

**Parks Forestry and Recreation follow-up Budget Items –
Community Centres where programs are free and Swim
to Survive Program**

Date:	December 9, 2013
To:	Budget Committee
From:	General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2013\Cluster A\PFR\BU50-121013

SUMMARY

This report is in response to a motion approved at the December 4, 2013 meeting of the Community Development and Recreation Committee requesting staff to report to Budget Committee on the financial implications of implementing the designation of new Community Centres where programs are free (formerly Priority Centres) and the Swim to Survive program for consideration in the 2014 Operating Budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. this report be received for information.

Financial Impact

Community Centres where programs are Free

The implementation of 16 existing Community Centres as "community centres where programs are free" will cost \$5.420 million and \$4.420 million net in 2016 and future years, including Welcome Policy savings of \$1 million. The start date of this implementation will result in different phase-in costs in 2014 and 2015.

The \$1 million reduction to the Welcome Policy subsidy arises from an anticipated reduction of demand for Welcome Policy access resulting from the increase in free program offerings at the newly designated community centres where programs will be free. Welcome Policy use in the 16 locations was \$1.2 million in 2012. The estimated reduction of the Welcome Policy budget will be reviewed once the new locations are implemented, and after a full year of operation history is known.

The 2014 Recommended Operating Budget includes funding for Fall 2014 implementation of the 16 designated community centres where programs are free will result in a net cost of \$0.86 million in 2014, \$3.39 million in 2015, and \$0.17 million in 2016 . To implement in the Summer of 2014, the net costs would be \$1.87 million in 2014, \$2.38 million in 2015, and \$0.17 million in 2016. To implement in the Spring of 2014, the net costs would be \$2.31 million in 2014, \$1.94 million in 2015, and \$0.17 million in 2016.

The table below outlines the costs for the different implementation dates:

Priority Centre Annual Financial Summary - Spring Implementation (\$000's)				
Description	2014	2015	2016	Total
Annual Revenue Loss	3,010.0	2,240.0	170.0	5,420.0
Welcome Policy Subsidy Expenditure Reduction	(700.0)	(300.0)	-	(1,000.0)
Net Impact	2,310.0	1,940.0	170.0	4,420.0

Priority Centre Annual Financial Summary - Summer Implementation (\$000's)				
Description	2014	2015	2016	Total
Annual Revenue Loss	2,440.0	2,810.0	170.0	5,420.0
Welcome Policy Subsidy Expenditure Reduction	(570.0)	(430.0)	-	(1,000.0)
Net Impact	1,870.0	2,380.0	170.0	4,420.0

Priority Centre Annual Financial Summary - Fall Implementation (\$000's)				
Description	2014	2015	2016	Total
Annual Revenue Loss	1,120.0	4,130.0	170.0	5,420.0
Welcome Policy Subsidy Expenditure Reduction	(260.0)	(740.0)	-	(1,000.0)
Net Impact	860.0	3,390.0	170.0	4,420.0

Swim to Survive

The incremental financial impact of implementing the Swim to Survive program in September 2014 is \$0.125 million in 2014, \$0.650 million in 2015 and \$0.270 million in 2016 for a total annual cost of \$1.045 million.

Swim to Survive - September Implementation (\$000's)				
Category	2014	2015	2016	Total
Gross Expenditures	\$ 125.0	\$ 650.0	\$ 270.0	\$ 1,045.0
Revenue	-	-	-	-
Net Expenditures	\$ 125.0	\$ 650.0	\$ 270.0	\$ 1,045.0
Positions (FTE)	2.0	3.7	0.7	6.4

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

DECISION HISTORY

On December 4, 2013, The Community Development and Recreation Committee requested:

1. the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report to the Budget Committee on the program and budget implications of the implementation of 16 new Centres Where Services Are Free (priority centres), starting in (a) the Spring or (b) the summer 2014 session;
2. the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report periodically on service and program levels in all Centres Where Services Are Free during the 2014 year;
3. the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report to the Budget Committee on the budget and program implications of implementing the "Swim to Survive" program as early as practicable in 2014; and
4. the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report to the Budget Committee on the possibility of funding the "Swim to Survive" Program through the Pan Am Games legacy Fund.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD25.5>

On November 27, 2012 City Council approved Recreation Service Plan which included the expansion of Community Centres where services are free (formerly 'Priority Centres') and the expansion of the Swim to Survive Program.

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

On July 16, 2013, City Council adopted the 2013-2017 Recreation Service Plan Implementation Plan which included a Spring 2014 implementation for new Priority centres and a Fall 2014 phased in implementation of the expansion of the Swim to Survive program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.CD22.1>

On July 16, 17, 18, 19, 2013 City Council approved the Toronto Pan/Parapan Am Games Host City Showcase Program and Major Special Event Reserve Fund, which included the approval of 16 Host City Showcase Initiatives funded from the Major Special Event Reserve Fund.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.EX33.13>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The expansion of Priority Centres was approved by City Council on November 27, 2012 as part of the Recreation Service Plan. As directed by Council, staff reported to the December 4th, 2013 meeting of the Community Development and Recreation Committee identifying 15 existing community centres and 1 new community centre which would achieve this designation and outlining the financial impact of a Spring implementation. The 2014 Recommended Operating Budget currently includes an expansion of 16 sites with a Fall 2014 implementation.

Swim to Survive is a nationally recognized program developed by the Lifesaving Society and teaches basic in-water skills to prevent drowning. Both the TDSB and TCDSB provide the program to a limited number of grade 4 students through their own staff or in partnership with the City. Council approved the expansion of this program to all grade 4 students in the City of Toronto through the approval of the Recreation Service Plan. The 2014 Recommended Operating Budget does not include a 2014 expansion of this program.

COMMENTS

Community Centres Where Programs Are Free (Formerly 'Priority Centres')

Parks, Forestry and Recreation currently operates 23 Priority Centres offering a wide range of programs and services for all age groups. The addition of 16 new community centres where programs are free would bring the total to 39. The new approach, approved by Council in November 2012, is designed to serve the highest number of low-income Census tracts with the fewest Priority Centres. Under this method, eligible Census tracts are those where at least 30 per cent of families are low income (below the Low Income Cut Off). A Census tract is considered "served" if it is within 1.5km of a Priority Centre. This criteria is based on research that shows that residents travel short distances outside of their Census tract – but usually within their local area – to participate in recreation. To provide stability of supports in low-income neighbourhoods, a community centre will

continue to be a Priority Centre until no Census tract within 1.5km has greater than 25 per cent incidence of low-income families. This requires a significant reduction in local poverty levels before supports are removed. Parks, Forestry and Recreation will review Priority Centres every five years using updated Census information to remain current and ensure fair application over time.

The Recommended 2014 Operating Budget includes the financial impact of designating 15 new Community Centres Where Programs are Free in Fall 2014 and 1 in 2015 (York Community Centre is currently under construction) for a total of 16. These centres will serve an additional 29 low-income Census tracts and will serve 89% of Toronto's low-income census tracts, a 33% improvement. These Centres will provide free registered and drop-in programming for all age groups (children, youth, seniors and adults) as well as removing permit rental fees for local non profit groups.

Table 2: A summary of what is free at Priority Centres

	Free	Not free
City-delivered programs	– All registered and drop-in programs for all age groups	– Registered programs for residents of other municipalities
Memberships and passes	– Passes and memberships for all age groups to fitness centres and weight rooms	– Memberships to tennis clubs and other sport clubs
Permits and rentals	– Permits for local non-profit groups in rooms, gyms, and kitchens for all age groups*	– Permits and rentals to private and commercial groups – Permits and rentals in pools, arenas, ice rinks, dry-pads, sport courts, and other unique facilities – Permits to Boards of Education

*Non-profit permits at Priority Centres may incur staffing and insurance costs.

Operationally, the implementation of these new designated centres can be achieved in which ever season as directed by Council and with the necessary budget as outlined in this report.

Report on Service and Program Levels

Parks, Forestry and Recreation will monitor and report periodically on service and program levels in all Centres Where Services Are Free during 2014.

Swim to Survive

Every child, regardless of income or where they live, should be able to learn basic swim survival skills. These skills must be taught. The 2012 Canadian Drowning report indicated that of the 347 preventable water deaths in Canada, 70 (approximately 22%) occurred in Ontario. Newcomers are one of the largest groups at risk as many lack water safety education and in water experience. The Swim to Survive program is a nationally

recognized course developed by the Lifesaving Society. It is delivered in Toronto through Schools and at City Recreation facilities. The program teaches three basic in-water skills to prevent drowning in the event of an unexpected fall in the water. The Lifesaving society estimates that if every child in Canada participated in the program, half of drowning could be prevented.

In 2011-2012 16% of TDSB and 95% of TCDSB grade 4 students participated in the Swim to Survive Program. The Council approved Recreation Service Plan includes expanding this program to all grade 4 children in Toronto. The expansion will require additional City investment to be allocated for staffing resources, transportation equipment, and program materials.

Operationally, if directed by Council, the implementation of this program can be achieved by initiating program planning in July 2014 with program implementation in January 2015, with the necessary budget as outlined in this report.

Expansion of Swim to Survive through use of the 'Pan Am Legacy Fund'

In July 2013, City Council approved the Toronto Pan/Parapan Am Games Host City Showcase program and Major Special Events Reserve Fund which included funding of up to \$6.228M for innovative projects which will leverage the profile of the Games to advance City Council endorsed objectives related to economic development/tourism, sport development/healthy living and resident engagement/cultural celebration. There is a 'TO2015 Legacy Fund' associated with the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre (TPASC); however, its use is strictly limited to TPASC by legal agreement with contributing parties.

The purpose of the Showcase program and the Major Special Event Reserve Fund is to address financial pressures that are attributed to non-recurring expenses to advance Council's priorities. The Swim to Survive program is an ongoing program with annual recurring expenses and as such not eligible for consideration to be funded from this Reserve Fund.

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SIGNATURE



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