

Clause embodied in Report No. 3 of the Economic Development and Parks Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on April 16, 17 and 18, 2002.

## 5

**Terms of Reference for Community  
Advisory Councils within the Economic  
Development, Culture and Tourism Department  
Parks and Recreation Division (All Wards)**

*(City Council on April 16, 17 and 18, 2002, amended this Clause by deleting from Recommendation No. (2) embodied in the report dated March 5, 2002, from the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, as embodied in the Clause, the words “become void on approval of Attachment No. 1”, and inserting in lieu thereof the words “remain in existence until the new constitution has been approved”, so that such recommendation shall now read as follows:*

*“(2) all existing Advisory Council constitutions and other documents remain in existence until the new constitution has been approved;”.)*

**The Economic Development and Parks Committee recommends the adoption of the following report (March 5, 2002) from the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, subject to adding the following:**

**“all local Councillors automatically become an ex-officio member of the Community Advisory Councils”:**

Purpose:

To request approval of the Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils to be used by the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, Parks and Recreation Division, to fulfil its commitment to public input, increase the volunteer base and build a strong volunteer/staff partnership that enhances programs and services to the public.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department’s Parks and Recreation Division, as outlined in Attachment No. 1, be approved;

- (2) all existing Advisory Council constitutions and other documents become void on approval of Attachment No. 1;
- (3) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

Currently the Parks and Recreation Division works collectively with 66 Advisory Councils. It is the intent of the Division to harmonize the Terms of Reference and increase the number of Advisory Councils over time, wherever there is a City-owned/community operated community centre or a significant parks resource.

The Parks and Recreation Division staff convened a gathering of volunteer representatives from across the City to discuss issues and new directions. A work group, consisting of volunteers from each district and staff, was established to develop a common Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils. The Terms of Reference and subsequent implementation strategies will become the operating guide for staff and volunteers as they work in partnership to enhance the quality and levels of programs and services for the public.

There have been numerous opportunities for all interested volunteers and staff to provide input to this process.

Comments:

Volunteers and staff identified the need to create an equitable approach to the manner in which the Parks and Recreation Division gathers input from the community and develops volunteer partnerships.

The goal is to establish Community Advisory Councils as a formal, ongoing means of public input into parks and recreation programs and events.

Volunteers and staff will work together to design and deliver the training required by volunteers and staff to successfully implement this process.

The three community options, outlined in the Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils, Attachment No. 1, provide staff and volunteers with the flexibility of building their partnership at a level and pace that is mutually beneficial. This flexibility also enables staff and volunteers to progress to a more formal advisory council structure if and when they agree it is in their best interest.

The key indicators of success include that both advisory council volunteers and staff are working with a clear understanding and respect for each others role, and that the partnership between both parties has enhanced the positive role that Parks and Recreation plays in the betterment of the community.

The development of Community Advisory Councils within the Parks and Recreation Division is an ongoing process, with emphasis on completing the implementation and training process by the end of 2002

Conclusions:

The Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils and the subsequent implementation process will increase the volunteer base within the Department and strengthen the staff/volunteer partnership model.

The high level of expertise within the current staff and volunteer group will provide an excellent training opportunity within local communities

The Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils, Attachment No. 1, be approved and implemented throughout the Parks and Recreation Division.

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Attachment No. 1  
Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils

The Parks and Recreation Division's mission states that "members of Toronto's diverse communities will have full and equitable access to high calibre, locally responsive recreational programs, efficiently operated facilities and safe, clean and beautiful parks, open spaces, ravines and forests."

In keeping with this mission and the high value placed on public input, a work group of committed volunteers and staff created the Terms of Reference for Community Advisory Councils.

Purpose

- To ensure continuing citizen participation/partnership with the Parks and Recreation Division.
- To make the most effective use of citizen time, talents and energy.
- To build on the experience, skills and interests of all members of the community.
- To take a leadership role in demonstrating fair and equitable practices in all aspects of community involvement.
- To work in partnership with staff to provide insight, advice and feedback:
  - (a) as a link between staff and the community to ensure that services and activities contribute to the betterment of the community at large;

- (b) to address issues affecting the community; and
- (c) to address issues affecting the Parks and Recreation Division.
- To increase awareness of the benefits of Parks and Recreation and encourage participation by current non-users of Parks and Recreation services.

#### Goal

- To establish advisory councils as a formal, ongoing means of public input to and dialogue with Parks and Recreation staff, where community interest exists.

#### Guiding Principles

- To be flexible in our endeavours to ensure we maximize our potential.
- To be inclusive and representative of the community's diverse nature.
- To be pro-active in our search for the latest trends, issues and approaches to parks and recreation.
- To be responsive to emerging needs.
- To take time to be insightful and thoughtful in the work we do.
- To work co-operatively for the betterment of the community.
- To be fair and equitable in all we do.

#### Accountability

- To the participants and community at large.
- To partners and stakeholders.
- To other members of the Advisory Council.
- To the Parks and Recreation Division.

#### Roles and Responsibilities of Advisory Councils

#### Volunteer/Staff Partnership

- To provide comments, insight and advice to assist staff in the performance of their responsibilities.
- To ensure clarity of role definition, feedback, and evaluation between staff and volunteers.

- To be actively involved in the development of the volunteer/staff partnership to enhance the work of Parks and Recreation within the community.
- To be a partner in the recruitment and selection of potential Advisory Council participants.
- To ensure new members participate in appropriate training and orientation sessions.
- To ensure there is recognition of the contribution of every volunteer and staff person to the partnership.

### Community Links

- Ensure the membership and activities of the Advisory Council demonstrate the City's commitment to equity and are representative of the demographics of the community to be served.
- Act as an information link between the community and staff.
- Develop new networks or become part of existing networks within the community.
- Form community partnerships to enhance activities within the facility and/or participate in community issues.
- Use an inclusive form of consensus-building to solve problems and develop innovative solutions to complex issues.

### Service

- Participate in the planning and implementation of special events to increase the profile of Parks and Recreation within the community and/or to raise funds for special projects to enhance activities.
- Advocate for new or revised activities, policies and procedures that contribute to the betterment of the community.

### Operations

- Provide input and advice on program planning and associated implementation and evaluation processes.
- Work collaboratively with staff to ensure space use within the facility represents a mutually acceptable balance between divisional programming, community use and private use.
- Provide and, with City staff, manage funding designed to enhance existing City activities.

- Abide by all relevant City by-laws, policies and legislation affecting the City.
- Attend and participate in regularly scheduled meetings.
- Ensure meetings are open to the public.
- Prepare, and make public, accurate minutes of Advisory Council meetings.
- Prepare, and make public, accurate financial records derived from fundraising activities.

#### Roles and Responsibilities of Parks and Recreation Division Staff

##### Volunteer/Staff Partnership

- To be actively involved in the development of the volunteer/staff partnership to enhance the work of Parks and Recreation within the community.
- To be a partner in the recruitment and selection of potential Advisory Council participants.
- To ensure new members participate in appropriate training and orientation sessions.
- To ensure clarity of role definition, feedback, and evaluation between staff and volunteers.
- To ensure there is recognition of the contribution of every volunteer and staff person to the partnership.

##### Management and Operation of Divisional Resources and Assets

- To be responsible for the day-to-day operation of Parks and Recreation facilities, programs and services and the management of fiscal, human and physical resources.
- To ensure operational compliance with all forms of legislation, policies and procedures pertinent to the City of Toronto.
- To provide appropriate information and updates related to the operation of the facility and the Division to assist volunteers in the performance of their responsibilities.

##### Advisory Council Membership

- Membership should reflect the City's commitment to access and equity as well as the demographic make-up of the community.
- Membership should consist of a representative cross-section of program participants from key areas of activity or age groupings (seniors, youth, aquatic, wellness, etc.), local service and community agencies, ratepayers and tenants associations, local businesses, relevant partners and the community at large.

- Members of Council may act as ex-officio members.
- The staff representative should be a management staff person (supervisor or designate) with participation by site staff as applicable.

### Advisory Council Structure

In keeping with the value placed on public input, and a recognition and support of the diversity of our communities, it is understood that the implementation process will occur over time, using the option that will generate the greatest public input in each community.

Each staff and community are to review the three options and undertake to implement the option that both parties agree is best suited to their community and the level of the volunteer/staff partnership. It is reasonable to begin with one option and move to another option.

### When Differences Occur

The Parks and Recreation Division acknowledges and appreciates the advice given by advisory council members to enhance the quality of its services to the community and makes every effort to incorporate this advice as given.

From time to time differences of opinion may arise within an advisory council or between an advisory council and staff of the Parks and Recreation Division. While an advisory council does not have authority over the actions of the Parks and Recreation Division, the Parks and Recreation Division recognizes the significance of community input and the need to ensure this input is validated.

In the spirit of partnership and good faith, the Parks and Recreation Division agrees to make every effort to settle differences, create understanding and strengthen our mutual resolve to better serve the public through a harmonious volunteer/staff partnership.

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### Models for Community Input and Feedback:

#### Option 1 Community Input and Feedback Sessions – Parks and Recreation staff initiated:

- (a) Participant Input/Feedback Sessions:
  - open participant meetings;
  - participant meetings by age groupings; and
  - participant meetings by activity area.
- (b) Community Partners Input/Feedback Sessions.
- (c) Community “at large” Input/Feedback Sessions.
- (d) Combined Input/Feedback Session.
- (e) Timeframes for meetings may be seasonal, quarterly, semi-annually, annually upon mutual agreement between staff and community.

Option 2      Community Advisory Council - By Appointment by a Joint Committee of Parks and Recreation Staff, Participants, Community Partners and the Community at Large:

- (a)      Criteria for selection to be developed by the joint committee.
- (b)      Recruitment and selection process to be completed by the joint committee.
- (c)      Training and Orientation completed by staff in partnership with the joint committee.
- (d)      Role of the committee is to:
  - counsel and advise staff re: programs to reflect community needs and interests;
  - fundraise to enhance activities for the community; and
  - act as a community partner and source for community feedback.
- (e)      Timeframes for meetings may be monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly as defined by the committee.

Option 3      Community Advisory Council – By Community Election:

- (a)      Criteria for selection of members on the Advisory Council:
  - resident, business in City, member of local agency/organization, interest/commitment in furthering vision, mission of Parks and Recreation Division, as it relates to the community, no conflict of interest.
- (b)      Recruitment Process:
  - examples: community notices; discussions with participants and interested community residents; involvement/input from community partners and stakeholders.
- (c)      Selection Process:
  - Annual General Meeting; submit nominations to nomination group in advance or from the floor; election by qualified residents by show of hands or ballot; nominated for specific position or to committee in general with selection of Executive by the elected committee at first meeting.



- (d) Training and Orientation:
  - See Parks and Recreation Manuals and Guidelines for Volunteers and Staff.
- (e) Role of Council:
  - See Terms of Reference Purpose and Roles and Responsibilities.
- (f) Timeframe for meeting may be monthly or bi-monthly or may be set as a minimum number to be held annually as determined by the Advisory Council.