

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of Parks, Forestry and Recreation is to provide world-class parks, a healthy urban forest and a wide variety of leisure opportunities and recreation experiences to Toronto's diverse communities in order to steward the environment, support lifelong active living and contribute to child and youth development.

- In achieving this goal, the Program faces significant challenges, including:

**Unachievable Revenue Targets** – Although improving, the Program has experienced chronic difficulty in meeting its revenue budget for golf, concessions, leases and agreements.

**Expenditure Growth** – The Program's Operating Budget has grown, on average, by more than \$10 million annually since 2003. The growth is largely attributed to the increasing operating impacts of capital projects and development agreements resulting in new park land and facilities, merit and step increases and cost-of-living adjustments (COLA). This rate of growth is not sustainable, yet the Program may be challenged to maintain current service levels without additional funding.

**Future Impacts** – The operation of future Waterfront projects will place considerable incremental financial and operating pressure on the Program.

**Urban Forest** – Expanding the urban forest, while maintaining it under increasingly unpredictable natural conditions, will require significant investment.

**Security Issues** – Additional resources will be required to address various security issues and ensure staff and participants' safety in ferry compounds operated by the Program.

**Infrastructure and Programming Demands** – The Program is facing a number of challenges related to aging facilities and keeping activities within them relevant to Toronto's changing communities.

**To address these challenges, the Program has established the following service objectives for the next three years:**

**To develop and integrate new Waterfront parks and sports fields and continue the implementation of the City's Waste Diversion Strategy;** / Operation of new waterfront parks and public spaces (\$0.443 million gross and net);

**To begin the development of a Parks Service Plan;**

**To implement the Urban Forestry Service Plan to expand and sustain the urban forest;** / Sustaining and expanding the urban forest and increasing the tree canopy from

17% to 34% as outlined in the *Climate Change Adaptation, Clean Air and Sustainable Energy Action Plan* (\$6.144 million gross and \$1.570 million net); Improving maintenance of commercial trees and trees on city streets (\$2.283 million gross and \$0 net);  
**and**

**To develop a Five-Year Recreation Service Plan and improve access to recreation by removing economic, cultural, disability and systems barriers.** / Improving access to recreation programs for Welcome Policy clients by implementing a new CLASS subsidy management module supporting universal on-line and touch-tone access (\$0.744 million gross, \$0 net);

*(New/enhanced funding also going towards:)*

Ensuring compliance with Transport Canada's new Marine Security Act (\$0.182 million gross and net).

The 2009 Recommended Base Budget funds the Program's key cost drivers including new operating impacts arising from the capital program, merit and step increases and other non- discretionary expenditures that total \$10.737 million. These are partially defrayed by \$1.126 million in additional revenue from an inflationary increase of 3.7% in the recreation programming fees and parks and recreation permit fees, efficiencies of \$0.144 million and the following service adjustments resulting in savings of \$1.469 million:

A reduction of one week of seasonal staff for Parks operations while maintaining the 2008 service level – savings of \$0.600 million net;

A reduction in recreation client support staff by 5% - savings of \$0.258 million net;

A reduction in expenditures for Golf Courses – savings of \$0.058 million net;

Continued deferral of ravine and watercourse maintenance expansion – savings of \$0.250 million net;

Restructuring of divisional support functions – savings of \$0.243 million net; and

Continued deferral of two increases in community services which have yet to be implemented (Intercultural Youth and Diversity Outreach and Community Engagement) while maintaining 2008 service levels – savings of \$0.060 million net.