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**City Eyes Keeping 26 Pools Afloat
By Bryn Weese**

City council should formally agree to work towards a long-term solution to keep 26 school pools open next year and beyond, Councillor Karen Stintz says.

But in order to do that, Stintz will have to convince 30 of her colleagues that council should at least debate next week whether the city has a role to play.

Stintz and Councillor Case Ootes, both members of the pseudo-council opposition Responsible Government Group, are moving a motion at next week's council meeting that the city agree to "work collaboratively" with the pool stakeholders over the next two months, she said yesterday.

But they'll need the support of two-thirds of councillors -- 30 of 45 -- to save the motion from being punted to the recreation committee, which would likely discuss the issue at their June meeting.

And according to Stintz, that's too late to save the pools because the Toronto District School Board has said funding arrangements for 26 pools still in limbo have to be secured within the next two months.

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"We will have lost an opportunity to be a part of the solution," she said. "We just want to formalize an agreement to work with the stakeholders.

"It's what the province has asked for, it's what the TDSB has asked for, and it's what our residents have asked for," she said.

The TDSB voted Wednesday to keep 13 of 39 pools earlier slated for closure open, and they have sent a request to the city to work with them to find a long-term solution for the others.

Earlier this week, the province committed more than \$12 million to bring the pools up to a reasonable state of good repair, provided others pay to heat and run them. Mayor David Miller says school pools are a provincial responsibility and the city already pays about \$6 million a year running 33 of the pools.