



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Implementation Update

<b>Date:</b>	March 29, 2016
<b>To:</b>	Community Recreation and Development Committee
<b>From:</b>	General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\CD11-041316-AFS#21719

### SUMMARY

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Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) is two and a half years into the five year mandate of the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan (the Plan). The purpose of this report is to update Community Development and Recreation Committee on the status of the implementation of the recommended actions outlined in the Plan. It also responds to direction from City Council and Community Development and Recreation Committee to report back with an update on the Youth Space Advisory Committee, Youth Outreach Strategy and evaluation of the Enhanced Youth Spaces Program (CD31.9) as well as the current status, progress and cost-sharing aspects of the After-School Recreation (ARC) Program and the status and potential roll out of the Community Leadership After-School Programs (CD3.3). While these were not initiatives specifically recommended in the Plan, they align with the overall objectives of increasing participation in recreation, decreasing financial barriers and improving local and geographic access.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation has advanced 24 out of the 27 recommended actions contained in the Plan. This report provides a summary of the progress made in advancing the Plan's four guiding principles: Quality; Capacity Building; Inclusion and Equitable Access.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. the Community Development and Recreation Committee receive this report for information.

## **Financial Impact**

There are no financial impacts resulting from the adoption of the recommendation in this report.

The detailed implementation plan for the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan was adopted by City Council on July 16, 2013 and the specific financial impacts to phase in portions of the plan were considered through the 2014, 2015 and 2016 Operating Budget process. From 2014 to 2016, total net Operating Budget increases of \$7.273 million were approved by City Council to advance Recreation Service Plan initiatives. This net impact includes gross expenditure increases of \$3.081 million and revenue reductions of \$4.192 million.

Future net Operating Budget increases to implement the remaining actions from Recreation Service Plan are currently estimated at \$9.455 million net, projected to be phased in from 2017 to 2020. Funding sources for the remaining actions have not yet been identified although estimates have been provided for the 2017 - 2021 Long Term Financial Plan.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **Equity Impact**

Parks, Forestry and Recreation values inclusion, respect, and diversity and aims to improve the quality of life of all Toronto residents through the provision of recreation programs and services that are welcoming and accessible. The focus of the implementation of the Plan has been on increasing equitable access to programs and increasing capacity to engage residents in hard-to-reach and underserved areas. The Division is committed to reducing barriers faced by equity-seeking groups and is determinedly developing and refining programs serving youth, children, and families in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs). These improvements are demonstrated through advancements of the initiatives and investments discussed in this report.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting of August 5 and 6, 2009, City Council adopted the development of a five-year Recreation Service Plan founded on the principles of equitable access, quality, inclusion, and capacity building.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2009.EX33.23>

At its meeting of April 12 and 13, 2011, City Council adopted the consultation framework for the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.CD2.1>

At its meeting of November 27, 2012, City Council adopted the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan with a recommendation to report back with an implementation plan in June 2013.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.CD17.2>

At its meeting of July 16 2013, City Council adopted the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Implementation Plan which sets out preliminary timelines, benchmark activities, and resource requirements to implement the actions contained in the Recreation Service Plan.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD22.1>

At its meeting of March 7, 2016, Community Development and Recreation Committee directed the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to meet with Social Planning Toronto, and consult with ethnic media, ethnocultural not-for-profit organizations and faith based organizations to discuss issues and identify solutions raised in Social Planning Toronto's "Newcomer Youth Access to Recreation in Toronto: Relationships, Resources and Relevance" report.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.CD10.11>

The following links provide background information and decision history on the After-School Recreation Care (ARC) and Enhanced Youth Spaces Programs.

**After-School Recreation Care:**

At its meeting of November 13, 14, 15 and 18, 2013, City Council adopted the approval of a 16-site expansion of the ARC Program.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD24.2>

At its meeting of May 5, 2015, City Council adopted the Toronto Children's Services 2015-2019 Service Plan which provides a portion of the ARC program funding.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.CD3.3>

**Enhanced Youth Spaces:**

December 4 2013, the Community Development and Recreation Committee referred the report (November 20, 2013) from the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to the Budget Committee for their consideration on the implementation of 10 new youth lounges.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD25.6>

At its meeting of August 25, 2014, City Council received a report providing an update on the implementation of the four Enhanced Youth Spaces and the establishment of a Youth Lounge Advisory Committee.  
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.CD31.9>

## ISSUE BACKGROUND

Toronto City Council unanimously approved the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan in November 2012. The Plan guides PFR's service priorities and advances planning and policy development of Toronto's recreation services. It aims to increase overall participation in recreation, decrease financial barriers, and to improve local and geographic access. The Plan's directions and recommended actions are based on significant input from residents and stakeholders, the documented benefits of recreation, and the demographic trends currently underway in Toronto.

The Recreation Service Plan is based on the following principles:

**1. Equitable Access**

Providing equitable recreation access on a geographic and demographic basis for all residents of Toronto.

**2. Quality**

Providing the highest quality of programs and services to enhance the health, quality of life, and well-being of residents.

**3. Inclusion**

Ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to access and participate in programs and services that are planned, delivered, and managed to recognize diversity and encourage participation of marginalized people and groups.

**4. Capacity Building**

Providing programs and services of social, economic and physical benefit to all participants and that create a sense of community, belonging, and vitality.

In July 2013, City Council approved the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan's implementation plan. PFR is two and a half years into the Plan's 5 year mandate and has focused on activities aimed at increasing access to recreation so all residents can participate, regardless of their age, location, or income.

The purpose of this report is to update the Community Development and Recreation Committee on the status of the implementation plan. It also responds to direction from the Committee and City Council to report back with an update on the Youth Space Advisory Committee, Youth Outreach Strategy and evaluation of the Enhanced Youth Spaces Program (CD31.9) as well as the progress and cost-sharing aspects of the After-School Recreation (ARC) Program and the status and potential roll out of the Community Leadership After-School Programs (CD3.3). These initiatives align with the Plan and have enabled the Branch to integrate investments in children and youth with the broader objectives of the Plan.

## **COMMENTS**

Over the last two and a half years, PFR has increased equitable access through investments that service children, youth, and families, particularly in hard-to-reach and underserved areas.

The following programs and initiatives have resulted in significant system changes and represent major advancements of the Plan's recommended actions. An account of City Council-directed programs and initiatives that function to advance the Plan have also been included. Appendix A lists all 27 of the Plan's Council-approved recommended actions and identifies whether the actions are on-going or complete, in progress, or future work.

## **COMMUNITY CENTRES WHERE PROGRAMS ARE FREE**

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Action:

*10.2 Implement the equitable distribution of free programs at designated recreation centres.*

The Plan recommended the “equitable distribution of free programs at designated recreation centres” as a key initiative to advance the principle of equitable access. Toronto City Council approved the financial impact of \$4.250 million net (2014-2016) to support the expansion of 16 additional centres where programs are free.

In 1999, Toronto City Council approved 21 centres where programs are free (formerly known as Priority Centres) in neighbourhoods with high incidence of low income. Two more centres were designated in 2011 and 2012, Antibes Community Centre and Regent Park Aquatic Centre, respectively. In 2013, there were a total of 23 community centres designated as centres where programs are free, where there are no user fees for all registered and drop-in programs. There are also no user fees for local non-profit groups permitting space such as rooms, gyms, and kitchens. City Council has also approved the removal of the name "priority centres" in order to change perceptual barriers, alongside the financial ones.

The Plan identified a new, equitable and consistent method of designating the location of centres where programs are free (CWPAF). The traditional method used to identify low-income census tracts – and used in the Recreation Service Plan – relied on Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut Off (LICO). Eligible census tracts were those areas where at least 30 per cent of families had low income and fell below the Low Income Cut Off. In the subsequent Staff Report entitled "Designating community centres where programs are free (Priority Centres)", the Division replaced LICO with the Low Income Measure (LIM) and adjusted the threshold of what constitutes a low-income census tract from 30 per cent (under LICO) to 28 per cent (under LIM). Using this method, the city serves more low-income census tracts and households. A census tract is considered "served" if it is within 1.5 km of a CWPAF. These criteria are based on research that shows residents travel short distances outside to their census tract, but usually within their local area, to participate in recreation.

Using the new designation criteria, there are now 38 community centres where programs are free. York Community Centre, scheduled to open in summer 2016, will bring the total to 39. Appendix B provides a map showing the geographic distribution of these centres.

### **Key Advancements:**

Since September 2014, 15 additional CWPAF have been designated. At these 15 centres, the following measures demonstrate improved access to recreation:

- 38% increase in program registrations (fall 2014 to summer 2015 over the same time period the previous year)
- 20% increase in visits to drop-in programs (fall 2014 to summer 2015 over the same time period the previous year)
- 13% increase in the registered course utilization rate (fall 2014 to summer 2015 over the same time period the previous year). Utilization is defined as the number of used spaces compared to the total available and is a key performance indicator used in service planning

Through this initiative, PFR has significantly advanced the principle of equitable access, bringing recreation programs and services to a greater number of Torontonians.

## WELCOME POLICY

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Actions:

*6.3 Improve registration and Welcome Policy application processes to make it easier for everyone to register for programs, and*

*10.1 Continue Welcome Policy provision*

The Welcome Policy Program advances the Plan's guiding principles of inclusion and equitable access. It is delivered through a partnership between the PFR and the Toronto Employment and Social Services Divisions.

The Welcome Policy provides fee subsidy to help low income individuals and families who live in Toronto access city-operated recreation programs and services. To be eligible, individuals must have a before-tax family income of less than Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-off (LICO). It is an individual-based subsidy that ensures funding is allocated to residents with low income.

Staff actively promote the Welcome Policy through outreach and communication materials in an effort to increase participation. In 2015, the annual expenditure of Welcome Policy was \$8.396 million with 94,957 registrations. The 2016 approved budget for Welcome Policy is \$8.794 million. The Division will continue to monitor the impact of centres where programs are free on Welcome Policy Program demand and utilization rates.

Key Advancements:

- Since 2013, the individual annual credit has been indexed to align with future increases in recreation user fees

Welcome Policy - Individual Annual Credit 2013-2016

Year	Child/Youth Annual Credit	Adult/Older Adult Annual Credit
2013	\$455	\$212
2014	\$483	\$225
2015	\$494	\$230
2016	\$514	\$239

- Improved promotional material, including the *Options for Free Toronto Recreation Programs* brochure
- Translation of Welcome Policy information into 22 different languages
- An interdivisional steering team consisting of PFR, Toronto Employment and Social Services, and Information Technology has been established. The mandate of this team is to improve awareness and outreach, the enrolment process, program registration and overall service coordination of the Welcome Policy program

The Welcome Policy continues to foster inclusion and improve access to recreation programs and services for residents with low income.

## SWIM TO SURVIVE

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Action:

### 11.1 Expand the current Swim to Survive program

The Swim to Survive Program advances the Plan's principle of equitable access. City Council has approved new funding of \$0.428 million net to implement this program (2014-2016). The program ensures that every grade 4 student, regardless of income, learns basic swim survival skills. It is a free program delivered in partnership with the Lifesaving Society and local school boards. It teaches basic skills to prevent drowning with three in-water classes.

The goal is to provide Swim to Survive training to an estimated 22,000 Grade 4 students annually in the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

Key Advancements:

- Since 2013, the number of grade 4 students who have received the Swim to Survive training has increased by 3300 students. This training is delivered through a combination of programs directly delivered by PFR and programs delivered by the Toronto District School Board and supported by PFR

Category	2013 Service Levels	2014 Service Levels	2015 Service Levels
Grade 4 Participants	4,000	7,300	7,300
Program Hours	530	790	790

- Staff have been working with both school boards to enhance partnerships to remove barriers to full enrolment including pool availability, transportation, scheduling and coordination of the program

In 2015, the original expansion plan was reviewed and revised to a five year implementation plan commencing in 2016 with full implementation of the program by 2020 (pending approval of additional funding in subsequent years). The 2016 Operating Budget approved the implementation of Phase 2 of the program enabling PFR to deliver the Swim to Survive Program to 9,000 grade 4 students in 2016.

Annual Student Participation in Swim to Survive Program based on a five year plan

Category	2016 Service Levels	2017 Service Levels	2018 Service Levels	2019 Service Levels	2020 Service Levels
Grade 4 Participants	9,000	12,250	15,500	18,750	22,000
Program Hours	961	1,325	1,676	2,000	2,380

Swim to Survive advances the Plan's guiding principle of equitable access by offering a universal and free program, with a school-based delivery model. The program helps eliminate cultural, financial, and geographic barriers to introductory and essential lifesaving swim skills.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS**

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Action:

### *4.1 Support the expanded use of community engagement*

Parks, Forestry and Recreation has expanded efforts to engage communities and seek public participation in recreation service planning to advance the Plan's principle of capacity building. Specifically, the Plan aims to increase access to underserved residents, including newcomers, youth, aboriginal peoples, and people with disabilities.

The Division has assessed barriers, facilitators, and recommendations stemming from Social Planning Toronto's "Newcomer Youth Access to Recreation in Toronto: Relationships, Resources and Relevance" report. Parks, Forestry and Recreation will consult with Social Planning Toronto and ethno-specific not-for-profit organizations to discuss options and opportunities raised by the report, as directed by the Committee Development and Recreation Committee on March 7, 2016. This collaboration can enhance community engagement strategies already in place at PFR, such as community consultations, surveys, open houses and focus groups as well as the use of Advisory Councils.

During the course of the Plan's mandate, PFR has undertaken several new strategies and partnership initiatives that aim to increase outreach, promotion, and support access to recreation programs. These include work with the Settlement Sector, the Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) partnership, and specialized programming for Syrian refugees:

#### **Settlement Sector:**

Staff have been working directly with community partners and agencies in the settlement sector and providing workshops for classes, groups, and individuals. Workshops offered provide an introduction to the wide range of instructional and drop in programs, programs such as Afterschool Recreation Care (ARC), Investing in Families, and Enhanced Youth Spaces. Information is also provided on how to register for programs and how to access many low cost or no cost options including Welcome Policy, free drop-ins, free leisure swim and skate, and community centres where programs are free.

#### **Key Advancements:**

- Partnered with 18 settlement agencies to deliver workshops to over 775 newcomers in 2015
- Strengthened the relationship with community support workers at the Toronto District School Board Model Schools for Inner Cities program and with Toronto Community Housing
- Participation in the Toronto Settlement Collaborative, which is a partnership involving PFR, Toronto Newcomer Office, and 5 Settlement organizations. The settlement agencies assign their staff to work in community centres approximately two days per week to provide a space where newcomers can access settlement services and recreational opportunities. Staff plan and deliver workshops, foster newcomer support networks, and develop social and cultural activities



### **Toronto Employment and Social Services Partnership:**

Since 2014, PFR has been working in partnership with Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) to provide workshops to TESS caseworkers and clients to enhance knowledge on recreation services and supports.

Key Advancements:

- Delivered on-site information sessions at 8 TESS locations prior to recreation program registration days. Provided TESS clients with information and support on how to register for programs through online, in-person or phone methods
- Access to 9 TESS locations across the city on priority registration days; providing public access to computers and the support of PFR staff to help with registration

### **Specialized Programming for Syrian Refugees:**

The City of Toronto received a request to provide recreation programming for newly arrived Syrian children and youth residing at a hotel in the Jane St. and Wilson Ave. area. Parks, Forestry and Recreation responded with a plan to offer onsite programming at Chalkfarm Community Centre, located in close proximity to the hotel.

Program delivery began in January 2016 with an orientation presentation for youth and families about city services, Welcome Policy, and program offerings at Chalkfarm Community Centre. Activities offered include sports, arts, games, eco activities, fitness programs, and video and board games.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE IN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Action:

*1.1 Expand quality standards to all age groups (youth, adult and senior) and recreation program areas focusing on safety, health and skill development*

The Plan calls for the provision of the highest quality programs and services to enhance the health, quality of life, and wellbeing of Toronto residents. The largest advancements in PFR's quality assurance efforts have been through the integration of HIGH FIVE®, Canada's only comprehensive quality standard for children's sport and recreation. The HIGH FIVE® quality framework is designed to support the safety, well-being, and healthy development of children aged 6-12 and brings a researched, credible, and reputable standard to City of Toronto's recreation programs. Parks, Forestry and Recreation is currently a registered member of HIGH FIVE®.

Key Advancements:

- Approximately 2240 staff have been trained since 2013 in Principles of Healthy Childhood Development, a one-day HIGH FIVE® workshop for front-line recreation staff
- 1900 program assessments are conducted using HIGH FIVE®'s primary service improvement tool on an annual basis. This tool enables staff to identify program strength and weakness and measure improvement in the quality of programs for children

HIGH FIVE® advances the Plan's guiding principle of quality by ensuring program staff develop a high level of knowledge and expertise in child development. This quality standard provides staff with tools for enhancing and maintaining a high caliber of recreation programming.

## **LOCAL PROGRAM AND SERVICE PLANNING**

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Action:

*4.2 Develop local recreation plans with residents and local stakeholders that respond to community needs*

To advance the Plan's guiding principle of capacity building, PFR is developing tools for front line and community based staff to better understand local needs and support local program planning efforts. Community engagement tools, demographic profiles, program utilization data, customer feedback, and cluster-based planning to share best practices are all strategies that will enable staff to better understand and tailor recreation programming to meet the needs of neighbourhoods and localities.

## **PRIMARY PROGRAM MODEL**

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Action:

*9.1 Implement the primary program categorization as a tool for planning*

The Plan recommends the Primary Program Model as a strategy to advance the guiding principle of equitable access. This service planning tool aims to maximize space and participation opportunities across the city by determining what programs and services should take priority with an emphasis on primary programs that set the stage for lifelong participation in recreation.

Primary programs are introductory programs that focus on physical literacy, health, and life-skill development, and are delivered in group-based settings, which maximizes the use of community centre space and staffing dollars. Certain primary programs will be delivered in all program locations, whereas some will respond to local needs. Secondary programs are likely to respond to individual needs and provide individual benefits.

A decision matrix was designed to review and classify current program offerings into one of the following (1) primary-delivered everywhere, (2) primary-delivered locally, or (3) secondary. When the review of existing programs using the decision matrix is complete, the Primary Program Model categorization will be integrated into the local program planning process; balancing consistency of programs with the flexibility to respond to local needs.

The Primary Program Model advances the principle of equitable access by ensuring community centres achieve the right program mix to maximize space and meet the needs of the local community.

## **FACILITIES MASTER PLAN**

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Action:

*9.3 Develop a 20-year Parks, Forestry and Recreation facilities plan to guide facility planning and required investments*

Parks, Forestry and Recreation is developing a 20-year Facilities Master Plan as recommended by the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan, as well as the 2013-2017 Parks Plan and the 2012 Service Efficiency Study Report. This is an update to the 2004 Recreation Facilities Report and will result in a comprehensive inventory of the City's indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, identify and prioritize future investment and opportunities for parks and recreation facility provision, and develop strategic investment priorities by facility type based on a principle of equitable distribution across the city.

The Facilities Master Plan advances the principle of quality by cataloguing facility assets in order to make sound operational decisions when it comes to managing, maintaining and allocating resources to meet the needs of Toronto residents.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS**

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Recommended Actions:

*2.1 - Develop and implement a Customer Improvement Strategy*

*6.1 - Improve citywide and local promotion of programs and services by implementing a comprehensive communications strategy,*

*6.2 - Continue to offer registration and customer service in a variety of ways, and*

*6.3 - Improve registration and Welcome Policy application processes to make it easier for everyone to register for programs*

Parks, Forestry and Recreation aligns its Customer Service Improvement efforts with the corporate initiative "At Your Service," which is focused on continuous improvement toward service excellence. PFR is undertaking a range of customer service improvement projects that will transform the public's service experience by measuring service and facility satisfaction, improving facility permitting and program registration processes, and by modernizing the online experience.

Work to improve the registration customer experience is underway and incremental changes have been applied over the past few years to address concerns heard from registrants. Since the current registration and permitting system (CLASS) has now reached its end-of-life, a plan for its replacement is in progress. A Recreation Technology Advisory Group has been established to provide guidance and advice on the replacement of CLASS. During this transition period, a comprehensive communications and consultation process will confirm, identify and communicate both process and technological improvements.

A marketing and communications strategy has also been developed to better reach and engage customers. Improving internal coordination will increase the quality, timing, efficacy, and efficiency of messaging about programs and services. The use of a variety of channels and platforms, including online and social media, has been and will continue to be expanded and enhanced. Improvements to the corporate website are enabling participants to obtain in-depth

and user-friendly content on programs and amenities available at community centres and other recreation facilities.

## **COUNCIL-DIRECTED INITIATIVES**

The following initiatives do not directly correspond to specific recommended actions of the Plan but were City Council-directed and support its broader objectives. Over the last two and a half years, each have made significant progress in advancing one or more of the plan's guiding principles: quality, capacity building, inclusion and equitable access.

## **ENHANCED YOUTH SPACES**

This report responds to direction from City Council and the Community Development and Recreation Committee to report back with an update on the Youth Space Advisory Committee, Youth Outreach Strategy and an update on the evaluation of the Enhanced Youth Spaces.

A Youth Recreation Engagement Strategy was approved in October 2013 to guide planning for youth programs and services. Recreation Services for Youth: Expansion of Youth Spaces was approved by City Council in October 2013 with \$1.699 million gross and \$1.402 million net in new funding (2014-2016) approved for 10 Enhanced Youth Spaces.

The Enhanced Youth Spaces initiative advances the Plan's principle of inclusion by providing access to safe, youth-specific and youth-dedicated spaces that foster feelings of community and belonging. As part of the plan's implementation:

Four sites were implemented in the fall of 2014 (phase 1):

- North Kipling Community Centre – Etobicoke-York District
- Antibes Community Centre – North York District
- Parkway Forest Community Centre – North York District
- Heron Park Community Centre – Scarborough District

Three sites were implemented in 2015 (phase 2):

- Don Montgomery Community Centre – Scarborough District
- Native & Child Family Services of Toronto – Toronto East District
- East Metro Youth Services – Scarborough District

The final three sites were approved in the 2016 PFR Operating Budget and will be implemented in late Spring (phase 3):

- Masaryk Cowan Community Centre – Toronto East York District
- Centennial Community Centre – Etobicoke-York District
- LAMP Health Organization/Rathburn Area Youth – note: this is a Cluster Model pilot; full-time staff will support multiple locations

A Youth Space Advisory Committee was established in May 2014 to provide input and guidance on the vision, identification of sites as well as the start-up and operation of the Enhanced Youth Spaces. The membership of the Youth Space Advisory Committee has been expanded to include key partners such as Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, The 519, For Youth Initiative,

as well as youth representatives in order to ensure it is reflective and inclusive of the diversity of youth experiences in Toronto.

Enhanced Youth Spaces attract youth into the facility, provide a safe, welcoming and supervised environment where youth can grow as individuals, connect to role models and peers and access programs and resources that are based on their interests and needs. A focus is to ensure programming supports inclusion of equity seeking youth including LGBTQ, females, youth with disabilities, newcomer and Aboriginal youth. The Youth Outreach Strategy is comprehensive; each location conducts focus groups and surveys regularly with local youth and has an advisory committee that provides ongoing input on the set up and program development for that location. There is a Youth Outreach Worker at each location that provides additional outreach to youth at local schools, community agencies, City partners and connects with youth at parks, malls, and public spaces. In addition, a city-wide Junior Advisory Committee has been established with youth representatives from each location to provide ongoing input to ensure consistency and responsiveness for the initiative across all the sites. These youth representatives also sit on the Youth Space Advisory Committee.

An evaluation of the first four Enhanced Youth Spaces was conducted in summer 2015, with support from the Youth Space Advisory Committee, with a focus on user experience. The results are very positive – 92% of survey respondents agreed that the design of the space is youth friendly and welcoming, 93% indicated that they feel safe in the space, 96 % indicated that the staff make them feel welcome and 80 % indicated that they visit at least 2 days a week and stay for 1 hour or more each visit. Key performance indicators with regard to participation and partnership are listed below and were outlined in a briefing note to City Council that was considered during deliberation of the 2016 Operating Budget. The development of an evaluation framework will be a key work plan activity for the Youth Space Advisory Committee in 2016.

#### Key Advancements:

- Enhanced Youth Spaces are equipped to reflect the interests of local youth and include the provision of recreation equipment, technology, and multi-media labs
- Life skill workshops offered on topics such as mental health and awareness, healthy living and healthy eating, employment readiness and job search techniques, self-esteem, financial literacy and leadership
- The placement of dedicated full-time staff at Enhanced Youth Spaces has resulted in the delivery of 7,629 additional youth program hours
- The model has enabled PFR to offer youth-focused leisure and instructional programs, 6 to 7 days per week, year round, and has facilitated 49,406 youth visits since the launch of this initiative in 2014
- Capacity building through internal training and engagement strategies has helped to double youth participation at these locations
- 33 community partnerships created, generating an additional 449 instructional course hours and 2,272 visits in 2015, at no additional cost to the Division
- PFR has partnered with Native Child and Family Services of Toronto and developed 2,366 hours of programming and achieved 11,128 total visits for Aboriginal youth, addressing an identified service gap

The Enhanced Youth Space initiative supports the implementation of several city priorities, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Toronto Youth Equity Strategy, and the Youth Employment Action Plan.

### **AFTER-SCHOOL RECREATION CARE (ARC)**

This report responds to direction from the Community Development and Recreation Committee to report on the current status of After School Recreation and Care (ARC), including existing and future provincial cost sharing aspects; current costs and roll out plans; and the status and potential roll out of the Community Leadership After-School Programs (CLASP).

The ARC program model was developed in 2005 to address the after-school child care and recreation needs of children aged 6-12 in Toronto. In addition to ARC, CLASP was developed in 2010 to respond to a demand from participants in the 10-15 age range.

Toronto's 2009 Middle Childhood Strategy identified the need for increased access to high quality out-of-school time programs for children aged 6 to 12. In 2014, PFR expanded the ARC program by 8 locations. In 2015, in partnership with Children's Services, the program was further expanded by another 10 locations. The expansion of the ARC program by 18 locations was supported by \$1.954 million gross and \$.733 million net in new funding (2014-2016).

#### **Key Advancements:**

- Since 2013, ARC has expanded by 18 locations for a total of 51 program locations, 6 of which are CLASP
- The program currently has the capacity to serve 1660 annually and is running close to full capacity with 1550 children enrolled as of December 2015
- The 18 program locations implemented since 2013 are located within the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs). Appendix C provides a map showing the geographic distribution of ARC program locations
- Results from an ARC program survey conducted in May 2015 show:
  - 87% of parents/guardians believe the ARC program welcomes all children and supports each child's individual needs.
  - 91% of parents/guardians believe the increase in physical activity gained from the ARC program has positively impacted their children
  - 94% of parents/guardians believe ARC has positively impacted their children's social interactions, such as building positive relationships

The 2016 Budget for After-School Recreation Care is \$5.108 million and is funded through the following sources:

<b>Funding Type</b>	<b>2016 Funding (000's)</b>
NCB* Supplement Reserve	1,125.0
Provincial Grant	790.6
User Fees	552.5
Property Tax	2,640.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,108.4</b>

*\*National Child Benefit*

ARC program fees are designed to be affordable for all with a low daily fee of \$2.49 per participant. Programs located at one of the designated centres where programs are free are offered at no cost to participants. Participants who are eligible can allocate their Welcome Policy credit to cover program fees.

There are currently no plans to further expand the ARC or CLASP programs. Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff are focussed on building a sustainable funding model for the ARC program and are working with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport on the viability of continued funding over the next three years. Children Services is responsible for ongoing funding of the 2015 Expansion (10 ARC sites). As per the Child Care Funding Strategy Staff Report (adopted by City Council on July 7,8 and 9, 2015), the program will continue to operate as an interdepartmental transfer from Children Services to PFR with a transition from National Child Benefit Supplement Reserve to tax-based funding over a five year implementation period commencing in 2016.

The expansion of the ARC program advances the 2012-2017 Recreation Service Plan's principles of inclusion and equitable access to recreation for families.

### **ELIMINATION OF LEISURE SWIM FEES**

In keeping with the principle of increasing equitable access, City Council approved the elimination of leisure swim fees at all indoor pools effective July 2014 with a financial impact of \$0.460 million net (2014-2015).

Since July 2014, participation at leisure swim has increased 17% across all indoor pool locations, providing Toronto residents of all ages the same level of service access.

### **CONCLUSION**

The first two and a half years of the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan have seen the advancement of programs and initiatives aimed at reducing financial barriers and increasing equitable access. For the remainder of the Plan's mandate, PFR will focus on initiatives that improve quality of programs and services by advancing standards, monitoring, and evaluation. Quality programs and positive experiences in recreation result in sustained participation over one's lifetime and yield a wide range of societal and health benefits. Parks, Forestry and Recreation will report back at the end of the Plan's mandate summarizing all the advancements and outcomes of the recommended actions.

### **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Janie Romoff  
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A- Status Update on 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Implementation Actions

Appendix B- Geographic Distribution of Centres Where Programs are Free

Appendix C- Geographic Distribution of After-School Recreation (ARC) Programs



## Appendix A

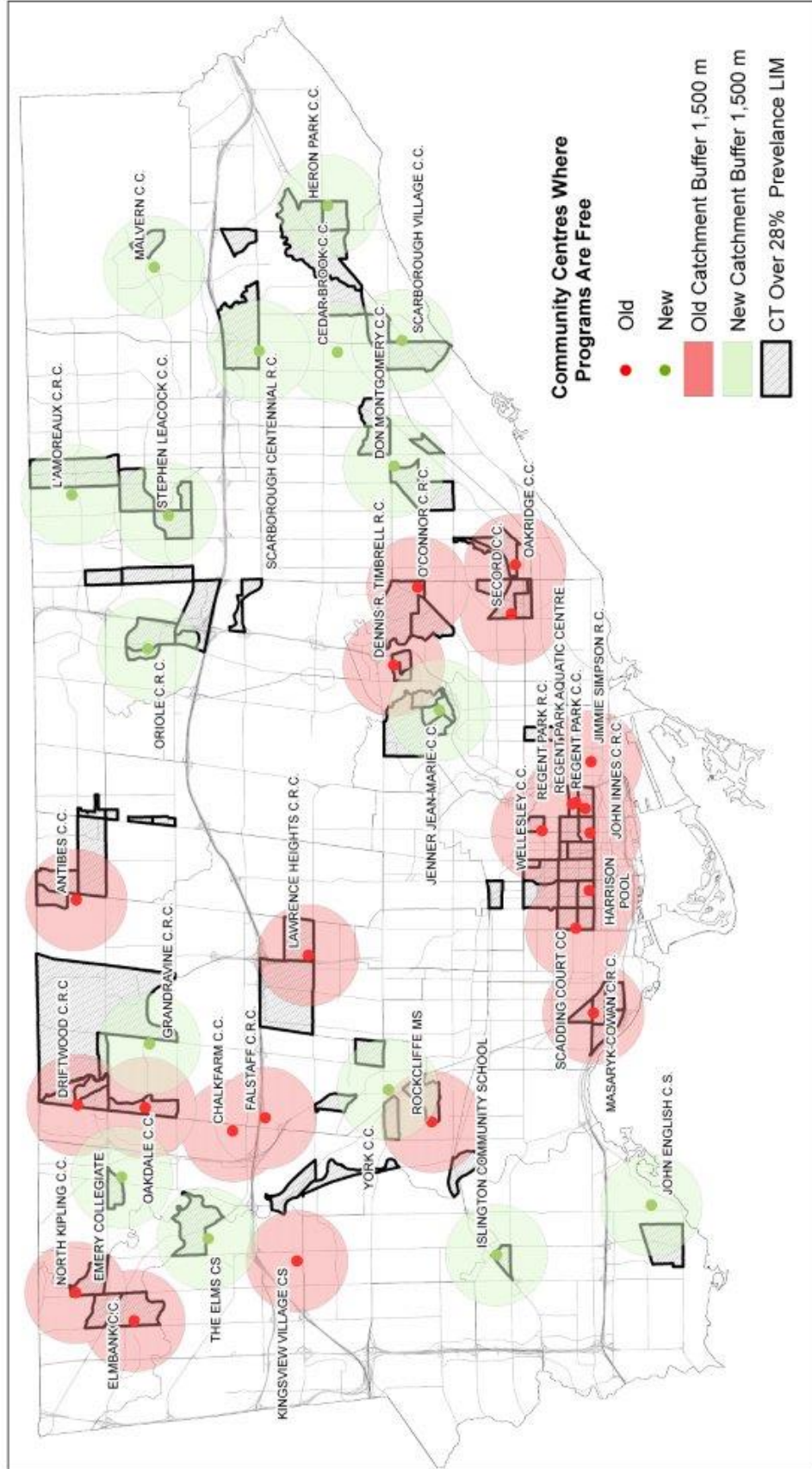
### Status Update on 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Implementation Actions

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Direction	Action	Status		
		Ongoing/ Complete	In Progress	Future Work
<b>Guiding Principle: Quality</b>				
1. Improve consistency and quality of all recreation programs and services by advancing quality standards, monitoring, and evaluation.	1.1 Expand quality standards to all age groups (youth, adult and senior) and recreation program areas focusing on safety, health and skill-development (includes: development of consistent standards and curriculum, program reviews, jurisdictional scans, surveys, program planning tools, and enhanced data collection)		●	
	1.2 Develop a system to measure and report on the achievements of recreation program standards (includes: setting clear and achievable targets, reporting on progress)			●
2. Strengthen the customer service experience as part of the development and implementation of a division-wide Customer Service Improvement Strategy and by improving facility conditions.	2.0 Develop and implement a Customer Improvement Strategy (includes: Establishing standards related to counter service operations, complaint handling, and program registration)		●	
	2.2 Implement and monitor consistent facility cleaning and maintenance standards at all community		●	
	2.3 Advance identified State of Good repair facilities projects		●	
<b>Guiding Principle: Capacity Building</b>				
3. Maximize the use of recreation as core community assets.	3.1 Improve the permitting system to enhance facility use and customer service by providing information and access to permits online		●	
	3.2 Enhance reporting standards for permits to better understand the use of facilities, and to achieve equity goals through permitting (includes: enhanced website, improved permit management and data collection)	●		

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Direction	Action	Status		
		Ongoing/ Complete	In Progress	Future Work
4. Enhance engagement and partnerships with local residents, other recreation providers, and schools to enable coordinated recreation service planning in Toronto and address service gaps and overlaps.	4.1 Support the expanded use of community engagement (includes: enhanced consultation, determining outreach strategies in collaboration with recreation sector providers, and establishing a Recreation Service Plan Advisory Group)		●	
	4.2 Develop local recreation plans with residents and local stakeholders that respond to community needs (includes: supporting recreation staff in planning, creating and delivering innovative and well-used programs, developing local programming tools and templates, and monitoring programs and conducting extensive programming data analysis including utilization rates, waitlist tracking and program evaluations to support local needs assessment)		●	
5. Increase and simplify opportunities to volunteer.	5.1 Develop a centralized volunteer management system	●		
	5.2 Leverage the volunteer engagement efforts of the 2012 Ontario Summer Games and the 2015 Pan and Parapan Games	●		
<b>Guiding Principle: Inclusion</b>				
6. Increase awareness among residents of the City's recreation services by developing a comprehensive outreach and communications strategy.	6.1 Improve citywide and local promotion of programs and services by implementing a comprehensive communications strategy		●	
	6.2 Continue to offer registration and customer service in a variety of ways	●		
	6.3 Improve registration and Welcome Policy application processes to make it easier for everyone to register for programs		●	
7. Improve access for underserved residents, including people with a disability.	7.1 Improve outreach to underserved residents	●		
	7.2 Create tools and strategies as part of local planning to support work with diverse and newcomer populations		●	

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Direction	Action	Status		
		Ongoing/ Complete	In Progress	Future Work
	7.3 Strengthen partnerships with service agencies and organizations that work with underserved populations	●		
	7.4 Ensure continued compliance with disability legislation	●		
<b>Guiding Principle: Equitable Access</b>				
8. Develop a service planning system that plans for age groups and recreation program types at both the city-wide and local scales.	8.1 Develop recreation plans for recreation program types and age categories (includes: conducting environmental scans of neighbourhoods, analysing programming requirements based on demographic data of neighbourhoods including ages, income and language spoken, developing recreation plans for age categories: children, youth and seniors)		●	
	8.2 Provide supports to recreation staff in planning, creating, and delivering innovative and well-used programs (includes: development of a framework for programming tools and templates and training staff to use new tools)		●	
9. Enhance the consistency and equity of service delivery across the city.	9.1 Implement the primary program categorization as a tool for planning		●	
	9.2 Develop a measure for service equity, focusing on participation rates and residents' ability to access recreation in their community			●
	9.3 Develop a 20-year Parks, Forestry and Recreation facilities plan to guide facility planning and required investments		●	
10. Refocus subsidy investments to reduce barriers and increase participation in recreation.	10.1 Continue Welcome Policy provision	●		
	10.2 Implement the equitable distribution of free programs at designated recreation centres based on the revised method for identifying centres where programs are free locations	●		
11. Increase	11.1 Expand the current Swim to Survive program	●		

2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Direction	Action	Status		
		Ongoing/ Complete	In Progress	Future Work
participation in recreation by developing two citywide programs for children and youth.	11.2 Develop a Youth Leadership Program model (includes: designing a Youth Leadership model that is a) universal; b) citywide; c) free of charge; d) promotes civic engagement; e) develops employment skills; and f) will serve 50% of all grade nine students in Toronto			●



Prevalence of low income in 2010 (%).  
The Low-income measure after tax is based on after-tax income  
of households extracted from the National Household Survey (NHS).

Parks, Forestry and Recreation  
Operational Effectiveness Research  
October 2014



