

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM14.9	ACTION			Ward: All
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Going with the Snow - Returning Tobogganing to 45 Hills Across Toronto - by Councillor Brad Bradford, seconded by Mayor Olivia Chow

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Brad Bradford, seconded by Mayor Olivia Chow, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to remove the signs prohibiting tobogganing and install new signs warning about the potential risks associated with tobogganing as well as information on where to find designated tobogganing hills that are inspected or maintained by the City.
2. City Council amend Chapter 608, Parks, to provide that the Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation consult with the local councillor and obtain Community Council approval, in advance of prohibiting tobogganing on any hill, notwithstanding temporary closures for urgent maintenance or operational requirements.
3. City Council direct the Acting General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to re-install hay bales that were previously in place at hills where tobogganing was previously prohibited.
4. City Council request the Province of Ontario to work with municipal governments to put forward a plan of action to amend the Occupier's Liability Act, Negligence Act, and other applicable legislation to address municipal liability, including issues arising from municipalities' joint and several liability, as it relates to the use of City property for recreational activities, including tobogganing, before the end of the Ontario government's current term.

Summary

Packing up the snow gear and going tobogganing is a beloved winter pastime for many families in our city, including Councillor Bradford with his family and Mayor Chow with her grandkids. Local residents have been tobogganing at parks like East Lynn and Christie Pits for many generations, which is why it caused so much confusion and dismay when people arrived at parks one winter morning to be greeted by "no tobogganing" signs.

Torontonians have spoken loud and clear: they want their city to embrace opportunities for fun outdoor winter activities like tobogganing.

This motion intends to change the City of Toronto's approach to regulating tobogganing. Rather than prohibit this beloved activity in certain locations, the City will use warning signs to allow park users to make informed decisions about the risk of tobogganing in all locations staff determine a warning is appropriate, along with information about the designated tobogganing hills in the city. In addition to replacing the signage that has been installed on these hills, the motion also directs staff in Parks, Forestry and Recreation to reintroduce hay bales and other measures to help mitigate the risks that exist in some parks.

This new approach addresses the need to promote safe use of our parks while still allowing the public to make informed decisions about their well-being. After all, we are a winter city and there are few pastimes more quintessential to the Canadian experience than that of tobogganing.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM14.9