



## Joe Pantalone

Deputy Mayor  
City of Toronto

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### MOTION – Fort York Visitor Centre Funding

#### SUMMARY:

The City's Culture Division is planning to build a Visitor Centre at the Fort York National Historic Site. The need for a Visitor Centre has been recognized in numerous planning studies prepared for the Fort over the past 20 years and is part of the City's Capital Budget. The Visitor Centre presents a unique opportunity to reposition the historic site within its historic and contemporary context. The Visitor Centre will be one of the legacy projects for the upcoming Bicentennial of the War of 1812 commemoration (overseen by a Steering Committee co-chaired by myself).

The Visitor Centre will provide the venue through which the Fort's content rich interpretive programs can be delivered more effectively. The Visitor Centre will be a multi-purpose building that will include exhibit spaces, multi-purpose rooms and meeting spaces, food service, a retail store and washrooms. The facility will also serve the local community with programming, curriculum-based school programming, and the multi-purpose rooms and meeting spaces can be used by the general public. At this time, exact programming has not been determined.

The Visitor Centre design has been completed and the project cost has been determined at \$23,013,000 gross and \$3,313,000 net. Confirmed funding sources include the City's Capital Budget, contributions from the Federal Government and approximately \$1.7 million in Section 37 contributions for Fort York Improvements. The Fort York Foundation has also set a fundraising goal of \$6 million. The Provincial Government has been requested to provide a contribution, however no funding from the Province has been confirmed and there is a potential budget shortfall.

The Fort York Secondary Plan contemplates a new Visitor Centre at the Fort and includes a provision that the Visitor Centre may also serve as a multi-use community facility. The Section 37 agreements for Blocks 1/2A, 3A, 3B, 5 and 7 in the Fort York Neighbourhood secured contributions of approximately \$2 million towards a community centre to serve the Fort York Neighbourhood. Blocks 2, 3, 4, 4A, 6 and 6A are subject to Development Levy Agreements where development levies are collected and spent like development charges. Accordingly, a portion of the levies is to be spent on community services.

The Visitor Centre will serve as a multi-use facility and be a centre point for the local community. In order to address any potential budget shortfall, on the understanding that the Visitor Centre will include community centre uses/programming and spaces available for the community, I recommend

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that available Section 37 contributions collected for a Community Centre in the Fort York Neighbourhood be directed to help fund the Visitor Centre. I also recommend that staff take the necessary steps to facilitate the specific allocation of a portion of the development levies collected in the Fort York Neighbourhood toward the Visitor Centre.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

City Council authorize and request appropriate staff to take all necessary action to direct any available or future Section 37 contributions for a community centre, collected from developments on Blocks 1/2A, 3A, 3B, 5 and 7 in the Fort York Neighbourhood , to the construction of the Fort York Visitor Centre;

City Council authorize and request appropriate staff to take the necessary steps to facilitate the specific allocation of development levies received in relation to Blocks 2, 3, 4, 4A, 6 and 6A toward the Fort York Visitor Centre;

City Council request appropriate staff to report back in the first quarter of 2011 on progress implementing recommendations 1 and 2 and how community programming will be delivered at the Visitor Centre; and

City Council request appropriate staff to take the necessary action to give effect to the above recommendations.

Sincerely,

Joe Pantalone  
Deputy Mayor  
City of Toronto