



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Donation from Fiskars Brands Canada Inc. to Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Date:	April 3, 2009
To:	Parks & Environment Committee
From:	Brenda Patterson, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Phyllis Berck, Director, Toronto Office of Partnerships
Wards:	Ward 36 – Scarborough Southwest
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval from City Council to accept an in-kind donation from Fiskars Brands Canada Inc. to construct a community garden in Toronto in accordance with the *Policy on Donations to the City for Community Benefits*. Since the estimated value of this offer exceeds the \$50,000 threshold for donation acceptance established in the policy, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division requires City Council consent before proceeding with the initiative.

The in-kind donation stems from the company’s “Project Orange Thumb” program, which has seen the development of over 100 community gardens in North America since its inception in 2003. Fiskars has selected the priority neighbourhood of Scarborough Village (Ward 36 – Scarborough Southwest) for its inaugural Toronto project. Construction of the garden, which will measure 50’ x 50’ at a minimum, is proposed to take place on May 27, 2009.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the Director of the Toronto Office of Partnerships recommend that:

1. City Council accept an in-kind donation from Fiskars Brands Canada Inc., valued at \$100,000 USD, for the development of a new community garden on an existing parks property located on the north side of Kingston Road, east of No. 3620, in

the Scarborough Village community, proposed to be installed on May 27, 2009;
and

2. the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation be authorized to enter into an agreement with Fiskars Brands Canada Inc. for the development of the community garden on terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

Financial Impact

The recommendation contained in this report will have no net impact on the 2009 or future Parks, Forestry and Recreation operating budgets.

Maintenance costs for this project will be nominal, as the new garden will be cared for by local community groups. No additional programming costs are anticipated.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Fiskars Brands Canada Inc., an international garden and tool company, approached the Toronto Office of Partnerships in December 2008 with the prospect of partnering with the City on their community garden initiative, "Project Orange Thumb".

COMMENTS

Project Orange Thumb is a program through which Fiskars provides community garden makeovers in priority neighbourhoods. Since its inception in 2003, the program has produced over 100 community gardens in the U.S. The aim of Project Orange Thumb is to promote community involvement, neighborhood beautification, sustainable agriculture and horticultural education.

The community garden makeovers take place in one day and are designed with Fiskars' Garden Designer, Joe Lamp'l, host of "Fresh from the Garden" on DIY Network and gardenSMART, in consultation with the chosen community.

After consulting with relevant City staff, Fiskars decided that the first Toronto Project Orange Thumb makeover would be appropriate at the Scarborough Village site. Ward Councillor Brian Ashton has also been advised in regard to this matter.

A community consultation on the garden's design is scheduled for early April and will involve City staff, members of the community and the local councillor's office. The makeover itself is proposed for May 27, 2009. Fiskars' employees and volunteers will create a community garden that is a minimum of 50' x 50'.

The proposed community garden will be established on a portion of an existing parks property adjacent to the Cornell Campbell House and the Scarborough Village recreation complex. This property currently supports only passive use and is comprised of turf and a few small trees. As directed recently by the Parks and Environment Committee at its meeting of November 19, 2008, (Item PE20.3), staff are formulating a strategic plan for the overall Cornell Campbell House (which was recently purchased by the City for eventual use as a horticultural centre) site and will report back in due course. The community garden resulting from this donation on the adjacent parks site will be complementary to the development of the strategic plan.

In all, this initiative has an approximate value of \$100,000 USD. All expenses including associated planning, fees, travel, green goods, hardscapes, royalties, rentals, associated salaries and incidentals are the responsibility of Fiskars. Ultimately, it is hoped that their generosity will not only support a priority community, but that it will also contribute to a sense of accomplishment and pride.

CONTACT

Phyllis Berck, Director
Toronto Office of Partnerships
Tel. 416-392-6119
Fax: 416-392-6118
Email : pberck@toronto.ca

Andy Koropeski, Director
Parks
Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Tel.: 416-392-7911
Fax : 416-397-4007
Email : akoropes@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Phyllis Berck, Director
Toronto Office of Partnerships

Brenda Patterson, General Manager
Parks, Forestry & Recreation