

Draft By-law - South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement Plan (Don River)

(City Council on December 14, 15 and 16, 1999, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Toronto Community Council recommends that:

- (1) the Maple Cottage Project be considered in the first phase of funding for the area;**
- (2) the boundaries of the Lake Shore Boulevard and South Riverdale Community Improvement Plan be amended to exclude any portion of the Queen-Broadview Business Improvement Area;**
- (3) the draft by-law attached to the report (November 29, 1999) from the City Solicitor, as amended by Recommendation Nos. (1) and (2), be approved and that authority be granted to introduce the necessary Bill in Council.**

The Toronto Community Council reports, for the information of Council, having requested:

- (1) the City Solicitor to report to the Toronto Community Council, at its meeting to be held on January 18, 1999 on a draft by-law designating the Queen-Broadview Business Improvement Area as a Community Improvement Area;
- (2) the Acting Commissioner of Urban Planning and Development Services to prepare a Community Improvement Plan pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning Act for the Queen-Broadview Community Improvement Area, and that the Toronto Community Council hold a public meeting with respect to the proposed Community Improvement Plan;
- (3) the Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services to report to the Toronto Community Council on any traffic management measures needed during the dismantling of the Gardiner East Expressway in order to prevent traffic infiltration into residential areas adjacent to the project; and
- (4) that a community consultation process be instituted with respect to any future proposals respecting Woodfield Road and Knox Avenue.

The Toronto Community Council reports, for the information of Council that notice of the public meeting was given in accordance with the Planning Act. The public meeting was held on December 2, 1999, and the following addressed the Toronto Community Council:

- Mr. Allan Reeve, Toronto Community Ventures; and
- Mr. Wilfrid Walker, Transport 2000 Ontario.

The Toronto Community Council submits the following report (November 29, 1999) from the City Solicitor:

Purpose:

To report on a draft by-law to designate the South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement project area, preserve the existing Leslie-Eastern community improvement plan ("cip") as a cip for the new project area and adopt an amendment to the cip.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

Passage of the draft by-law does not have any financial impact, as it would authorize, but not require, implementation of the projects described in the plan.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) The Toronto Community Council hold a public meeting in accordance with the Planning Act to consider the proposed by-law; and
- (2) If, following the public meeting, the Toronto Community Council so wishes, it could recommend to City Council that the proposed by-law be adopted and that authority be granted for the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bill in Council.

Background:

In 1991 the Council of the former City of Toronto designated the Leslie – Eastern Community Improvement Project Area and adopted a cip. At its meeting of June 9, 10 and 11, 1999, City Council approved dismantling the portion of the Gardiner Expressway east of the Don River (Clause 4 of UEDCR No. 8), authorized designation of a community improvement project area that would include the Leslie – Eastern project area and additional lands and requested a report on a draft community improvement plan.

Comments:

The proposed by-law would designate the expanded area, name it the “South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement Project Area”, preserve the existing Leslie – Eastern cip and adopt, as a new plan, authorization for further projects.

Conclusions:

If adopted, the draft by-law would establish the South Riverdale and Laek Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement project area and the new cip, itself, while preserving the existing Leslie – Eastern cip.

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Attachment No. 1

DRAFT BY-LAW

Authority: Toronto Community Council Report No. , Clause No. ,
as adopted by City of Toronto Community Council on

Enacted by Council:

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW No. - 1999

To designate certain lands as the South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East
Community Improvement Project Area and amend
the Leslie-Eastern Community Improvement Plan.

WHEREAS subsection 28(2) of the Planning Act provides that the Council of a municipality that has an official plan containing provisions relating to community improvement may, by by-law, designate the whole or any part of an area covered by the official plan as a Community Improvement Project Area;

AND WHEREAS the Official Plan of the former City of Toronto contains provisions relating to community improvement covering the lands outlined by heavy lines on the map attached as Schedule "A";

AND WHEREAS the Council of the former City of Toronto by By-law No. 535-91 passed on September 16, 1991 designated certain lands wholly within the lands shown on Schedule "A" as the Leslie-Eastern Community Improvement Project Area;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the former City of Toronto by By-law No. 602-91 passed on October 7, 1991 adopted a Community Improvement Plan for that Project Area;

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The land outlined by heavy lines on the map attached as Schedule "A" are designated as a Community Improvement Project Area within the meaning of section 28 of the Planning Act.

2. The Leslie-Eastern Community Improvement Plan contained in By-law No. 602-91 of the former City of Toronto is hereby deemed to be a community improvement plan for the South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement Project Area.

3. The community improvement plan attached as Schedule “B” is hereby adopted as a Community Improvement Plan for the South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement Project Area.

ENACTED AND PASSED this day of , A.D. 1999.

SCHEDULE “A”

(map to be inserted)

SCHEDULE “B”

The South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement Plan No. 2

1.0 Background

The Council of the former City of Toronto designated the Leslie-Eastern Community Improvement Project Area by By-law No. 535-91 passed September 16, 1991. The Project Area is wholly within what has now been designated as the South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement Project Area. The Council of the former City adopted the Leslie-Eastern Community Improvement Plan by By-law No. 602-91 passed October 7, 1991. That Plan has now been deemed to be a community improvement plan for the South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East Community Improvement Project Area.

The request to prepare this Community Improvement Plan arose in conjunction with the Gardiner East Dismantling Project.

Section 28 of the Planning Act permits City Council to designate an area of the City as a Community Improvement Project Area and then adopt and implement a Community Improvement Plan for the designated area. The purpose of a Community Improvement Plan is to identify public projects to be undertaken over a number of years which will improve the area’s physical quality and livability. The types of capital projects that can be included as part of Community Improvement Plans are diverse, and are decided in consultation with the local community. A wide variety of local interest groups were consulted during the preparation of this Plan, and two open houses on the Gardiner East Dismantling Project provided additional opportunities for public comment on it. Generally, the Community Improvement Projects forming as part of this Plan can be divided into three broad categories:

- those projects which are associated with and enhance the value of the Gardiner East Dismantling Project;

- projects which are unrelated to the Gardiner East Dismantling Project but benefit the local area; and
- projects intended to provide for traffic management under existing and anticipated traffic conditions.

There are several potential sources of funding for the Community Improvement Projects including the City's annual capital budgeting process, the capital budget of the Gardiner East Dismantling Project, as part of private redevelopment resulting from development approvals, capital infrastructure programs funded by senior levels of government, and private or corporate donations. A project may be funded by one of these methods alone or in combination.

2.0 Context

From a city planning perspective, the most striking feature of the Gardiner East Dismantling Project is the inclusion of urban design, and "green" elements as part of the new urban boulevard proposed. This "greening" includes the addition of:

- a landscaped "green" space having a maximum width of 30 metres along the north side of the new road;
- a new trail for cyclists and pedestrians within the green space on the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard;
- a pedestrian path and landscaping on the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard;
- a landscaped median;
- public art, to be developed in consultation with the community; and
- improvements to pedestrian access across the Gardiner East.

Overall, these design elements have a significant impact on humanizing the physical environment of the Lake Shore/Gardiner East and improving the physical amenity of the area.

The "greening" of the Lake Shore/Gardiner East, may also act as a catalyst for:

- the development of linkages with other associated "green" infrastructure projects such as the new park being constructed at Coxwell Avenue and Lake Shore Boulevard, proposed "greening" projects within the Port area, revitalization of the Lower Don River, including the West Don Lands to create a large coordinated open space system within east Toronto;

- reinvestment and a better corporate image for industries within the Film Studio District and the Port area;
- increased bicycle commuting to the downtown and emerging destinations such as Gooderham and Worts; and
- undertaking community improvements within the area north of the Gardiner East to enhance the value of the project to the neighbourhood.

Overall, the urban design and “greening” component of the Gardiner East Dismantling Project will help to transform the Gardiner/Lakeshore from a “corridor” into a “place” with a positive physical identity and multiple public functions. Such reinvestment in the City is essential to the creation of a better quality of life for Torontonians, and a positive investment climate within the City.

3.0 Community Improvement Projects which enhance the Gardiner East Dismantling Project

There are several proposed community improvement projects which complement the Gardiner East Dismantling Project, and which would enhance its overall value. They are described below and shown on the attached map.

3.1 The Greening of Lake Shore Boulevard between Coxwell Avenue and Leslie Street

The Gardiner East Dismantling Project includes the creation of a substantial “green” landscaped recreational corridor between Leslie Street and the Don River. The recreational corridor includes the provision of a bicycle/pedestrian path, tree planting, and public art. This green space will connect to cycle/pedestrian systems west of the Don River once a bridge is constructed over the Don River. To the east, a new park of about 8 hectares is under construction on the east side of Coxwell Avenue as part of the Greenwood Racetrack redevelopment. The sweep of Lake Shore Boulevard east of Coxwell Avenue has also been rehabilitated with trees, landscaping and a meandering pedestrian trail. The north side of Lake Shore Boulevard between Leslie Street and Coxwell Avenue contains a wide grassed boulevard with sparse tree planting. This area should be connected to the green spaces east and west with a pedestrian/cycle path, additional landscaping, trees and benches. This would enhance the role of the Gardiner/Lake Shore as a commuting route for cyclists. This should be implemented coincident with the completion of the Gardiner East Dismantling Project.

3.2 Pedestrian Improvements to Leslie Street

Leslie Street between Queen Street and Lake Shore Boulevard is used by pedestrians to walk to two local destinations: the Loblaws Superstore at Eastern at Leslie, and to the south, the Leslie Street Spit. If a major east-west pedestrian route is implemented along the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard as part of the Gardiner East Dismantling Project, then pedestrian traffic on Leslie Street could be expected to increase.

Area residents have complained that Leslie Street, and especially the intersection of Leslie Street and Eastern Avenue, is not a pleasant walking environment. Given that Leslie Street is likely to become a more important pedestrian street, it should be improved. Improvements would consist of:

- tree planting on the east side of Leslie Street from Eastern Avenue to Lake Shore Boulevard;
- tree planting on the south side of Eastern Avenue just east of Leslie Street; and
- reconfiguration of the traffic island at Leslie and Eastern to remove the northbound right turn channel from Leslie to Eastern Avenue and replacement it with a landscaped area and a sidewalk.

This last improvement has been examined from a traffic engineering viewpoint and is feasible as it would not reduce traffic service levels. In addition, reconfiguration of the intersection would eliminate a traffic conflict between cars merging onto Eastern Avenue from Leslie Street and those vehicles exiting the Loblaws site onto Eastern Avenue.

3.3 Midblock Pedestrian/Bicycle connections to Lake Shore Boulevard

Except for Carlaw Avenue and Leslie Street, there are no direct pedestrian/cycle connections linking Eastern Avenue, and the “greened” Lake Shore. Without such connections local residents would have to walk or cycle in an indirect manner to access the green space along the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard. A midblock connection is best accomplished in conjunction with the redevelopment of sites between Carlaw Avenue and Leslie Street.

3.4 Pedestrian/ Bicycle Bridge over the Don River

As part of creating a direct cycle/pedestrian route to the downtown along the “greened” Don River corridor, it is necessary to provide access over the Don River. A feasibility study, and a preliminary design for the bridge were completed in 1998. The bridge would be accessed from the west side of the Don Roadway at the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard. A direct and accessible pedestrian and cycling link would be created between east Toronto, the downtown and the Don River trail system thereby enhancing commuting and recreational opportunities.

3.5 Woodfield Road and Knox Avenue

Woodfield Avenue south of Eastern Avenue is a wide dead end street. Two major truck oriented activities, the Canada Post Plant and the Loomis Courier Service, are located there. If Woodfield were extended to connect to Lake Shore Boulevard, it would provide a direct and alternate route for these operations and would reduce truck traffic on Eastern Avenue. In addition, the extension would improve traffic service levels at the Coxwell Avenue/Lake Shore Boulevard intersection during the a.m. peak hour by providing an alternate route to Lake Shore Boulevard from Eastern Avenue. Turning movements at Lake Shore Boulevard would be limited to right in, right out access. Traffic restrictions or traffic management measures would be placed on Woodfield Road between Eastern Avenue and Queen Street East to prevent infiltration during the a.m. peak hour. The sidewalk on the west side of Woodfield Road would be extended to connect to the bicycle and pedestrian trail along the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard . Additional landscaping and trees would be placed along the edge of Woodfield Road, where feasible.

Knox Avenue south of Eastern Avenue has the potential to be an effective cycle/pedestrian link to the green space along Shore Boulevard in order to improve access from the north. The construction of a new sidewalk on the east side of Knox Avenue between Eastern Avenue and Lake Shore Boulevard appears feasible. Tree planting along this portion of Knox Avenue could be accommodated on the west side of the street. The extension of Knox Avenue to Lake Shore Boulevard could also be considered as an alternative if Woodfield Road is not extended to improve existing peak hour traffic service at the intersection of Coxwell Avenue and Lake Shore Boulevard. However, this option would probably divert less local truck traffic onto Lake Shore Boulevard from Eastern Avenue, and should only be considered if Woodfield Road cannot be extended.

3.6 Carlaw Avenue

Carlaw Avenue directly connects the Danforth to the proposed Lake Shore green space. Carlaw Avenue could serve as an effective route for pedestrian and bicycle traffic from the Danforth area. Significant redevelopment is occurring in the Dundas-Carlaw area as older industrial buildings and vacant sites are being redeveloped for live-work and residential land uses. This will create a larger residential population base along Carlaw Avenue. It is therefore appropriate to recommend improvements to Carlaw Avenue south of Gerrard Street in order to create a major north-south pedestrian/cycle link to the Lake Shore green space area. The types of improvements could include the installation of:

- a bicycle lane along Carlaw Avenue between Lake Shore Boulevard and the Danforth; and
- streetscape improvements such as decorative paving, street trees and landscaping.

It appears feasible to widen the sidewalks on the east side of Carlaw Avenue from Queen Street to the rail bridge within the existing boulevard. Additional landscaping could be installed against the edges of existing buildings, possibly in raised planters. The west side

of Carlaw Avenue in this vicinity could likely accommodate further in ground tree planting at the edge of the existing sidewalk.

Implementation of streetscape improvements on Carlaw Avenue south of Queen Street presents its own opportunities and constraints. The east side of Carlaw Avenue is physically constrained, and provides little opportunity for improvement. However, the west side of Carlaw Avenue has a wider boulevard which could accommodate a wider sidewalk and some tree planting.

A detailed analysis and design of streetscape improvements and the bicycle lane proposed for Carlaw Avenue are required. Should the bicycle route on Carlaw Avenue prove unfeasible, the establishment of a bicycle route on Logan Avenue should be considered as an alternative.

Existing land owners in the Dundas-Carlaw area should act jointly to reach consensus and create impetus to carry out this project as part of a public-private partnering with the City, as some of the community improvements described for Carlaw Avenue north of Queen Street would likely occur on private property. Private property owners would be expected to jointly fund and maintain a portion of the improvements.

3.7 Booth Avenue

Booth Avenue south of Eastern Avenue is another potential location for pedestrian oriented improvements which would link the South Riverdale neighbourhood to the Lake Shore green space. A new sidewalk and tree planting could be installed on the west side of Booth Avenue as a wide grassed boulevard exists on much of this block. The east side of Booth Avenue could contain additional tree planting except where existing businesses have parking and loading access.

4.0 Community Improvement Projects which are Unrelated to the Gardiner Dismantling Project

4.1 Improvements to Leslie Grove Park

a) Children's Parkette/Improvements to Leslie Grove Park

Area residents feel there is not enough local park space for children in the Community Improvement project area. They also feel that play equipment in Leslie Grove Park is older, and may not be safe for children. The Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism should investigate and report on the adequacy of play equipment in Leslie Grove Park, children's parks needs within the local area, and potential opportunities for addressing any identified needs. Some residents suggested converting a small Toronto HydroYard at Eastern Avenue and Caroline Avenue to a parkette for children.

b) Re-use of Leslie Grove Park Field House

Certain community groups have suggested that the field house in Leslie Grove Park, adjacent to Queen Street East be renovated and re-used for a community use. The ideas for community uses include things such as public washrooms, a youth centre, a community policing centre or a seniors centre with an associated outdoor seating area. Further community consultation will be required to determine the most appropriate community use.

c) Safety Improvements to Leslie Grove Park

Area residents indicated that Leslie Grove park is used for illicit nighttime activities, particularly drug dealing. To alleviate this problem they suggested improving the park's overall safety by:

- relocating public seating closer to the street edges;
- providing better lighting within the park interior;
- improving nighttime public surveillance opportunities and sightlines into the park; and
- regularly trimming trees to improve lighting and surveillance.

The Commissioner of Economic Development and Tourism should investigate these concerns and report.

4.2 Community Safety

a) Street Lighting

Several area residents and Queen Street East business owners feel that lighting levels are deficient in the following areas within the Community Improvement Area: Queen Street, Eastern Avenue, and in public lanes. The Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services should review lighting levels along Queen Street, Eastern Avenue, and public lanes within the Community Improvement Area, and report on a program of possible improvements.

b) Garage Address Program

Some area residents stated that it is difficult for police to respond to calls where the incident has occurred in a public lane. Once they patrol the public lane, the police cannot easily identify the location of the complaint. The installation of address identification on the rear of properties would allow police to respond to calls more quickly. This program could be implemented as part of a summer youth employment program.

4.3 Improvements to Queen Street East

Business owners along Queen Street East identified several improvements to Queen Street, and they felt that safety improvements and physical beautification of the area needed to be implemented concurrently. Their specific ideas for community improvements include:

- the provision of more waste receptacles along Queen Street East;
- the placement of bicycle parking rings along the street edge;
- the erection of additional public phone booths along the street;
- improved lighting along Queen Street East; and
- the establishment of a commercial surface parking lot to accommodate shoppers.

With the exception of the request for phone booths and a commercial parking lot, these matters can be accommodated through existing programs provided by the City. These matters should be brought to the attention of the appropriate City staff to determine whether it is feasible to provide the items. The Parking Authority of Toronto should investigate and report on the feasibility of establishing a commercial surface parking lot on Queen Street between Carlaw Avenue and Leslie Street.

4.4 Improvements to Pape Avenue

Pape Avenue south of Queen Street has an abnormally wide right-of-way. It is a local street that carries moderate traffic volumes. The road width of Pape Avenue between Queen Street and Eastern Avenue is exceptionally wide and could be narrowed to widen the sidewalk and plant street trees. A second option is to retain the sidewalks, and to create landscaped median in the centre of the road. This option may have fewer conflicts with public utilities.

4.5 Eastern Avenue

Eastern Avenue has many functions: it is a significant arterial road for downtown commuters, and it services local truck traffic, on street loading, street parking and pedestrian activity. Residents living adjacent to Eastern Avenue, and particularly those families with children attending Bruce Public School, expressed concern regarding the width of sidewalks along Eastern Avenue. In addition, residents indicated that portions of Eastern Avenue, east of Leslie Street lack sidewalks. These substandard conditions make normal pedestrian passage difficult along many parts of Eastern Avenue. Given the extensive use of this street the only practical way to increase sidewalk widths is to eliminate one lane on Eastern Avenue to make it three lanes wide. It would be replaced with a directional traffic control system similar to Jarvis Street north of Queen Street. Two lanes would operate westbound during the morning peak hour. In the evening the lane direction would reverse with two lanes eastbound. This change would permit the sidewalk to be widened, and some in ground street tree planting along the street edge may be possible. The feasibility of this community improvement has been assessed from a traffic engineering perspective. The scheme could be implemented without affecting

service levels if the phasing of the traffic signal at the Leslie Street and Eastern Avenue intersection is altered.

4.6 Community Garden

The establishment of a Community Garden on a vacant lot, in an existing park space or on a building rooftop could stimulate social interaction among area residents, and lead to increased community spirit. Community gardening projects in Boston, Vancouver, and in the Corktown area have helped improve a sense of community. A possible location for a community garden is a vacant piece of city owned land at the foot of Saulter Street.

4.7 Improvements at Mosley Avenue and Eastern Avenue

The intersection of Mosley Avenue and Eastern Avenue is a view terminus for eastbound commuters and pedestrians. Currently, this terminus is barren and derelict. Tree planting, a landscaped feature or public art could enhance this area.

4.8 Enhanced Street Signs

Some Seniors complained that the size and design of street signs makes them hard to read when driving. One possible community improvement project could be to design and install more readable street signs.

5.0 Traffic Management Related Community Improvement Projects

5.1 Logan Avenue Traffic Management

Area residents, particularly those on Logan Avenue, expressed concern about the existing amount and nature of local truck traffic which travels through residential streets. They indicated that the traffic occurs at most hours, including early morning. They requested that traffic management measures be implemented that encourage truck related uses on Logan Avenue south of Eastern to use Lake Shore Boulevard for egress rather than Logan Avenue in order to reduce the volume of truck traffic on the street. They suggested that Logan Avenue south of Eastern Avenue be restricted to southbound movements. Traffic consultants retained by the City have reviewed the feasibility of placing traffic management measures on Logan Avenue. They recommend that the best resolution is to change the residential portion of Logan Avenue, south of Eastern Avenue, to one way southbound. The Commissioner of City Works and Emergency Services should install appropriate traffic management measures in this location for a temporary period and then report back on their effectiveness.

5.2 Traffic Light on Eastern at Larchmount

Several interest groups have requested that new traffic signals be placed at specific locations on Eastern Avenue to improve pedestrian safety, particularly for children. Various locations have been mentioned where a traffic light should be considered. As

part of the Community Improvement Plan, it is feasible to provide a pedestrian activated crossing at the intersection of Larchmount and Eastern Avenue. The addition of more traffic lights on Eastern Avenue is impractical as it could reduce the traffic service levels significantly.

The Toronto Community Council reports, for the information of Council, having also had before it during consideration of the foregoing matter, Clause 4 of Report No. 8 of the Urban Environment and Development Committee, headed "F.G. Gardiner Expressway East Dismantling Project (Don River and East Toronto – Wards 25 and 26)", as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on June 9, 1999, which is on file with the City Clerk.

The Toronto Community Council reports, for the information of Council, having also had before it during consideration of the foregoing matter, the following communications, a copy of which had been submitted to Members of Council under separate cover:

- (November 26, 1999) from Ms. Catherine McVitty, Manager, Environmental & Corporate Affairs, Lever Ponds; and
- (December 2, 1999) from Mr. Wilfrid Walker, Transport 2000 Ontario

(City Council on December 14, 15 and 16, 1999, had before it, during consideration of the foregoing Clause, a communication (December 8, 1999) from the City Clerk, forwarding submissions received from the following regarding the Draft By-law with respect to South Riverdale and Lake Shore Boulevard East – Community Improvement Plan (Don River).

- *(November 26, 1999) from Ms. Catherine McVitty, Manager, Environmental and Corporate Affairs, Lever Ponds; and*
- *(December 2, 1999) from Mr. Wilfrid Walker, Transport 2000 Ontario.)*