



REPORT TO: Chair and Members of Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

REPORT FROM: Samantha Howard, Manager of Recreation Services

DATE: April 3, 2018

REPORT NO.: RP-2018-0013

RE: Youth Services Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. RP-2018-0013 dated April 3, 2018 regarding Youth Services Update be received;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to enter into an MOU and license agreement with the Halton District School Board for youth space in Gary Allan High School, Georgetown;

AND FURTHER THAT ongoing funding and full operating budget impacts to support continued operations of the Youth Centres be referred to 2019 Budget Committee for consideration;

AND FURTHER THAT the Manager of Purchasing be authorized to extend the existing single source purchase order PO 18-004 to Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK) 471 Pearl Street Burlington, ON L7R 4M4 to an upset limit to a total of \$40,000 for on-site clinical support services at Youth Centres in 2018;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to report back on future updates from the Youth Network to advise of further changes in the provision of youth services in Halton Hills.

BACKGROUND:

In September 2017, Council approved Report R&P- 2017-0023 regarding Youth Services Update through Resolution No. 2017-0184 that read in part:

AND FURTHER THAT the funding request of \$75,000.00 for a one year extension of Open Door (Georgetown) and Off The Wall (Acton) Youth Centres be referred to Budget Committee as part of the 2018 Operating Budget review;
AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to report back on future updates from the

Youth Services Network Steering to advise of further changes in the provision of youth services in Halton Hills.

COMMENTS:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the following information regarding the future of youth services in Halton Hills:

- a) Actions resulting from the Youth Network collaborative and continued coordination with youth service providers;
- b) Updates on priority areas within the Youth Service Model;
- c) Full operating costs required in the 2019 base budget to support continued operations of the Youth Centres.

Youth Network

The Halton Hills Youth Network is a collection of youth serving agencies across the Town of Halton Hills; the Network and Steering Committee are co-chaired by the Region of Halton and the Town of Halton Hills. The Network continues to grow in strength with the agencies around the Network and has expanded to include Support and Housing Halton, STRIDE, CMHA, Halton Healthcare (North Halton Mental Health), One-Link and Gary Allan High School.

The goals of the Youth Network have been to assess levels of service and service gaps, explore opportunities and establish working groups to address these gaps, and enhance the coordination of services to cover the full spectrum of needs for youth in Halton Hills.

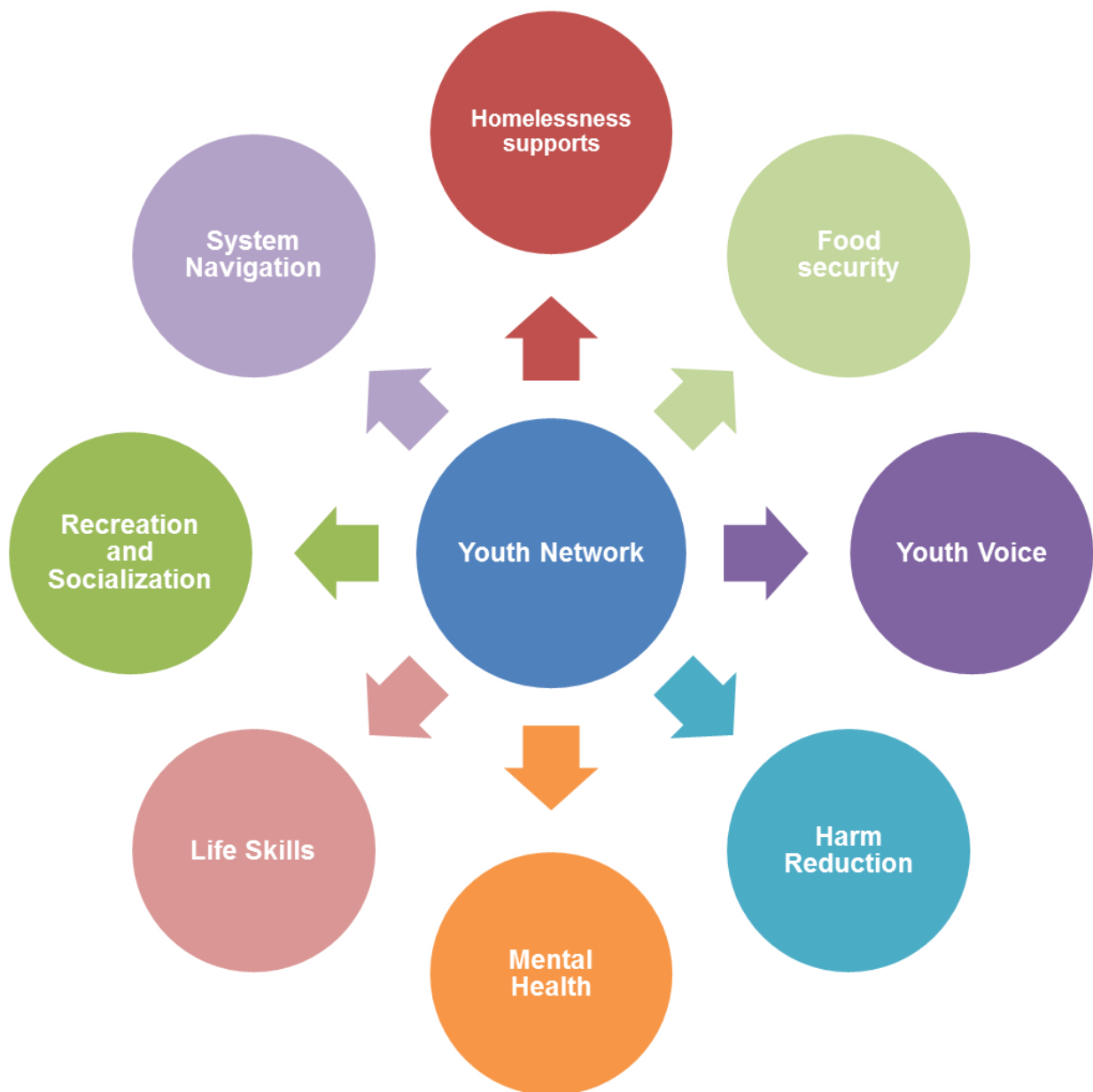
Youth Services Model

The outcome of the work of the Network has been a developing model for the delivery of youth services in Halton Hills. The key objectives for the model include:

- Services to youth, especially youth who are most vulnerable, will improve;
- The best elements of the previous programming will be maintained, stabilized and improved;
- Youth will continue to have a voice and be engaged in decision-making of the collaborative;
- Dedicated Youth Space that is designed on integrated service delivery will be available;

- Youth will be supported through improved service system navigation to address the eight priority areas that have been identified;
- A longer term strategy will create a more sustainable model for the delivery of youth services.

Eight priority areas have emerged and are being addressed by with subject matter expertise in each service area. The 2018-19 work program of the Youth Network will continue to focus on these eight priority areas.



System Navigation



The System Navigator is currently in a one year pilot phase that is being funded by Halton Region through Bridging the Gap, a program of the Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS). The System Navigator is responsible for community outreach, relationship-building and establishing community connections, case management, and transportation for ages 14 – 24 years. Since this role began in July 2017, there has been a steady increase of the number of new clients served in outreach support. Currently the System Navigator has a case of 35 youth in Halton Hills with varied degrees of support. In the Fall, Bridging the Gap received one additional day of funding for System Navigation through the housing department at the Region. This makes it a full-time role dedicated to Halton Hills. With the additional day of funding, the System Navigator now manages the Host Home in Georgetown. Halton CAS applied to Halton Region Community Investment Fund to support the position for another 3 years and has received funding approval. The Network will continue to work with Bridging the Gap to find a sustainable funding solution after funding ceases in 2021.

Youth Voice



To support ongoing youth engagement in 2018, the former MYAC committee has been dissolved to encompass the broader youth voice. Staff and the Youth Network has been meeting with youth specific to issues on activities that require a youth voice i.e. transition of youth centres to the Towns' operation, exploration of new dedicated space, involvement and support of funding applications to support the Youth Wellness Hub model, skatepark design, and the Town's transit strategy. The Youth Voice engagement has not been in a formalized committee structure as the youth have expressed they want to be engaged where they are rather than have to go elsewhere to have their voice heard. In general there has been positive support for the Youth Voice approach to engaging youth on issues that are critical to the success of the Youth Network.

The next step is to explore the use of peer mentorship as a way of formalizing the youth voice and connection with the broader Youth Network.

Harm Reduction



Funded through the Region of Halton, the North Halton Outreach Program was a new pilot project that ran from June 5 – August 30, 2017. The purpose of the pilot was to provide harm reduction programming in North Halton for at-risk youth who may not be connected with more traditional educational or recreational systems. The North Halton Outreach Pilot is currently being evaluated and outcomes will be shared once they become available.

Mental Health



Clinical support service refers to the availability of both brief solution and ongoing counseling to support positive mental health.

Since the Fall, the Youth Network has advanced this support with a number of actions including:

- Clinical Services Review study performed by Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK)
- Continued 0.6 FTE on-site clinical support at both youth centres
- ADAPT Transitional Age Youth Outreach program provides support out of both youth centres on a referral basis
- In Spring 2018, CMHA officially launched walk-in clinics at the Hillview Active Living Centre which serves transitional aged-youth 16+ years
- 0.5 FTE Nelson Youth Centres provide Individual and Family Therapist who provides counseling support for youth in Halton Hills
- Halton Healthcare Transitional Youth Worker is dedicated 2 days per week in Halton Hills and has joined the Youth Network

The provision of onsite mental health services by ROCK has provided youth care in the centres over the past six months and demonstrates the scope and magnitude of support services required for youth.

Life Skills



Life skills refer to the availability of services that support growth and development such as advocacy, education, literacy and employment.

Since the Fall, the Youth Network has advanced this support with a number of actions including:

- Employment and Social Services from Halton Region has visited the youth centres to assist with resume writing and job search
- VPI Working Solutions has attended the youth centres to share information about the Youth Job Connect program
- SAVIS (Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services) hosted a workshop at both youth centres about healthy and unhealthy relationships
- The Youth Services Librarian has been moving forward with youth specific programming including Teen Writer's Circle, Skills Exchange Umbrella, launch of two Teen Advisory Council's (one per branch) and connecting youth to volunteer opportunities. The Youth Librarian has also attended the youth centres to share information about library services and will be returning to help issue youth library cards.

Homelessness Supports



As the Service Manager for Housing and Homelessness, Halton Region has contracted with the Halton Children's Aid Society (HCAS) as their lead youth agency in Halton Hills. HCAS delivers the Bridging the Gap program which focuses on homelessness prevention as well as short and long term housing options for youth in Halton Hills. Current housing supports include Host Homes, Halton Housing Help, Housing First Placements, the Emergency Youth Housing Task Force as well as transportation assistance to the Salvation Army Lighthouse shelter in Oakville. As noted, the Halton Hills System Navigator funded through Halton Region's Community Investment Fund has assumed management of the Host Home program in Georgetown and continues to respond to youth with housing concerns by triaging individuals to the most appropriate housing support available. This position also continues to work with the Housing Task Force via the Community Support Network Halton Hills to

fund emergency housing for youth. Four youth were provided with temporary housing through this funding source in the 2017-18 winter months. In addition to the System Navigator, Bridging the Gap also served 28 youth with case management assistance with their housing in Halton Hills in 2017. Six youth were also permanently housed using a Housing First approach in 2017 in partnership with Bridging the Gap, Wesley Urban Ministries and Halton Housing Help. Youth may not be permanently housed in Halton Hills due to a limited amount of available rental units, but all intake and experience of homelessness was initiated in Halton Hills.

Food Security



This priority area of focus ensures youth have easy access to safe and nutritious food. Since July 2017, five programs are hosted at both youth centres that support continued access to healthy food.

- Healthy Snack program - Offered twice per week at both locations in partnership with Halton Food for Thought
- You're the Chef - Offered once per week at Off the Wall
- Self-Serve – Grab and go items as per Student Nutrition Program established by Halton Food for Thought
- Social and congregate dining special events and food nights
- Food pantry available at both locations and at various locations around Halton Hills

Staff have been able to secure additional funding for these food programs through a charity golf tournament at North Halton and continued support from the community outreach organized by the owners and staff of Georgetown Chevrolet.

Recreation and Socialization



The integrated service model of youth programming includes opportunities for active living, quality out of school time and socialization as well as onsite connection with health and social services. Since assuming operation of both Youth Centres, there has been an overall enhancement in recreation and socialization opportunities as well as greater access and connection to these wrap-around services.

In collaboration with community agencies including ADAPT

(Halton Alcohol, Drug & Gambling Assessment Prevention and Treatment Services), Halton Women's Place, SAVIS, Sexual Health Clinic, Employment agencies, and Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth have all attended both youth centres and facilitated educational programming. Community agencies are scheduled to continue attending the spaces and spend time with youth.

Program Highlights:

Georgetown

- Open Door Youth drop-in Centre
- Free swimming and skating opportunities
- Youth Network (as supported by the Youth Voice) is currently exploring opportunities for alternative space in Georgetown and has entered into discussion with Halton District School Board to explore opportunity within Gary Allan High School.

Acton

- Off the Wall drop-in Centre
- Acton Hub drop-in including open gym & free swimming
- Conceptual, design and engineering phases of Acton Town Hall will commence in 3rd quarter of 2018

Key Outcomes of the Youth Network and Youth Service Model

Since the establishment of the Youth Service Network in October 2016, staff note the following outcomes:

- Improved outreach for housing supports and identification of issues arising from Youth Voice;
- System Navigator has a dedicated case load in Halton Hills to improve youth access to programs and services and is now managing the Host Home program in Georgetown;
- A Harm Reduction pilot was launched in Summer 2017;
- Drop in recreation programs have provided additional opportunities for youth to access to gym times, swims, trips and skates;

- The Youth Voice working sessions have engaged youth in the design of programs to suit their needs, assist with vetting funding opportunities and designing the Youth Wellness Hub concept, and to identify emerging issues;
- Collaborations with ROCK, CMHA, Halton Healthcare and Nelson Youth Centre offer new mental health counseling services;
- Town staff have operated the Open Door and Off the Wall Youth Centre spaces since July 2017 without substantive changes to core operations with expanded hours in Fall 2017;
- Communications with youth have been through new Instagram and Twitter accounts, as well as postings on the Town website and through a dedicated e-mail youth@haltonhills.ca.

Youth Space

Providing services to youth in Halton Hills in a dedicated space or hub, using a model of service integration and co-location, is necessary and beneficial to service providers in our community. What has become clear from the Town's Youth Needs Study, the recent Clinical Services Review and the overall vision and models of service defined by the Youth Network, is that the existing spaces are not conducive to supporting the well-being of the youth, nor do they have the capacity for the co-location and integrates service provision that the Youth and the Network need (i.e. recreation, mental health services, addictions counseling, primary care, vocational support and training, etc.) This has led to an exciting, innovative and inclusive vision for youth space. The vision is to provide the resources, infrastructure and mechanisms to support the holistic well-being of youth ages 12 -24 years in Halton Hills in central location(s), or Hub model. This includes the provision of services that address the social, intellectual, physical and emotional well-being of youth. The Halton Hills Youth Network is now an established collaborative that is committed to moving ahead with this long-term sustainable model of integrated service delivery and the concept is widely supported by the youth voice.

In response to this vision, Town staff has entered into discussions with representatives from Halton District School Board to discuss community use of Gary Allan High School to host the Youth Wellness Hub (youth centre). There is full interest and support from both parties to proceed with exploration of this partnership and the Youth Voice played a key role in supporting and selecting the space that meets the criteria outlined in our youth space matrix.

In pursuit of this Hub concept, the Youth Network submitted two grant applications to support this Hub model of service delivery.

- i) Trillium Youth Opportunities Fund (YOF)

The Youth Opportunities Fund offers funding supports for collaborative initiatives that will break down barriers and strengthen connections between service providers, foundations, community groups, governments and youth leaders. With ROCK as lead-agency, the Youth Network submitted an application for \$1.2 million over 5 years to fund staffing resources required to implement the work plan of the Youth Network and address the eight priority areas. In March 2018, we received notice that we were unsuccessful with this grant application.

Following feedback from Trillium, the Youth Network is going to proceed with another application under the Grow Grant stream. This stream of funding supports the expansion of existing projects that will reach more people. Funding ranges from \$50,000 to \$250,000 per year for up to 3 years.

ii) Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario (Call for Proposals)

In February 2017, the Ontario government announced funding for up to 9 integrated service hubs province-wide to address the gaps in the province's youth service system. These hubs will specifically target the needs of youth ages 12 – 25 years as fully integrated “one-stop-shops” for mental health, substance abuse, primary care, education/employment/training, housing and other community and social services including recreation and socialization. These new hubs will also include peer support services, outreach and system navigation. In December 2017, with ROCK as lead-agency, the Youth Network submitted a funding application to the Ministry for funding for a Youth Wellness Hub in Halton Hills. Total funding request was \$300,000 over three years to support both capital upgrades to space and operational monies including staffing supports, transportation and program expenses. This application is still pending. In March 2018, the provincial government announced an investment of \$2.1 billion dollars over the next four years in mental health and addictions services, including funding for 15 youth wellness hubs.

Staff will prepare a referral to the 2019 Budget Committee for the ongoing costs of maintaining the Youth Centres and relocating to spaces that will accommodate a Youth Wellness Hub. This model is required to serve a variety of integrated youth services in one location that is easily accessible to youth. The co-location of key services will help alleviate access challenges and support youth in accessing services more easily now and into the future. In Georgetown, the Youth and the Youth Network endorse in principle the relocation to Gary Allan High School. In Acton, staff will be proceeding with a conceptual design for the Acton Town Hall.

Clinical Services Review

In 2017, Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK), in collaboration with the Town of Halton Hills, conducted a clinical services review which assessed the current clinical service provision environment for youth in Halton Hills. A copy of the review can be found in Appendix A of this report. The deliverables of this review included:

1. A clinical understanding of youth centres attendees
2. Review of collateral documentation and contracts
3. Assessment of the clinical service provision environment
4. Recommendation of possible future service provision models

The aim of this review was to gain a strong understanding of youth who are accessing services, including their presenting mental health challenges, better understand youth experiences of the current service environment and make recommendations. Data was collected by the ROCK through informal discussions with youth, telephone interviews with community stakeholders, and the team's observations. The review took place between September – December 2017 and data continued to be collected by the on-site intensive worker until March 2018.

Five recommendations were provided for consideration when developing a new service provision model.

Recommendation 1: Designated Youth Space

Recommendation 2: Co-located, integrated youth services

Recommendation 3: Community wellness & mental health awareness

Recommendation 4: Partner with adult services

Recommendation 5: Align to youth wellness hub model

Next Steps

Staff will continue to focus on providing a continuity of service and the needs of youth remain a continuing priority. In 2018, staff and the Halton Hills Youth Network will proceed with the following next steps:

- Continue work on the eight identified priority areas of focus;
- Pursue funding opportunities to help support and sustain the preferred integrated service model;
- Pursue with dedicated youth space in the form of a Youth Wellness Hub at Gary Allan High School in Georgetown and prepare a conceptual design for Acton Town Hall;
- Staff will prepare operating budget submission for 2019.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The provision of youth programming relates to the following Corporate strategic actions:

Foster a Healthy Community

- A.3.** To provide a broad range of educational, recreational, and cultural services that meet the needs of our residents.

Provide Sustainable Infrastructure & Services

- G.1.** To provide infrastructure and services that meet the needs of our community in an efficient, effective and environmentally sustainable manner.

Provide Responsive, Effective Municipal Government

- H.1.** To provide leadership and advocacy on issues of importance to our community. To encourage community participation in decision-making.
- H.5.** To expand opportunities for communication with our community.

In addition, the Town's **Youth Needs Study** specially addresses the recommendations of this report as follows:

- CS1.** Clearly define the realistic role (based on available resources, current responsibilities and allocation of budget) that the Department of Recreation and Parks can take in coordinating services with the broader sector
- CS2.** It is recommended that staff from the Town facilitate discussions, through hosting of a development meeting with community service providers to investigate the development of a Town of Halton Hills group relating to youth services – geographically focused within the municipal boundaries – to determine the responsibility for compiling information, sharing of resources and working together
- CS4.** Continue to support through formal agreement, Links2Care and youth programs and services they provide in Acton and Georgetown
- CS6.** Co-locating facilities and programs with those offered by community service providers and partners is encouraged at any future youth spaces developed by the Town
- A5.** Review budget practices and make an annual commitment to youth through a realistic allocation of funding to support direct youth access to services (e.g. developing free core services, enhancing current special events and/or youth spaces, etc.)
- YS1.** The Town of Halton Hills should consider utilizing space in existing community centres as drop-in youth space until such time as dedicated youth space is developed; spaces should be assess for accessibility within the facility, impact upon other users of the facility, flexibility of the space, etc.
- YS7.** The Town of Halton Hills should enter into discussions with the Region and other organizations that serve homeless youth to determine the space, staffing, and resource requirements for the creation of a homeless shelter geared specifically to youth, should all parties agree this is a priority

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The funding request will be referred to the 2019 Budget Committee for consideration as part of the Operating Budget review.

In 2017, Council approved \$75,000 from Tax Rate Stabilization to support continued operations of both youth centres for one additional year. During this time, the Youth Network has explored opportunities and outlined a preferred sustainable solution to enhance overall youth service delivery. This funding has been used to support rent of locations, enhanced youth recreation programming and onsite clinical supports by ROCK. The upset limit in the purchase order request for continued onsite clinical supports will be found within existing budget for 2018. If the Youth Wellness Hub model were to proceed, staff will identify any additional operating costs required for review at the 2019 Budget Committee.

CONSULTATION:

The Manager of Purchasing has reviewed and supports the recommendation set out in this report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Youth voice information was gathered informally during regular hours of operation at Open Door. Three Halton Hills Youth Voice Visioning sessions were held by ROCK as part of the Clinical Services review in November and December 2017. These sessions focused on physical space and culture of youth centres, desired amenities and types of services that should be integrated into future space.

Community Stakeholder interviews were held throughout the Clinical Services Review with 17 individuals from a wide range of agencies with the purpose of gathering information about stakeholder's perceptions of the current service environment for youth and understanding their ideas for future service provision models.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life.

The recommendation outlined in this report (advances, does not advance, is not applicable to) the Strategy's implementation.

This report supports the Social Well Being and Cultural Vibrancy pillars of Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is Good.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Members of the Youth Network, Youth, and members of the public who have contacted Recreation and Parks regarding this issue will be advised of the outcomes this report.

CONCLUSION:

Staff is committed to the continuation of the Halton Hills Youth Network to assist in guiding the work in each of the eight priority areas defined within the youth services model. The youth and the Network have been active in participating and designing a long-term sustainable solution for youth service delivery and staff is committed to moving forward with these ongoing service design and implementation approaches.

Reviewed and Approved by,

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Samantha Howard, Manager of Recreation Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simone Gourlay'.

Simone Gourlay, Manager of Purchasing

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warren Harris'.

Warren Harris, Commissioner of Recreation and Parks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brent Marshall'.

Brent Marshall, CAO