

Clause embodied in Report No. 5 of the Economic Development and Parks Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on May 21, 22 and 23, 2002.

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**Materials for the Arts Program  
at the Don Valley Brick Works (All Wards)**

*(City Council on May 21, 22 and 23, 2002, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)*

**The Economic Development and Parks Committee recommends the adoption of the following report (April 8, 2002) from the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism:**

Purpose:

To obtain Council authority to explore further an innovative partnership between the environment and culture whereby Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, Culture Division, in consultation with Works and Emergency Services, would set up a municipally operated materials donation/waste reduction program dedicated to the arts at the Don Valley Brick Works.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications associated with the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, in consultation with the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services, conduct further research into the establishment of a Materials for the Arts program at the Don Valley Brick Works; and
- (2) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

In order to achieve the waste reduction goals of the City of Toronto's Task Force 2010, whose mandate it is to achieve a 30 percent waste reduction by 2003, 60 percent reduction by 2006 and a 100 percent reduction by 2010, recommendations have been made to look at cost-effective alternatives to landfilling, such as re-use centres.

The Culture Division of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, with the assistance of the Waste Diversion Planning Division of Works and Emergency Services, are proposing to study a project whereby a City-run warehouse operating out of the Don Valley Brick Works provides a place for corporations to donate what is called industrial discard (bolts of fabric, paper, architectural and interior design samples, binders, wallpaper rolls and books, nylon flag materials, matboard, etc). In return, corporations may be assured that those materials will go to individual artists or non-profit organizations that create art.

The City of New York has, since 1979, operated a joint program between the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Department of Sanitation's Bureau of Waste Prevention, Reuse and Recycling called Materials for Arts. The Materials for Arts program has become a critical support for the arts in New York City and meets a vital criteria in the waste reduction process – keeping valuable items from entering the waste stream. This interchange keeps hundreds of tons of materials annually that would otherwise be disposed of – paint, paper, products, office and home furnishings, fabric remnants, lumber, vinyl and plastics.

Similarly, the Toronto District School Board, since 1981, has operated a program called Artsjunktion from the basement of the Ossington/Old Orchard Public School. Artsjunktion is a depot for receiving and distributing donated materials and supplies to be used in educational and creative programs within the Toronto District School Board whether it is in the classroom, artistic in-school creations, curriculum projects, day care and parenting centres and concurrent after school and seniors' programs.

Artsjunktion solicits and collects materials from hundreds of companies and individuals in the Toronto and surrounding areas through their efforts and through their association with several waste recycling network organizations (i.e., Ontario Waste and Materials Exchange, Recycling Council of Ontario and Beyond the Blue Box).

Artsjunktion's 10,000 square foot warehouse is so successful that it cannot keep up with the demand. Because Artsjunktion is associated with the public school system – it is only able to provide to the public schools and day cares within those public schools and it cannot provide art materials to either the separate school board, private day cares or other non-profit arts organizations.

As such, the City has an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to both the waste reduction cause and to the local arts and cultural community by replicating such a materials reuse program for the arts.

#### Comments:

The benefit of the Materials for the Arts project is two-fold. Such a project would provide free materials for the art community so that money saved in turn will allow such organizations to redirect their modest finances to other badly needed and often deferred areas of need. The Materials for the Arts would also divert waste materials from the landfill, as is the current practice of many corporations through private waste disposal companies.

It is recommended that the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, in consultation with the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services, conduct further research into the establishment of a Materials for the Arts program at the Don Valley Brick Works. Staff will report back on the viability of the program including an outline of the associated costs and potential sources of financial support.

The Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services has reviewed this report and concurs with the proposed initiative.

Currently, a Public Advisory Committee is being formed with the mandate to provide citizens input on policies, procedures and issues related to the development, operation and programming of the Don Valley Brick Works site. Input will generally relate to the cultural and natural heritage and the landscape of the site. The materials for the Arts pilot program would be vetted through this group for further consideration should City Council recommend adoption of this report.

Conclusions:

Waste reduction programs have been proven to be very successful both in Toronto and in New York City. Toronto's Artsjunktion is oversubscribed and only available to schools and day cares within the Toronto School District. As such, a Materials for the Arts program should be further researched.

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Councillor Betty Disero, Ward 17 Davenport, appeared before the Economic Development and Parks Committee in connection to the foregoing matter.