

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

March 18, 2003

To: Economic Development & Parks Committee

From: Joe Halstead, Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

Subject: U of T Greenhouse Relocation to Allan Gardens
Trinity-Spadina – Ward 20 and Toronto Centre Rosedale – Ward 27

Purpose:

To seek approval to proceed with the incorporation of the east and west wings of the U of T Greenhouse as part of the relocation of the main Greenhouse to Allan Gardens.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications to this report. This amount is included in the 2003 approved capital budget. The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and concurs with the above request.

Recommendations:

1. That the donation of \$375K from the donor for the erection of the two wings of the U of T greenhouse at Allan Gardens be accepted and that the City Solicitor be authorized to draft the necessary agreement including the incorporation of payment schedule and the naming of the Children's Conservatory Programmes for a period no more than five years as donor recognition, to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism and the City Solicitor.
2. That the current draft agreement with the U of T for the dismantling, relocation and erection of the U of T greenhouse to Allan Gardens be amended to include the addition of the two wings, inclusive of required boiler upgrades, at a cost no greater than \$250K. The University shall construct the wings as part of the main greenhouse relocation.

3. That authority be granted to expend the amount of \$250K on the basis of a letter of confirmation from the donor towards the relocation of the wings and the necessary support student facilities in order to capitalize on the pending reconstruction of the greenhouse at Allan Gardens and to allow sufficient time to finalize the necessary agreement with the donor. This amount will be offset by the payments made by the donor over time as specified in the secured agreement.
4. That additional funding in the amount of \$125K of the total commitment of \$375K be provided by the donor to provide the necessary support student facilities (washrooms, storage and furnishings) for the creation of a horticultural classroom in the greenhouse and wings. This department, as part of its capital works programme, will undertake such work once the funds are committed from the donor and the U of T has completed its work.
5. That staff of this department work with the Ontario Heritage Foundation to secure other donors who would contribute towards the children's teaching area facilities and programmes at Allan Gardens.
6. That staff of this department enter into discussions with the public and separate schools boards to discuss programming and support for the horticultural classroom.
7. The appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

On July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002, Council adopted the report "Relocation of U of T Greenhouse to Allan Gardens" which outlined the process and program for the relocation of the U of T Greenhouse Conservatory (Botany Building) fronting College Street to Allan Gardens. The University would undertake the work of dismantling and reconstruction adjacent to the existing Allan Gardens Arid House at a cost not to exceed \$1.035 million. This undertaking was to be secured by way of an agreement with the University (U of T).

The above noted relocation and reconstruction of a structure that is included in the City's inventory of Heritage Properties was viewed as an appropriate way to save the structure and extend its public service in one of the City's major horticultural parks. The relocation of the U of T Greenhouse to Allan Gardens will provide invaluable space to conduct and promote children's gardening activities in a conservatory-type setting.

The above report also noted that this department would continue to explore, with potential donors, any future capital improvements to the Children's Conservatory component. In planning the 2003 capital budget for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism -Parks and Recreation division, a project of \$700K was identified for Allan Gardens, based on funding from donors. The addition of the wings and creation of a children's horticultural teaching programme is a first step towards implementation.

Comments:

Further to the above approvals, staff have worked closely with U of T officials and our respective legal departments to draft the necessary agreement to accept the donation and clarify the responsibilities for the dismantling and reassembly of the Greenhouse at Allan Gardens. This agreement is nearing finalization and can be amended further to the approval of the additional recommendations made in this report. The University has dismantled the former U of T Greenhouse as per an approved strategy with this department's Heritage staff, and is awaiting reassembly at Allan Gardens once the agreement is finalized.

The opportunity to also preserve the wings of the U of T greenhouse has come forward from the heritage community and is supported by this department. This would allow for the preservation of both the context of the College Street frontage and the historical integrity of the greenhouse structure. These same wings also present the opportunity to accommodate required back-of-house support space for children's garden activities such as washrooms, equipment storage, lockers, lunch and meeting area, without having to build a separate structure. The cost of relocating and constructing the two wings is estimated at \$250,000.00, subject to tender confirmation. The U of T would construct the wings as part of their tender activities related to the main greenhouse, thereby minimizing disruptions and expediting the work. The City would be required to guarantee the payment of up to \$250,000.00 (part of which would be dedicated to boiler upgrades) in order for the work to proceed at this time. The current schedule would see the work commence spring 2003 with likely completion by the early spring of year 2004.

Staff of this department, in co-operation with the local Councillor, Kyle Rae, have actively pursued funding partners for this project. The donor has agreed to provide \$375,000.00 in funding over a 2-year period with a payment schedule of \$125K each of October 2003, December 2003-January 2004 and December 2004. This payment schedule will provide funds for the relocation of the wings, upgrades to the heating system, as well as the necessary funds to furnish the space as a horticultural teaching program.

The receipt of such amounts will be dependent upon the execution of a funding agreement with the donor, which could take some time to finalize. The final agreement with U of T is ready for finalization and U of T is preparing to tender and award the greenhouse relocation contract with work scheduled to commence this spring. In order to capitalize on this opportunity it is necessary for the City to commit the funds now to the U of T, in order to preserve the wings of the greenhouse. This amount will be offset by the donor's money over the next two years. We see this as a minimal risk and inconvenience, realizing the status of the donor and their interest in the project.

In terms of donor recognition, the only proviso requested is that the Children's Conservatory Programme at Allan Gardens be named after the donor for a period of no more than five years.

Conclusions:

There is an opportunity to preserve the two wings of the U of T greenhouse as part of an agreement with the U of T to move the greenhouse building to Allan Gardens. A donor has come forward to support both the preservation of the wings as well as the necessary furnishings and upgrades. The original agreement with U of T for the greenhouse relocation was at no additional cost to the City. With the support of the donor, the wings of a significant heritage landmark can also be preserved and important children's horticultural programming can be facilitated in this space. The necessary funds are available through the approved 2003 capital budget, to be offset by the donation as noted in a legal agreement.

Contact:

Frank Kershaw, Director, Policy and Development, Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department, Tel. 416-392-8199, Fax: 416-395-0278, Email: fkershaw@toronto.ca

Joe Halstead
Commissioner
Economic Development, Culture and Tourism