

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: May 11, 2011

SUBJECT: TTC POLICY ON COMMUNITY GARDENS

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Approve the adoption of the community gardens policy, as set out in Attachment #1 to this report; and
2. Authorise and direct the appropriate staff and officials to take the necessary actions to give effect to the TTC community gardens policy.

FUNDING

The organization, as defined in the policy, as a not-for-profit group including community groups/associations, societies, and individuals, will have the sole responsibility for costs associated with a community garden on TTC properties. From time to time, the TTC may be required to provide limited resources for site preparation and supply of landscape materials. No other funding implications arise out of the approval of this report.

BACKGROUND

The TTC has ongoing relationships with community groups/associations, not-for-profit organizations, and individual community members who are currently using various TTC properties for the purposes of planting and maintaining community gardens. These gardens include, but are not limited to, the planting of flowers, trees, and shrubs. The plantings on TTC property vary in size as well as planting typology. Examples of such sites include the flower plantings at Russell Carhouse, as well as the not-for-profit organization entitled LEAF (Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests) who has planted trees and shrubs at various subway stations since 2009.

DISCUSSION

At this time, the TTC does not have a policy on community gardens. The proposed new policy is attached to this report, as Attachment #1. The policy has been created in order to standardize the TTC’s approach to community gardens on TTC property. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of the TTC departments involved in the review and administration of community gardens. The policy also clearly sets out the process which will be followed for the approval of community gardens.

The policy has been written taking into consideration the City of Toronto’s community gardens policy, as approved July 6, 1999. TTC’s policy is distinct for the City’s policy with respect to the following aspects:

- Community gardens within TTC property will not be allowed for agricultural or for-profit, use whereas the City allows urban agriculture within its sites.
- The TTC will not issue permits for community gardens nor will the regulations pertaining to the gardens be reviewed on an annual basis; however all community gardens on TTC property will be licensed.

The community gardens policy makes the organization responsible for the community garden. These responsibilities include the cost associated with the design, construction, and maintenance of the community garden.

The policy will be administered through the execution of a licence agreement for each community garden site. The licence agreements will be executed between the organization and the TTC. Each licence agreement will detail the respective responsibilities of the applicable organization and the TTC for each community garden, including the planting obligations, liability of the parties, insurance requirements, signage, materials, and maintenance.

JUSTIFICATION

The approval of the proposed new TTC community gardens policy is recommended to bring the TTC into conformity with the City of Toronto’s policy on community gardens. The policy will ensure that a standardized process is followed for dealing with all community garden applications on TTC property. The policy ensures that the TTC’s interests are protected throughout the duration of a community garden.

May 11, 2011
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Attachment 1