play"*.

Recommendations:

The General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, recommends that:

1. The City of Toronto increase participation in recreation programs by implementing the following policy and program directions in support of "Everybody Gets to Play":
 - a. Protect and expand free drop-in recreation and leisure activities;
 - b. Develop and implement city-wide universal free grade/age specific instructional programs in collaboration with the boards of education:
 - i. Youth Cooperative Leadership program for Grade 8 and 9 students;
 - ii. Learn to Skate program for Grade 5 students; and
 - iii. Swim Skills program for Grade 4 Students;
 - c. Renew the recreation subsidy policy for individuals and families with income below the Low Income Cut Off based on the following credits per person per year:
 - i. \$360 for children and youth;
 - ii. \$150 for adults; and
 - iii. \$150 for seniors;
2. initiate the phased conversion of Priority Centres over 3 years to align with other Parks, Forestry and Recreation centres, including provisions for the following:
 - a. development of a transition plan to guide conversion of Priority Centres to the new subsidy policy and the introduction of fee-based programs;
 - b. consultation with users and community groups on the transition plan and service priorities; and
 - c. supplemental funding for additional drop-in programs as determined through service planning;
3. adopt a new pricing policy for fee-based recreation programs that will achieve an average 50% recovery of direct costs within 7 years;
4. develop a program to monitor and review participation and access to recreation services by all Toronto residents, including:
 - a. demand for and use of recreation services ;

- b. impacts on participation from pricing and costing changes;
 - c. use of financial access policies and programs by residents;
 - d. communication and marketing of policy to target communities; and
 - e. “ease of use” for residents and City staff.; and
5. recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 4 above be deferred to the February 21, 2008 meeting of the Community Development and Recreation Committee, with a request that the Chair of the Community Development and Recreation Committee convene a special meeting of the Committee during the week of January 21, 2008 for the purpose of hearing from the public on the proposed policy and program directions set out in this report.

Speakers:

Brenda Librecz, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation (Submission Filed)
Malcolm Bromley, Director, Community Recreation, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Matt Bentley, Program Standards Development Officer, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Councillor Shelley Carroll, Ward 33, Don Valley East
Councillor Gord Perks, Ward 14, Parkdale-High Park
Councillor Adam Vaughan, Ward 20, Trinity-Spadina

City Clerk

Candy Davidovits/lv
Item CD12.7

- c. General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation