



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Fort York Pedestrian Bridge

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| <b>Date:</b>             | November 9, 2007  |
| <b>To:</b>               | Executive Committee                                     |
| <b>From:</b>             | Elaine Baxter-Trahair, Director, Waterfront Secretariat |
| <b>Wards:</b>            | Ward 19   |
| <b>Reference Number:</b> | P:\2007\Cluster B\WF\ec07006.doc                        |

#### SUMMARY

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The purpose of this report is to seek Council's authority to proceed with the environmental assessment (EA) for the Fort York Pedestrian Bridge project in 2008.

Waterfront Toronto will fund the EA, for which \$300,000 is allocated in the Waterfront Revitalization Initiative's 5-Year Business Plan / 10-Year Forecast (2007-2016) and the 2008 Recommended Capital Budget. Capital funding for the project beyond the EA must be secured in order to proceed with design and construction.

The Fort York pedestrian bridge would provide an important new north-south pedestrian and cycling link from communities north of the Lakeshore rail corridor to Fort York and the Waterfront. The pedestrian bridge is a stand alone project that can proceed independently of other initiatives at the Waterfront.

If the EA is initiated in 2008 and capital funding for the project is secured, the Fort York pedestrian bridge could be completed by 2012 in time for the bi-centennial commemoration of the War of 1812. Achieving this deadline, however, could be compromised if either the EA process or project funding is delayed.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **The Deputy City Manager responsible for Waterfront Revitalization and the Waterfront Project Director recommend that:**

1. Council authorize staff of the Waterfront Secretariat, in partnership with other relevant divisions, to initiate the environmental assessment for the Fort York pedestrian bridge project in 2008, subject to approval of the 2008 Capital Budget for Waterfront Revitalization Initiative;
2. The Mayor and the Deputy Mayor be mandated to seek funding from other orders of government and stakeholders for the design and construction of the Fort York pedestrian bridge; and
3. The appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The Waterfront Revitalization Initiative's 5-Year Business Plan / 10-Year Forecast (2007-2016), approved by City Council in July, 2007, and the 2008 Recommended Capital Budget for the Waterfront Revitalization Initiative includes funding of \$300,000 in Transportation Initiatives Sub-Project No. WFT906728-19 for an EA of the Fort York pedestrian bridge.

As no funds are included for implementation of the pedestrian bridge project beyond the EA phase in the 2008 Recommended Capital Budget for Waterfront Revitalization Initiative, additional funding and budget approvals are required before the project can be implemented.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting of July 16 to 18, 2007, City Council approved the Waterfront Revitalization Initiative's 5-Year Business Plan / 10-Year Forecast (2007-2016) contained in Executive Committee Meeting Report No. 10 and adopted the following motion:

“given that the bi-centennial of the War of 1812 is fast approaching, Waterfront Toronto and the Waterfront Secretariat be requested to review the timing of the pedestrian/bicycle link from Fort York northerly, for implementation prior to 2012 and report in time for the 2008 Capital Budget on this matter”.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/cc/decisions/2007-07-16-cc11-dd.pdf>

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

A preliminary concept plan for the pedestrian bridge was prepared in 2006 by du Toit Allsopp Hillier for the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Division. The preliminary concept envisages a curved modular bridge connecting the Niagara community to Garrison Common at historic Fort York.

Most of the land required for the pedestrian bridge is City owned. In addition, implementation of the project could allow underutilized lands adjacent to the proposed bridge to be upgraded as parkland.

A Municipal Class EA for the pedestrian bridge would be undertaken by consultants retained by the Waterfront Secretariat, working in consultation with Transportation Services, City Planning, Technical Services and other divisions. The EA could take approximately 1.5 years and will address issues related to urban design, public art, archaeology, heritage, soil conditions and natural environment.

Waterfront Toronto is not undertaking the EA as it is currently focusing its efforts on other areas of the waterfront including East Bayfront, West Don Lands and the Port Lands.

## **COMMENTS**

The Fort York pedestrian bridge has the potential to be an iconic structure forming a western gateway to the downtown area. It complies with the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan which shows a key north-south pedestrian link at this location.

The pedestrian bridge would be designed not to conflict with existing or proposed roads and rail lines. As a result, it can be de-linked from the Front Street Extension, which is to be considered separately in the context of the future of the Gardiner/Lakeshore corridor.

Waterfront Toronto estimates that the total cost of the Fort York Pedestrian Bridge project is in the range of \$14 to \$18 million, excluding property acquisition.

The pedestrian bridge could be completed in time for the bi-centennial commemoration in 2012 of the War of 1812 if the EA starts in early 2008 and funding from other orders of government and stakeholders is obtained for its implementation. The schedule is tight and any EA 'bump-up' requests or prolonged negotiations with the railways or property interests could cause delays.

City staff supports the Fort York Pedestrian Bridge project. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor, who is co-chair of the War of 1812 Bi-Centennial Committee, should be mandated to seek the additional funding required for implementation of the project from the other orders of government and stakeholders. A federal environmental assessment (CEAA) would also be required if federal funding is obtained.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

Richard Butts

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Deputy City Manager