

## Proposed Policy on Outdoor Bake Ovens

Purpose	<p>To provide a framework on outdoor oven usage that draws on the experience of existing oven users.</p> <p>To outline procedures that can be used when responding to requests for the installation and operation of outdoor ovens in City-owned/operated parks.</p> <p>To indicate that this policy is to be used as a guideline, and that local circumstances may differ from one park to another.</p>
Policy Statement	<p>Bake ovens are a community resource with many social benefits. This policy outlines how the Parks, Forestry and Recreation department can best respond to requests for new bake ovens and how to enable new ovens to be successful.</p>
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals or organizations that would like to install and/or use an outdoor oven in a City park;</li> <li>• City of Toronto staff, volunteer(s), contracted staff involved in the building and/or usage of an outdoor oven in a City park</li> </ul>
Definitions	<p><b>Bake oven:</b> An enclosed or pre-cast structure with an oven opening used for baking or cooking food. A fire is set inside the structure's oven chamber by burning dry, seasoned wood. Bake ovens are often built as a permanent structure set on a concrete pad. Food items are placed into the front opening, onto the oven's hearth.</p> <p><b>Tandoor oven:</b> A structure often constructed of stainless steel with a clay pot / oven set inside, used for baking or cooking food. Tandoor ovens can be permanent or portable structures, set on a concrete pad. A fire is set to heat the oven by burning dry seasoned wood or charcoal, and food items are lowered into the oven through the top opening of the oven.</p> <p><b>Outdoor oven:</b> a Bake oven or a Tandoor oven.</p> <p><b>Allowable burn materials:</b>          Bake ovens: dry seasoned, untreated wood.          Tandoor ovens: dry seasoned, untreated wood or charcoal</p> <p><b>Applicant / User:</b> the main contact person that is interested in building and / or using an outdoor oven in a City park.</p> <p><b>General Manager:</b> the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation or his designate.</p>
Procedure for requesting a new bake oven	<p>Each step below should be completed with ongoing collaboration between city staff (Parks and Recreation), local councillors and the applicant, and in consultation with city staff and community groups who operate the existing bake ovens in city parks.</p>

	<p><b>Application:</b> The applicant submits a written proposal to the Parks manager and the Recreation manager showing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) At least two people sponsoring the effort have spent a minimum of 20 hours baking/cooking alongside experienced bake-oven users at an existing bake oven (preferably more hours), and have conferred with experienced park bake oven users about their proposed location, oven plans and programming.</li> <li>b) They have a realistic, specific plan of how to fund the building of the oven and its ongoing use.</li> <li>c) They have the enthusiastic support of 20 park users (i.e. users of the park where the oven is to be built), at least five of whom want to use the oven (e.g. teachers at nearby schools, churches, heritage groups, etc.).</li> <li>d) They have the enthusiastic support of two city staff working in or near the location, willing to be long-term champions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Site Assessment:</b> The applicants' proposed location and building plan is reviewed by city staff (including several who currently run bake-oven programs) and by the ward councillor. See "Location criteria" in policy below for further details.</p> <p><b>Community Consultation:</b> Feedback from the community can be gathered in many forms, eg. on an ongoing, informal basis in the community; through letters of support; surveys; meetings; etc. The consultation process should be carried out by the applicant, the city and the councillor's office, and the feedback should be reviewed jointly by these three parties.</p> <p><b>Design:</b> The oven design should be reviewed by at least two experienced oven users, and if possible, someone who has experience building bake ovens. In particular, the hearth should be big enough to accommodate community oven programming. Availability of kitchen space and storage areas should also be considered during the design stage.</p> <p><b>Construction:</b> The construction of the oven could be undertaken as a local building project or assigned to a knowledgeable builder. The applicant is responsible for overseeing the construction process. Specific construction arrangements can be set out in the oven plan created by the applicants and the city.</p> <p><b>Oven Plan:</b> Oven scheduling and maintenance responsibilities, as well as any other details about oven use, will be laid out in an oven plan written jointly by the applicants and city staff.</p>
Bake oven programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All community programs at a bake oven in a public park share the following goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) to increase the park's liveliness by creating a gathering place in</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>the local public space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) to increase neighbourhood interaction</li> <li>c) to show the community a variety of cooking techniques (through show-and-tell, teaching, or serving food from the oven)</li> <li>d) to provide a link with other park/ community/ neighbourhood programs (i.e. community gardens, farmers' market, community kitchen programs, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>2. Whether these programs are run directly by recreation staff or by individuals or a group, they provide an open activity to the community on public parkland and would be covered by the city's insurance policy.</p> <p>3. Oven operators would have knowledge of bake ovens, after having participated in other bake oven programs and learned how to use an oven.</p> <p>4. These programs could include a fundraising component, e.g. offering the bread baked in the oven by donation in order to cover program costs.</p> <p>5. Such community programs could include (but aren't limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Long-term community use -- the city and a community group could agree to a set of terms that would give the group long-term access to the oven in order to run community programming.</li> <li>b) Seasonal programming -- a community group or a smaller ad-hoc group would have the use of an oven for one or more seasons in order to run a community activity at a given time.</li> <li>c) Recreation division programming, e.g., drop in pizza days</li> <li>d) One-off teaching events held for the community, e.g. baking workshops, matzah bake.</li> <li>e) Small-scale local cooking projects -- Neighbourhood cooks may use an oven to run a cooking project, e.g. baking, drying tomatoes or fruit, etc.</li> <li>f) Small-scale local business incubator -- Neighbourhood cooks may use the oven as part of a small community-oriented business, provided that they welcome interaction with other park users.</li> <li>g) Program offering locally booked one-off activities by a third party.</li> </ul> <p>The third party is required to go through a training session (also developed locally) offered by PFR staff or a trained oven user. Fees can be requested if staffing and/or material costs need to be recovered, as well as a donation to help offset ongoing maintenance costs.</p> <p>Even if the one-off activity is planned for a particular purpose such as a birthday party, it is also a public activity because it contributes to the safety and liveliness of the public space, and</p>
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	<p>the group using the oven is also responsible for introducing the oven to other interested park users. For these reasons, this program is also covered by the city's volunteer insurance policy.</p>
<p>Roles and Responsibilities</p>	<p><b>Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff is responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- meeting with interested applicants to discuss their ideas for a new oven, within three weeks of receiving their proposal.</li> <li>- working with applicants to identify and evaluate a proposed site</li> <li>- Working with applicants to hold community consultations and collaborate on follow-up on consultation feedback</li> <li>- Working with applicants to develop a plan for managing and using the bake oven</li> <li>- Identifying city programs and facilities that will help maximize oven use</li> </ul> <p><b>Toronto Public Health staff is responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Working in collaboration with the applicant, other experienced bakers and supportive city staff to identify food safety considerations, based on hard data - mindful of the overall goal of best responding to requests for new bake ovens and enabling the success of new ovens.</li> <li>– Ensuring that outdoor oven users have knowledge of food safety considerations.</li> <li>– Conducting food safety inspections, as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Toronto Fire Services staff is responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewing site plans and site inspections of new outdoor ovens in an effort to best respond to new requests for bake ovens and enable the success of new ovens.</li> </ul> <p><b>Parties interested in building a new outdoor oven in a City park are responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Putting together a written proposal to the recreation manager and the parks manager.</li> <li>- Collaborating with city staff and the councillor's office on the various steps of the application process (eg. site assessment, community consultation, design, construction and the creation of an oven plan)</li> </ul> <p><b>Parties interested in having long-term use of an outdoor oven on City-owned/operated parkland are responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A description of their proposed oven programming.</li> <li>- Arranging a plan for oven scheduling, training, storage, and maintenance with Parks and Recreation staff.</li> <li>- Providing a realistic plan for how they will fund their use of the oven and any support roles (e.g. training, scheduling) that they assume.</li> </ul> <p><b>Parties interested in having seasonal or occasional use of an</b></p>

	<p><b>outdoor oven on City-owned/operated parkland are responsible for the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing a description of their proposed project.</li> <li>- Meeting with person responsible for the oven schedule to determine project details.</li> <li>- Receiving oven training OR asking experienced oven users to operate the oven.</li> <li>- During the event(s), acting as oven representative to the public, welcoming questions and involvement from the public.</li> </ul>
Location criteria	<p>When reviewing possible locations in the park, consideration should be given to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor oven must be at least 10 feet (3.04 metres) from combustible structures / objects;</li> <li>• Space above burn line must be at least 10 feet (3.04 metres) from vegetation and drip line of trees;</li> <li>• Location of stake-outs (telephone, hydro, gas, water lines);</li> <li>• Proximity to a water source;</li> <li>• Access to road</li> <li>• Availability of washrooms;</li> </ul> <p>Where possible, the following needs should also be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of a commercial or community kitchen space;</li> <li>• Availability of storage space;</li> <li>• Proximity to other park activity areas (to encourage collaboration)</li> <li>• Visibility from high-traffic areas to encourage community involvement and a sense of the oven being linked in.</li> <li>• Where possible, the oven should be one component of a welcoming community space that could also include a community garden, a playground or other natural neighbourhood gathering area, and/or a farmers' market.</li> </ul>