TORONTO Member Motion

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM55.65	ACTION			Ward:All

By-law Enforcement Staffing Levels in City Parks - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Ceta Ramkhalawansingh

**** Notice of this Motion has been given.***
**** This Motion is subject to referral to the Licensing and Standards Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.***

Recommendations

Councillor kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to report to the Licensing and Standards Committee at its first meeting in 2015 on the appropriate level of by-law enforcement needed for the City of Toronto's Park System.

Summary

With more than 1,600 public parks across the City covering 13 percent of the City's land area (a total of over 8000 hectares) Toronto has come to be known as The City Within a Park. This system of parks and the 600 kilometres of trails that wind through them are an integral and defining part of our City and provide free and accessible spaces for socializing and recreation, promoting healthy, active living and fostering community. Toronto's public parks play host to special events and programming year round and are used by members of our communities from all walks of life, of all ages and abilities; they are an invaluable and necessary asset for the diverse communities across this City. Our parks provide significant economic benefits as well in their roles as cultural and creative spaces, by acting as a strong pull for tourists and through the promotion of healthy and sustainable communities.

Such an extensive and actively used park system requires extensive and active upkeep and stewardship to ensure that they remain safe and welcoming environments for residents and visitors alike. Yet the City Within a Park has only eight (8) Park By-Law Enforcement Officers on staff to monitor and investigate reported by-law and maintenance issues and infractions throughout the over 8,000 hectares of parkland. Due to this severe understaffing, pro-active management of park by-laws is not possible and issues are handled on a complaints basis only.

Our parks will only become more economically and socially valuable as our City continues to increase in density steadily every year and it is critical that we build the capacity to properly manage a sustainable and vibrant network of public parks.

(Submitted to City Council on August 25 and 26, 2014 as MM55.65)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM55.65