

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM7.15	ACTION			Ward: 10
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Critical Measures to Restore Ecology and Preserve the History and Culture of Hanlan’s Point Beach and Surrounding Area - by Councillor Ausma Malik, seconded by Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie

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

Recommendations

Councillor Ausma Malik, seconded by Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie, recommends that:

1. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with other appropriate divisions, to take steps to expand the clothing optional beach at Hanlan’s Point on City-operated lands between Toronto Island Airport and Gibraltar Point as soon as possible and implement communication tactics including signage to communicate the expansion.
2. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with the City Solicitor and other appropriate divisions, to review a by-law amendment on the restoration and expansion of the clothing optional beach at Hanlan’s Point Beach and area between Toronto Island Airport and Gibraltar Point and to report back to Infrastructure and Environment Committee in the fourth quarter of 2023.
3. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with appropriate divisions, and in alignment with the Toronto Island Master Plan and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Flood Mitigation Environmental Assessment, to consider including the following projects within the recommendations and priorities of the Master Plan and to report back as part of the Master Plan in the fourth quarter of 2023:
 - a. the development of a new paved trail to access the north end of Hanlan’s Point beach while ensuring the protection of the adjacent Environmentally Significant Area; and
 - b. restoration of the beach in the area of the original site of Hanlan’s First Pride Picnic to commemorate and recognize the significance of this space to the 2SLGBTQ+ communities.
4. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to continue work already underway to review and implement:

- a. installation of signage, cultural markers and flag poles to acknowledge the significance of Hanlan's beach and the site of Hanlan's First Pride Picnic; and
- b. opportunities to enhance the ecological integrity of Hanlan's Point including: new fencing to direct park and beach goers to preferred access points and pathways; and a pilot program to naturalize areas and increase buffer zones within and around Hanlan's Point Beach.

Summary

At its meeting of May 10, 11 and 12, 2023, City Council adopted Item 2023.MM6.22, Recognizing the Importance of Queer History and the Ongoing Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (2SLGBTQ+) Community Presence at Hanlan's Point Beach and Surrounding Area.

City staff have reviewed a number of proposals related to enhancing this space and provided recommendations on what items can proceed at this time and which require further review.

The issues and proposals include:

The southern portion of the beach on the westerly shoreline of Toronto Island Park currently lacks adequate markers identifying it as a community hub for Toronto and Canada's 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Hanlan's Point Beach has seen a dramatic decline in useable space for both residents and the region's wildlife as a result of natural sand erosion and human interference, with approximately 400 metres of the westerly shoreline currently without sand, resulting in frequent human crowding and trampling of dunes in the areas immediately surrounding the unusable space, which in turn contributes to additional ecological degradation in those areas.

In recent years, Hanlan's Point Beach and surrounding area has been the location of an increasing number of incidents of violence towards 2SLGBTQ+ beachgoers in the space's most crowded areas, and members of Toronto's 2SLGBTQ+ community have raised concerns over issues of crowding, conflict, and discrimination in the historic space which could be mitigated by improved control or expansion of access points.

The site of Canada's historic first ever 2SLGBTQ+ Pride gathering, located at Hanlan's Point Beach, is currently severely eroded and in a state of ecological disrepair making it impossible to visit and use by the community.

The current clothing optional beach area may be expanded to reduce crowding, assist in the enforcement of the space through the use of natural boundaries, and formalize the clothing optional use of the space at the southern portion of the westerly edge of Toronto Island and the remaining westerly edge of Toronto Island as it has been used by the community for over a century. Under current authority, City staff may implement expansion over a portion of this area, and a staff review and report back on further changes including an updated By-law.

A final report to City Council on the Toronto Island Master Plan is anticipated in the fourth quarter of 2023 and will consider several of these proposals.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM7.15