

Attachment 3 – ACCESS TO TRCA PUBLIC FACILITIES

BACKGROUND

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) recognizes and promotes the full participation of all residents in educational, cultural and recreational programs and services, as per TRCA's Admittance Policy. Through a variety of offerings, TRCA's public-use facilities engage diverse user groups, including persons with disabilities, financially challenged individuals and groups, children and Active Transportation users.

TRCA continually strives to promote inclusion and access for all. The following outlines several programs that TRCA has implemented to help alleviate barriers to participation and encourage greater access to nature-based cultural and recreational experiences.

Programs with regional public libraries

CVC and TRCA's program with the City of Brampton and Town of Caledon Public Libraries provides access to financially challenged individuals and groups. Conservation Parks Family and Friends Memberships are available for "checkout" at Brampton and Caledon public libraries. This program offers free access to TRCA and CVC parks, promoting inclusivity, encouraging nature-based experiences, supporting healthy communities, and increasing awareness of parks.

Black Creek Pioneer Village participates in both Toronto Public Library's Museum + Arts Pass program, which provides free access to Toronto museums and cultural attractions, and a similar program with Vaughan Public Library to promote equitable access to the site. Individuals may borrow a pass from participating library branches which provides them with free general admission to the site. These programs ensure that all residents of Toronto and Vaughan may explore the story of the Toronto region at Black Creek Pioneer Village.

Program with the Region of Peel

In partnership with CVC, TRCA has been collaborating with the Region of Peel Healthy Communities Initiative to "get more kids, more active, more often". TRCA and CVC have provided free admission opportunities to students and their families. This program has increased access to the outdoors to promote lifelong engagement. Staff teams work together to develop new programs that encourage more students to participate more often in nature based recreational and cultural experiences.

Canoo (formerly known as the Cultural Access Pass program)

TRCA participates in the Institute for Canadian Citizenship's *Canoo* program, which celebrates multiculturalism by offering new Canadian citizens free general admission to Canada's natural and cultural treasures. As a participating cultural attraction, Black Creek Pioneer Village welcomes Canoo members every year. This initiative has been extended to TRCA's parks to provide Canoo members with greater access to TRCA facilities.

Active Transportation Policy

TRCA continues to work with municipal and industry partners to formalize additional trail access points to Conservation Areas and to expand trail connections. This encourages more people to enjoy nature-based recreation more often and helps people stay active.

Free Admission Programs

At all TRCA public-use facilities, free general admission is offered to toddler ages 0-3. Through the Ontario Teacher's College membership, teachers receive free admission at all facilities. Participants of Vaughan Culture Days and Doors Open Toronto receive free admission to the Kortright Centre and Black Creek Pioneer Village, respectively. In October, the Kortright Centre also offers a Family Adventure Walk in the Forest where families can participate free of charge and children are encouraged to participate in "forest school inspired" activities. TRCA also waives admission fees for support persons accompanying visitors with disabilities to alleviate barriers to experiencing culture and nature-based outdoor recreation.

TRCA continues to explore new opportunities that help people engage with nature. Inclusivity and accessibility are priorities at our facilities. Staff is committed to expanding current initiatives and providing diverse communities with even more opportunities in years to come.

Community Learning Activities

TRCA provides community learning activities in local greenspaces and neighbourhoods to support local engagement in nature-based activities. These programs are focused on improving opportunities for local residents and families to participate in free activities that help improve local knowledge about ecosystems and watersheds while contributing to ecological health. These programs are supported through municipal funding and government and private grants and free to the end user. Information on Community Learning events and activities is available on TRCA's events webpage.

Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow

TRCA works with local schools to provide integrated learning experiences for students from eligible schools to access the Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow program at one of TRCA's three overnight centres. Focused on improving student knowledge, understanding and action related to the environment, the Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow program provides subsidized experiences for classes from schools in priority areas of TRCA's watersheds. This program is supported through municipal funding and private grants. TRCA works closely with area school boards to identify schools that would benefit from this program.