

September 11, 2006

**Parks Forestry and Recreation
Plan for the Routine Disclosure of Information**

Preamble:

Most Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division information falls under the Routine Disclosure category and can be publicly released without a formal Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (MFIPPA) request having been filed. From a review of our current practices, generally, Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff are adhering to the Routine Disclosure Guidelines detailed in the Corporate Access and Privacy Manual.

A summary of the MFIPPA requests for 2004 and 2005 (2006 figures are incomplete) that were received from the Corporate Access and Privacy (CAP) office reveal that most fall under the Routine Disclosure category. However, some involved requests concerning private matters that cannot be divulged (e.g. claims against the City regarding private trees, detailed staff records etc.). From the 63 MFIPPA requests made over the last 2 years, most could have been dealt with through the Routine Disclosure guidelines. It is uncertain why members of the public chose to make MFIPPA requests rather than make these requests through the normal process of contacting the General Manager's Office or one of our Branches directly, as this information was not available. These requests have been categorized below. It should be noted that many of these requests involve inquiries involving forestry matters.

- Forestry Information Requests:
 - Fallen City Tree incident reports
 - Copies of Letters of Objection for Tree Removals
 - Maintenance history of City Trees
 - Private Tree By-law Inquiries / Applications
 - Tree Complaints
 - Tree records pertaining to specific trees (city and private) - includes city/arborist reports, correspondence, drawings, financial statements
 - Tree Removal Inquiries
 - Granted or pending tree removal permits for a specific project (if permit granted, information could be divulged, if pending cannot be divulged until matter decided)

- Other Types of Requests:
 - Capital Project Funding for specific projects (if approved, could divulge)
 - Consultant studies and payment (gross amount, if contract awarded)
 - Contract Information (if contract awarded)
 - List of job categories and related information (i.e. salaries, staffing numbers, etc.)
 - Park levy charges paid by certain developments
 - Section 37 and 45 Contributions (Development Charges and Cash-in-lieu) - Funding source details
 - Record of tickets issued by Parks By-law Enforcement Officers (including the categories of tickets issued and the value of the tickets issued)
 - Staff report / policy guideline / study / audit information details
 - Welcome Policy Inquiries (non- personal information only)

PARKS, FORESTRY AND RECREATION ROUTINE DISCLOSURE PLAN

Purpose:

To ensure information requested by the public is provided in a timely fashion through regular communication channels in an effort to divert requests away from the formal MFIPPA process wherever feasible.

Procedures:

Currently the General Manager's office (GM) receives MFIPPA requests and forwards them to the appropriate branch for a response, within the prescribed 30 day timeframe set by legislation. The GM's office follows up with the appropriate staff to ensure these requests are responded to within the required timeframe.

Other public inquiries, requests and complaints are also received by the General Manager's office and by individual branches directly. GM staff forward all correspondence and phone calls requiring a response to the appropriate PFR Directors and staff, requesting a response within a 2 week timeframe. However, some of the more complex requests involving one or more branches or other City divisions may require a longer period to prepare a suitable response.

Proposed Improvements:

- 1) PFR will be developing a Routine Disclosure Policy Manual in 2007 which will guide Division staff in implementing a policy of Routine Disclosure for all Division information and materials, provided the information does not:
 - a) contain material received in confidence from other levels of government (domestic or foreign) as mandated under Section 9 of MFIPPA;
 - b) contain third party information as mandated under Section 10 of MFIPPA;
 - c) contain any personal information as mandated under Section 14 of MFIPPA;
 - d) provide advice or recommendations of a city employee or consultant prior to their being considered by City Council;
 - e) involve a legal claim against the Division which has not yet been resolved;
 - f) pertain to lease and land negotiations; and
 - g) seriously threaten the safety or health of any individual.
- 2) Training for PFR staff with respect to Freedom of Information requests and Routine Disclosure is required to ensure that staff is able to properly assess requests prior to disclosing information. As part of the Division's Training and Learning Committee's (TLC) priorities, PFR will ensure that all Division staff who respond to public information requests are familiar with the requirements of MFIPPA and know what information can be routinely disclosed without the requirement for a formal MFIPPA request. Staff training is planned for 2007-8, after the launch of the PFR Routine Disclosure Policy Manual).
- 3) Refine existing tracking processes to ensure a consistent, Division-wide approach to recording and monitoring requests from the public for information that falls within the Routine Disclosure categories established by the Division.
- 4) Continue to work with the 3-1-1 Project Team in establishing linkages for faster service to the public with respect to information inquiries.
- 5) Redesign the PFR external webpage to reflect our new Divisional structure and provide the public with comprehensive information on our facilities, programs and services (to be developed in 2007-8).