

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM23.30	ACTION			Ward: 14
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Year-Round Non-Motorized Watercraft Storage Pilot - by Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, and the applicable local Ward Councillor, to negotiate and sign amending agreements of any existing licence agreements relating to the use of designated waterfront locations for non-motorized watercraft rental services, to allow for the year-round storage of equipment and storage containers where operationally feasible and at market rates, on terms and conditions acceptable to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
2. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to negotiate and sign a nominal-fee three-year licence agreement commencing 2025 with an option to renew for an additional year, with Don't Mess with the Don, for access and storage at a waterfront location satisfactory to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to provide free non-motorized watercraft programming and support environmental initiatives, on terms and conditions acceptable to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

Summary

The City of Toronto, through Parks, Forestry and Recreation, has put in place non-motorized watercraft rental licenses with various operators for seasonal access to designated waterfront locations to provide watercraft rentals, lessons, and public storage of personal crafts for a term of four years. These licenses operate seasonally from June to September each year and pay the City a market license fee.

Some of these operators, including Toronto SUP & Kayak Inc., have made requests for year-round storage of containers at their sites. This would allow licensees to keep storage containers in place, causing less disruption to surrounding areas, and continuity of storage for customers.

While this is not appropriate for all locations based on terrain, logistical considerations, and other winter uses, Parks, Forestry and Recreation can pilot a year-round approach with vendors who request to take part in the initiative, based on a review of each independent request by

Parks operations staff for feasibility, in consultation with the appropriate ward Councillor, and with an appropriate market license fee being charged for commercial operators. Applicable realty taxes may apply.

Don't Mess with the Don

City staff have also been approached by the not-for-profit Don't Mess with the Don to find storage and programming space. Don't Mess with the Don is a volunteer-led charitable organization that works to protect and restore natural spaces around the Don Valley and its ravines. One of Don't Mess with the Don's programs provides free weekly kayaking tours to:

- help educate participants on impact of pollution and invasive species;
- introduce Toronto residents to kayaking in an affordable manner;
- assist in garbage and debris clean-up of the lake, rivers, and ravines; and
- increase community appreciation and respect for our natural environments.

A commercial market rent would be prohibitive for Don't Mess with the Don as a charitable organization that does not charge for kayak tours as a part of their educational program.

This motion directs City staff to work with Don't Mess with the Don to secure a nominal-fee licence for the group to operate seasonally near the waterfront and to improve access for Don't Mess with the Don's kayak program. This would facilitate the expansion of the program, mobilize the community led clean ups of natural spaces, and help the organization reallocate funds from storage to other community programming.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation would work alongside Don't Mess with the Don to determine an appropriate location for the organization's needs and enter a nominal agreement on terms and conditions approved by Parks, Forestry and Recreation General Manager, in consultation with the local Councillor.

Reason for Urgency: The summer lease expired in October so certainty is needed ahead of the winter months to avoid a period of uncertainty for Parks, as well as the operators.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM23.30