

## **Review of the Community Space Tenancy and Granting Request for Parents Engaged in Education**

**Date:** September 8, 2021

**To:** Economic and Community Development Committee

**From:** Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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On May 26, 2021, the Economic and Community Development Committee requested the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management and the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to apply the City of Toronto's Community Space Tenancy Policy and the appropriate granting process to the request on behalf of Parents Engaged in Education and report back in September 2021.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, Parents Engaged in Education has provided a range of services to support children living in poverty with learning at home as a result of COVID-19, engaging 275 families and 435 children. Families have accessed the services from across the Greater Toronto Area, including: Jane and Finch, Regent Park, Dorset Park and high needs areas of Scarborough such as Malvern, West Hill, Orton Park, Mornelle Court, Danzig, and Tuxedo Court. To support their ongoing operations, Parents Engaged in Education is seeking support from the City in terms of funding and community space.

This report summarizes the actions taken to date in response to the Economic and Community Development Committee's request.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration recommends that:

1. The Economic and Community Development Committee receive this report for information.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendation in this report.

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

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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The City's Community Space Tenancy Policy and Community Funding Unit at Social Development, Finance and Administration granting processes are designed to provide equitable access to funding and community space required by eligible non-profit organizations serving City of Toronto residents including Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving groups. These organizations in turn provide programs and services that align with and support the City's strategic objectives. The absence of community space and funding directly impacts the availability of programs and services that are responsive to local needs.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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On May 26, 2021, the Economic and Community Development Committee requested the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management and the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to apply the City of Toronto's Community Space Tenancy Policy and the appropriate granting process to Councillor Paul Ainslie's request on behalf of Parents Engaged in Education and report back in September 2021.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EC22.7>

At its meeting on May 5 and 6 2021, City Council referred Motion MM32.15 regarding Parents Engaged in Education to the Economic and Community Development Committee. This Motion recommended that City staff locate a City-owned site for occupancy in Scarborough, and work with the Provincial Government and the Provincial Ministry of Education to secure financial support for Parents Engaged in Education.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-166363.pdf>

## **COMMENTS**

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Social Development, Finance, and Administration's staff responsible for Community Funding and the Community Space Tenancy Policy reviewed the request from the Economic and Community Development Committee. Staff also consulted with Corporate Real Estate Management with respect to the request. The Managers of Tower and Neighbourhood Revitalization Unit and Community Funding Unit met with the Executive Director of Parents Engaged in Education to share information and explore ways to support the work of the organization.

### **Community Space:**

The Community Space Tenancy Policy supports eligible community agencies such as Parents Engaged in Education by providing opportunities to below market rent leases of City facilities from which agencies can provide services to local neighbourhoods to meet specific community needs. In the meeting with Parents Engaged in Education, the Community Space Tenancy Policy was explained and an upcoming Community Space Tenancy opportunity that came available during the review was discussed. The

Executive Director indicated that the organization's current space arrangement is more affordable than the new opportunity but expressed interest in being alerted to future space opportunities.

A Request for Expressions of Interest was run in August 2021 for the new Community Space Tenancy opportunity at 705 Progress Avenue, Unit 36/37. Parents Engaged in Education was included on an email distribution from City staff to alert organizations about Community Space Tenancy opportunities. The Request for Expression of Interest includes a requirement that organizations must attend the Mandatory Online Information Session prior to submitting an application. This session was held on August 10, 2021 and Parents Engaged in Education did not attend. No other Community Space Tenancy opportunities exist at this time but the organization will remain on the list to be notified of future Request for Expression of Interest Opportunities released under the Community Space Tenancy Policy.

**Funding:**

With respect to funding, the Community Funding Unit does not anticipate any upcoming City funding opportunities. Staff informed the Executive Director about other funder's opportunities, many of which Parents Engaged in Education is already pursuing in their work across the Greater Toronto area. The City of Toronto Grants Policy dictates that funding be used only to support Torontonians. However, the Community Funding Unit generally does not fund activities that are seen to be the responsibility of other orders of government or school boards. A number of Toronto-based not-for-profit organizations provide programs and services similar to those provided by Parents Engaged in Education. This includes: youth-specific organizations such as the boys and girls clubs, as well as multi-service agencies that offer programs to support children, youth and their families. In the Scarborough-Guildwood ward, this includes the East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club and Heart Beatz, which are both supported with Community Service Partnerships funding. The City of Toronto further supports similar programming through its network of Association of Community Centre locations and community centres.

**Other City Supports:**

Parents Engaged in Education expressed interest in the possibility of a mobile service delivery model and a subsequent meeting was arranged with the Toronto Public Library regarding access to decommissioned bookmobiles, or a partnership with bookmobile services. These discussions are on-going.

**CONTACT**

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**SIGNATURE**

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