

Supplementary Report - GG27.14 - Renewal of Various Boat Club Leases

Date: March 24, 2026

To: City Council

From: Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, General Manager, Parks and Recreation

Wards: 3 - Etobicoke-Lakeshore and 4 – Parkdale-High Park,

SUMMARY

This supplementary report describes the process undertaken by City staff, in consultation with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), that informed the staff determination not to include the Toronto Humber Yacht Club (THYC) among the boat clubs recommended for lease renewal in GG27.14 - Renewal of Various Boat Club Leases. The purpose of this report is to provide additional details regarding roles, considerations assessed, and factors weighed as part of that review.

As part of the broader work to review the twenty-five site boat club lease portfolio expiring in July 2025, Parks and Recreation, and Corporate Real Estate Management, completed a comprehensive assessment that included a review of: (i) any environmental policy changes that may impact a site's permitted land use or activities; (ii) current tenant's lease history and standing with the terms of their lease obligations, and (iii) any public concerns or issues resulting from the current site use and operations. Staff applied this comprehensive assessment framework across all the entire boat club leased portfolio, considering evolving priorities on floodplain management, any default notices issued, and community feedback on boat club operations.

As part of the boat club portfolio renewal review, City staff consulted with TRCA, as many of the lands are under the jurisdiction of the TRCA with some either owned or leased by the TRCA and managed by the City. For those sites under TRCA control, under the authority of the 1972 Management Agreement (Management Agreement) between the City and TRCA, TRCA must consent to leased land uses and as a result, both parties work collaboratively to determine acceptable uses. With regards to the THYC site specifically, it is located entirely within the regulated floodplain of the Humber River on TRCA-owned lands.

City staff determined that the lease associated with the THYC site was the only lease that did not meet the criteria for renewal, based on site-specific factors related to its location within the regulated floodplain, the nature and intensity of the land use, and alignment with current TRCA and City objectives.

This report also outlines the steps taken by the City to notify and engage THYC regarding the lease expiry and summarizes related communications concerning site transition expectations. While acknowledging the long history of THYC at this location and the impacts on its members and volunteers, the City has sought to manage the process in a clear and orderly manner and, where feasible, to identify potential options to support affected members.

Pending Council direction, the City will work with TRCA on site decommissioning, clean-up, and a technical site review to determine feasibility of potential future site uses. The City and TRCA will also collaborate on a robust community engagement plan to identify future uses, with an emphasis on those that balance public access with ecological protection, flood risk management, and long-term resilience of the Humber River corridor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management and the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, recommend that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts resulting from the recommendation in this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the Financial Impact Section as presented in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of March 9, 2026, General Government Committee amended Item GG27.14 – Renewal of Various Boat Club Leases, from the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, and recommended by the General Manager, Parks and Recreation. As part of that decision, General Government Committee authorized the continuation of a temporary month-to-month overhold to allow the Toronto Humber Yacht Club (THYC) to operate for the 2026 season, and directed the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, and the General Manager,

Parks and Recreation, to report to the June 2, 2026 meeting of the General Government Committee. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.GG27.14>

COMMENTS

Historical Context

The Toronto Humber Yacht Club (THYC) is located within King's Mill Park along the Humber River on approximately 2.06 acres of leased land within the regulated floodplain. The club serves over 100 members, with an estimated 50 to 60 motorized boats, and also provides storage and dock access for jet skis, paddlers, and other non-motorized watercrafts.

THYC acquired an interest in the property in 1955 and commenced operations at its current location in 1956 under a provincial charter. Between the late 1950s and 1970s, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA), now the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), undertook a program of land acquisition along the Humber River for flood control and erosion management purposes. As part of this program, ownership of the lands occupied by THYC was acquired by the conservation authority and has since been managed by the City of Toronto under the 1972 Management Agreement, which requires formal written approval from TRCA prior to leasing any TRCA-owned lands.

THYC entered into a 20-year lease agreement with the City of Toronto and TRCA effective August 1, 2005. The lease expired on July 31, 2025, and the club currently remains on site under a month-to-month overhold, in accordance with the lease terms.

Site Characteristics, Current Use, and Impacts

The THYC site is regulated under the Conservation Authorities Act and is located directly adjacent to the Humber River within the hydraulic floodway, the inner portion of regulated flood plain needed to convey flood waters with the greatest risk to people and property. Many existing structures on the site pre-date current planning policies and are therefore legally non-conforming. Under current regulations, any future development or construction of new structures exceeding 15 square metres would require TRCA permits, and would not be permitted due to an unacceptable level of risk to persons and property.

This site is the only boat club operating on a river and the only leased boat club site located entirely within the hydraulic floodplain. Riverine shorelines differ significantly from Lake Ontario shorelines, as they are dynamic systems subject to erosion and periodic flooding. These processes are integral to ecological function and habitat diversity but also present increased risks to built infrastructure and intensive land uses.

During the review of existing uses across the boat club portfolio, staff identified that the current site layout at this location included over 35 docks extending approximately 300 metres of shoreline, along with fuel storage and refuelling facilities and over 7,000 square metres of impacted surfaces associated with clubhouse facilities, parking, boat launching, staging, and storage. These uses limit the site's ability to support natural processes, absorb floodwaters and provide natural resilience to extreme weather events.

Staff have also identified unauthorized vegetation removal and increases in dock infrastructure beyond what was permitted under the lease.

Since the lease was established more than 20 years ago, environmental conditions and policy priorities have evolved, particularly in response to increasingly frequent and severe weather events. This context has placed greater emphasis on restoring natural systems to support climate resilience.

During the review, TRCA advised that a motorized boating club represents an intensive private land use that does not advance current objectives for hazard mitigation, environmental restoration, or sustainable recreation on TRCA-owned river valley lands managed by the City. This assessment informed staff's determination that the use should not be continued, and that future consideration of the site should focus on lower-impact alternatives, subject to Council direction.

These considerations are informed by the TRCA's Living City Policies, Terrestrial Natural Heritage System, and Conservation Area Strategy, and the City of Toronto Official Plan policies for the Natural Heritage System, which emphasize protection and enhancement of natural features, hazard management, and avoidance of activities that may negatively affect aquatic habitat or shoreline stability.

Lease Review

As part of the broader review of the 25 boat club leases set to expire in 2025, City staff, in coordination with TRCA, undertook a consistent evaluation of all expiring leased sites. This assessment included a review of any policy changes that may impact a club's permitted land-use or activities, an assessment of a boat club's standing with the terms of their lease obligations, and consideration of any public concerns or issues resulting from current uses. This review applied the same assessment framework across all sites, considering evolving priorities on floodplain management, any default notices issued, and community feedback on boat club operations.

As the landowner, TRCA provided input as part of the City's evaluation, consistent with its mandate to manage flood risk, erosion hazards, and ecological health across all areas where the TRCA has jurisdiction. TRCA advised that the THYC site's location within the regulated floodplain and hydraulic floodway, combined with the scale and intensity of the existing motorized boating club land use, including large permanent shoreline structures, over 7,000 square meters of impacted surfaces associated with

clubhouse facilities, parking, boat launching, staging and storage, and fuel storage and refueling facilities does not best support current objectives and strategies for managing flood and erosion risk, environmental restoration, and long-term stewardship. This was the only site flagged for concern by TRCA.

In its role as parkland manager, the City considered a range of factors relevant to long-term site management, including impacts to the physical site, surrounding community, and other park users. Staff also reviewed a history of lease compliance matters associated with the site, as well complaints and correspondence from residents and community groups, including a petition with over 2,000 signatures requesting that the lease not be renewed.

Tenant Compliance Issues, Notifications and Public Concerns

Between 2018 and 2024, the City issued formal default notices and multiple letters to THYC outlining various tenant lease violations, including:

- Encroachments on non-leased lands
- Unauthorized structures, including patios and gazebos
- Shoreline expansion through unauthorized docks and float homes
- Full-year live-aboard on leased premises without City approval
- Unauthorized licensing/subleasing a portion of the leased property
- Bonfires and storage of flammable materials
- Introducing unauthorized substances into the water, including garbage and potential contaminants from underground fuel tanks
- Failure to ensure activities on the leased premises do not constitute a nuisance or interfere with neighbouring properties, including excessive noise complaints
- Reports of operators and members showing aggressive behaviour towards others

In response to these concerns, the City made multiple efforts to engage with THYC to communicate the lease violations and the required remedies. Several matters directly exacerbated environmental concerns and impacts to the site, including unauthorized vegetation removal, site alterations for parking and storage, and risks associated with aging fuel infrastructure adjacent to the Humber River.

Despite repeated efforts by the City, THYC did not demonstrate that the identified violations had been addressed or that the required corrective actions had been undertaken, and communication from THYC regarding these matters has been minimal or absent in recent years. To date, the majority of these violations remain outstanding.

A summary of these communications and current status can be found in Appendix "A".

Decision

Taken together, these considerations informed staff's assessment of the appropriateness of renewing the lease at the time of expiry. The conclusion of the

existing lease term provided an opportunity for staff, in consultation with TRCA, to re-examine the suitability of the current use in light of updated policies, environmental conditions, and land stewardship objectives for the Humber River valley. Staff ultimately determined that allowing the THYC lease to come to its natural expiry was consistent with TRCA's input as landowner and with the City's broader approach to managing public river valley lands. The TRCA has provided a letter of support for this decision which can be found in Appendix "A."

Engagement with Toronto Humber Yacht Club Regarding Non-Renewal of the Lease

The City issued formal notice to THYC on June 30, 2025, by mail and email to the then Commodore and designated contacts under the lease, advising that it would not be entering into a further lease agreement. No response was received for approximately three months.

A follow-up notice was issued on October 2, 2025, again by mail and email to the same contacts. On November 25, 2025, the City was contacted by the Commodore, who advised that a new Commodore had been appointed and they provided the new Commodore's contact information. The notice letter was reissued by email to the new Commodore the same day.

A formal response from the new Commodore was received on December 23, 2025, acknowledging the City's notice and advising that they had been appointed late in the boating season and formally confirmed at the THYC Annual General Meeting in December.

A meeting was held on January 14, 2026, between City staff and representatives of the THYC, including the Commodore, a Board member, and a consultant, to discuss the decommissioning of the site and exit from the TRCA property. A decommissioning plan had been requested by the City however no decommissioning plan was provided by THYC at that time.

At this meeting, staff advised that the City would be installing on-site signage to notify members and the public that the lease was not being renewed and the club would not be operating for the 2026 boating season.

The City subsequently requested a decommissioning plan again, and proposed a site visit through email correspondence on January 21 and January 30, 2026. THYC responded through email on January 27 and February 7, 2026 without providing a decommissioning plan or date for a site visit.

The City replied by email on February 26, 2026, reiterating the request for a decommissioning plan and advising that THYC notify its members that there would be no boating season in 2026.

No further communication was received from the THYC following the City's February 26, 2026 email reiterating the request for a decommissioning plan, and prior to consideration of the matter by the General Government Committee on March 9, 2026.

On March 10, 2026, the day following the Committee meeting, THYC emailed the City advising of actions it intended to take to continue operations on the TRCA property. The City has yet to respond. On this day, the City also received a report from the public that the on-site City signs notifying the members of the impending lease expiry had been removed. This was not done by the City.

Options for THYC Members

Staff acknowledge that the decision to not renew the THYC lease agreement represents a challenge for the current membership and volunteers. Subject to Council direction, staff are committed to working with THYC to support clear communication to all impacted parties regarding next steps and, where feasible, exploring opportunities for members to be accommodated at other boat clubs across the city.

Next Steps and Future Site Planning

The City remains committed to ensuring that any future consideration of the site is informed by community engagement, and in partnership with TRCA as the landowner. The expiry of the lease provides an opportunity to consider whether alternative, less intensive uses would align with land stewardship objectives.

In 2026, pending Council direction, the City will be focussed on winding down boat club operations, including the removal of boats, private property, and encroaching structures from the site. Following decommissioning, City staff in coordination with TRCA will begin preliminary site reviews and technical assessments during the appropriate seasonal conditions in fall 2026 and spring 2027 to support a future-land use planning process. It is envisioned that City and TRCA staff would coordinate on potential land-use scenarios, preliminary feasibility review, along with restoration and hazard mitigation objectives in preparation for a public engagement process targeted for fall 2027.

Following this preliminary work, a public engagement plan would be developed to allow for stakeholder and public feedback in determining the future of the site. The public engagement design would consider the community's interest in access to recreational spaces and the environmental objectives outlined in this report. Any decisions or proposals resulting from the community engagement process would be subject to TRCA approval.

Contingent on Council direction, future work would focus on engagement and planning to explore lower-impact, publicly accessible uses that balance recreation with ecological protection, flood risk management, and long-term resilience of the Humber River corridor.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Patrick Matozzo
Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management

Terry Ricketts
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APPENDIX A - TRCA LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR NON-RENEWAL OF THYC LEASE
RECEIVED APRIL 11, 2025
APPENDIX B - LEASE INFRACTION NOTIFICATION CHRONOLOGY BETWEEN
2018 AND 2024

Appendix A - TRCA Letter of support FOR NON-RENEWAL OF THYC LEASE
RECEIVED APRIL 11, 2025



Lauren Grosberg
Senior Project Manager
Business Services, Parks & Recreation
City of Toronto
55 John St, Toronto, ON

Subject : Alternative uses of the area leased by the Toronto Humber Yacht Club at 101 Humber Valley Rd, Etobicoke, ON

TRCA developed a Terrestrial Natural Heritage System (NHS) Strategy in 2007 with support from its municipal partners. The strategy aimed to establish, protect, and restore a strategic network of existing natural cover including forest, wetland, meadow, successional, beach and bluff along with additional natural areas targeted for restoration across TRCA's jurisdiction.

Together these areas support TRCA's and its municipal partners' shared goals and objectives for regional biodiversity, ecosystem functions, and related ecosystem services such as aquatic system health, and flood protection.

Based on the location of the Toronto Humber Yacht Club within a valley, directly adjacent to the Humber River, and within TRCA's NHS, a less intensive land use would better support TRCA's ecological management objectives. This could include implementing programs for habitat creation, naturalization, and enhancement, which would have a positive impact on the ecological function of the surrounding NHS, allowing for better protection of those functions. Ecological restoration of valley lands, riparian areas and the associated NHS is typically a TRCA priority where opportunities are available.

As such, TRCA would be in support of the City of Toronto's decision to not renew the existing lease with the Toronto Humber Yacht Club.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kathryn Lockyer".

Kathryn Lockyer
Director, Legislative and Property Services

APPENDIX B - LEASE INFRACTION NOTIFICATION CHRONOLOGY between 2018 and 2024

Compliance Category	Communication Count	Section of Lease	Description	Status
Unauthorized Live-a-Board Vessel	2	9	Live-a-boards located on leased property Float homes brought to leased property	Ongoing
Contravene Laws or By-laws	3	4	Recreational vehicle on site (3 separate communications)	One resolved; two ongoing
Environmental / Vegetation Damage	6	4	Fireplaces / bonfires on site (3 separate communications) Not keeping the leased property "neat, clean, and in good condition and repair" Encroaching on City and/or TRCA land outside of leased property Garbage and other unauthorized items have been allowed to enter the water	Ongoing
Nuisance / Disturbance	7	4	Nuisance / disturbance of users or occupants of neighbouring property (7 separate communications) Examples include noise complaints, "river rave" parties	Ongoing
Commercial Benefit	8	4 and 14	Rental jet ski operation on site Water taxis brought to leased property Business operating on site - Iron River Racing (6 separate communications)	Resolved
Unauthorized Construction / Alternations	11	4 and 6	Unapproved dock structures (3 separate communications) Installation of decks, tents, furniture, picnic tables, plants, storage containers (8 separate communications)	Ongoing