



June 8, 2015

Dear Parks and Environment Committee Chair and Members,

**Re: Building a Paddle Friendly City that Supports the Urban Recreational Fisheries Strategy**

Toronto has been shaped by the water that surrounds it. Lake Ontario, our rivers, the ice and snow, have all played a role in shaping our city. Toronto's cultural roots were forged by the Ojibway, Mohawk, and Wendat people who lived, fished, traded, and travelled the shores of Lake Ontario. Later, predominantly European settlers further capitalized on the natural water features of our landscape by facilitating the growth of industry and use of the water as a transportation system, all the time enjoying the recreational uses that the water provided us.

Today, we have made great strides in cleaning our once polluted waterways through strategic investments in our infrastructure and regulations that protect water. We have restored shorelines, we have cleaned storm water, and we have built public spaces where people can enjoy our waterfront.

Now it is time to celebrate and enjoy them. That means swimming, fishing, and paddling in Toronto's waterways. We have eight designated Blue Flag Beaches.

Despite improvements, access to the water's edge is still inhibited by shorelines that restrict access. While beaches allow access for swimming, only a handful of locations can be accessed by anglers and boaters. It can be difficult to find a place on Toronto's waterfront where you can put a canoe into the water or cast your fishing line.

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) along with the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, have been working to design landscaping features that will improve fish habitat for urban fishing while providing access points for canoe and kayakers to put their boats into the water. In May 2015, the TRCA passed the Urban Recreational Fisheries Strategy and in recent years the TRCA has implemented several shoreline habitat restoration projects that provide access for anglers and boaters.

# Councillor **Mike Layton**



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## **Recommendations:**

That the Parks and Environment Committee:

1. Request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to give a presentation, with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, to the Parks and Environment Committee on the Urban Recreational Fisheries Strategy and how the City of Toronto can support these efforts.
2. Request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, in consultation with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and recreational water users, to report to the Parks and Environment Committee in 2016 with recommendations to make Toronto's waterways more accessible to recreational fishing and boating, specifically low water docks for access by kayaks, canoes and paddle boards.
3. Recommend that City Council express its support for the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Urban Recreational Fisheries Strategy and ongoing works to improve public access to Toronto's waterways.

Sincerely,

Mike Layton  
City Councillor  
Ward 19, Trinity-Spadina

Attachments: Urban-Recreational-Fisheries-Plan-Conservation-Authorities Presentation  
Long Pond Shoreline Enhancement Project Before and After