

April 18, 2013

Mr. Norm Kelly
Councillor, City of Toronto
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West, Suite C43
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor Kelly:

Re: Parks and Environment Consideration of the Toronto Parks Plan 2013-2017

At **Authority Meeting #12/11**, held on January 12, 2012, **Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)** staff reported to the **Authority** on the development of the **Parks Plan** and the seven themes that were guiding its development. **TRCA** staff also provided comments to the **Authority** which were forwarded to the **City**. The seven themes are as follows:

1. Parks and Trails as City Infrastructure;
2. Equitable Access for All Residents;
3. Nature in the City;
4. Place Making;
5. Supporting a Diversity of Uses;
6. Community Engagement and Partnerships;
7. Environmental Goals and Practices.

The **Authority**, at that time, recognizing the long standing agreement whereby **TRCA**- owned lands in the City of Toronto are under management agreements with the City, directed staff to continue to work in partnership with City staff to address the common goals of both agencies and the implementation of the **Parks Plan**. **TRCA**-owned lands constitute more than 8,000 hectares of Toronto's parkland.


TRCA senior staff has reviewed the *City of Toronto Parks Plan 2013-2017* and has met with senior staff at **Toronto Parks, Recreation and Forestry** to review the findings of the report. We congratulate City staff in the development of this plan to address the issues of improved communications with the citizenry of Toronto who wish to have greater opportunities to participate in the planning and implementation of an improved park system. We note the development of the **Urban Park Ranger Program** and look forward to providing information to assist the **Rangers** in their work.

TRCA shares in the concern of City staff that intensification has resulted in the need for new parks and increased management to ensure that overuse does not result in a gradual deterioration of the quality of the parks and natural areas. The parks and ravines systems are a hallmark for which the City is deservedly proud. These areas are an immense resource for residents and they significantly add to quality of life, health and wellbeing. Collectively, we must find the means to address the issues that result from ever increasing demands on the park system.

TRCA staff supports the recommendations for improved system planning and we would welcome the opportunity to collaborate on the development of management plans and provide insights we have gained from the management of almost 18,000 hectares of TRCA-owned land within the GTA. Recently, in partnership with Waterfront Toronto and the City, we have completed three major additions to the park system improving waterfront access to the Port Union waterfront (3.8 km) in Scarborough, the Mimico Waterfront Park (1.1 km) and at Tommy Thompson Park. The new award winning parks across the waterfront and the soon to be opened Don River Park, continue the tradition of the Toronto Music Garden and the successful model developed there for partnership and stewardship that engages local residents.

In conclusion, TRCA would like to express our appreciation and support for the Parks Plan 2013-2017 and pledge our assistance in its implementation over the next five years.

Sincerely,



Brian Denney, P.Eng.
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Councillor Sarah Doucette
Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon
Councillor James Pasternak
Councillor Gord Perks
Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam
Richard Ubbens, Director, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto
Jim Hart, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto
Susanne Burkhardt, Planner, Parks Standards and Innovation, City of Toronto
Dela Ting, Committee Administrator, Parks and Environment Committee, City of Toronto
Adele Freeman, Director, Watershed Management, TRCA
Nancy Gaffney, Waterfront Specialist, TRCA