



REPORT FOR ACTION

Donation from a Resident for Cawthra Playground Enhancements

Date: December 12, 2016

To: Parks and Environment Committee

From: General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Ward 21 St. Paul's

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from City Council to accept a donation and enter into a donor agreement with Marlene Zaretsky, a Toronto resident, for the revitalization of Cawthra Playground. The scope of work will include replacing the sand substrate with an AODA-compliant rubberized surface, adding additional AODA-compliant play equipment, including a new junior play structure, while incorporating an existing and functional play structure for older children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to accept a donation of \$0.100 million from Toronto resident Marlene Zaretsky, through the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation, for enhancements to the existing playground in Cawthra Playground, Ward 21, in compliance with the City's Policy on Donations for Community Benefits.
2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to negotiate and enter into a donor agreement for the \$0.100 million donation from Marlene Zaretsky for enhancements to Cawthra Playground, Ward 21, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no additional annual operating costs associated with the planned improvements as Cawthra Playground has an existing playground and, as such, is part of Parks, Forestry and Recreation's existing operating, maintenance and inspections budget.

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on October 30, 31 and November 1, 2012, City Council amended its Donations to the City for Community Benefits policy:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.EX23.17>

At its meeting on September 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2006, City Council adopted its Donations to the City for Community Benefits policy.

http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/toronto_office_of_partnerships/files/pdf/donation_policy.pdf

COMMENTS

Marlene Zaretsky was born and raised in Toronto and lives here in retirement. Her late daughter, Katherine (Kathy) Tanenbaum lived in a home backing onto Cawthra Playground in Ward 21. Ms. Zaretsky wishes to make a \$100,000 donation for playground enhancements in Cawthra Playground in memory of her daughter, who loved children and the park. Ms. Zaretsky's adult son, Matthew Finkelstein, lives across the street from the playground. Marlene Zaretsky is an upstanding citizen and has donated to and volunteered with many worthy causes.

Cawthra Playground is a small neighbourhood park, 1,886 sq.m., with an older playground, green space, a mix of mature and young trees, and a drinking fountain. The playground equipment is functional, but aging and lacks equipment for the junior range age of 2-5 years. The sand substrate does not meet AODA criteria.

Parks, Capital Projects, Forestry and Partnerships staff have been involved in the conversations with the donor, including site visits. A public open house was held Sept. 28, 2016 in Ward 21, organized by the Councillor, in collaboration with Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to present concept design options for an enhanced playground. Approximately 25 residents attended. Response was favourable with a clear preference for one of the two options presented.

Donor recognition is expected to be built into the design of enhanced play space, e.g. a plaque.

The donation will flow through the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation, which will issue a tax receipt to the donor.

Implementation

Upon approval of this donation and the 2017-2026 Recommended Parks, Forestry and Recreation Capital Budget and Plan, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Capital Projects staff will proceed to develop final designs, in consultation with the donor, community and Councillor. The donor has expressed the desire to have the construction completed in 2017.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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