

Lower Don Lands Project

Date:	May 31, 2010
To:	Executive Committee
From:	Richard Butts, Deputy City Manager
Wards:	Wards 28 and 30
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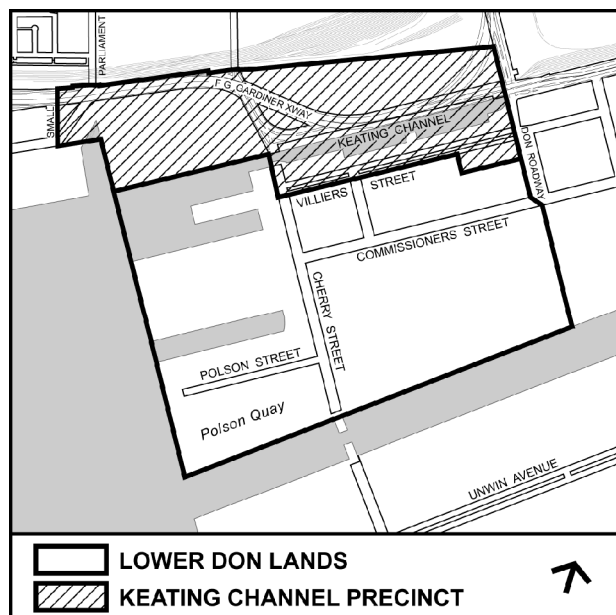
SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council support for plans by Waterfront Toronto (WT) and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to revitalize the Lower Don Lands, renaturalize the Lower Don River and flood protect the Port Lands.

The subject area is shown in the key map. The Lower Don Lands is a large brownfield in the north-west Port Lands. Land ownership is primarily public with private ownership pockets in the Keating Channel Precinct and on Polson Quay. Currently, the Don River flows into Keating Channel before discharging into the Inner Harbour.

The ‘big move’ driving the design is a dramatic new river estuary extending further south into the center of the new district (see Attachment 1). The new river valley removes surrounding lands from flood risk, creates new natural habitat, greenery and parks and gives shape to the character of adjacent waterfront communities.

When implemented, the plans will help establish Toronto as a leader in developing sustainable urban communities and the restoration of natural landscapes. These projects are also critical to opening up the rest of the vast Port Lands to revitalization.



The transformation of the Lower Don Lands is a long-term initiative that is estimated to take place over the next 30 years.

The vision for the new district is contained in the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan (Attachment 4). The plan sets out a new structure for the area based on the new river. It integrates vibrant new neighbourhood precincts, water's edge green space and innovative infrastructure and services. The plan is flexible enough to accommodate a variety of uses and activities including a Port Lands sports centre now under consideration by Council.

The Keating Channel Precinct Plan (Attachment 5) provides a more finely grained community design and service and infrastructure plan for the area immediately east of East Bayfront. Following the development of the West Don Lands and East Bayfront, it is anticipated that this will be the first new community to be developed in the Lower Don Lands.

The various associated Environmental Assessments (EAs) addressed in this report, and a proposed Official Plan Amendment being brought forward concurrently by City Planning, are planning prerequisites for implementation of the Lower Don Lands project. The long-term success of the new urban estuary depends on proceeding with critical infrastructure early in the area's development in order to provide essential flood protection, parkland and establish basic municipal servicing. Similarly, the early introduction of transit will be critical.

Although revitalization of the Lower Don Lands poses complex technical and financial challenges, the results of this planning exercise demonstrate the exceptional city building potential of this district. Council's endorsement of the Framework Plan, Keating Channel Precinct Plan and associated EAs, together with the planning approvals being brought forward by City Planning, will establish the planning vision for the Lower Don Lands. Attention can then be turned to maintaining the momentum of the project, by Waterfront Toronto seeking funding to initiate detailed design and other preparatory work for the Don River Mouth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council:

1. support the preferred alternative of the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Environmental Assessment and its submission to the Minister of the Environment for approval;
2. endorse the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan (May 2010) to guide the revitalization of the Lower Don Lands;
3. authorize Waterfront Toronto to put the Lower Don Lands Class EA Infrastructure Master Plan (May 2010) in the public record in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class Environment Assessment;

4. endorse the Keating Channel Precinct Plan (May 2010) as it relates to lands west of and including Cherry Street;
5. authorize Waterfront Toronto to put the Keating Channel Precinct Class EA Environmental Study Report (May 2010), as it relates to lands west of and including Cherry Street, in the public record in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment;
6. defer approval of the Keating Channel Precinct Plan and Keating Channel Class EA Environmental Study Report as they relate to lands east of Cherry Street until the Gardiner/Lake Shore Boulevard Reconfiguration EA is further advanced;
7. request Waterfront Toronto to submit to the Waterfront Project Director, a Business and Implementation Plan for the Lower Don Lands with priority for Phase 1 (Don River Mouth), addressing capital costs, revenue and expenditures, funding, project phasing and land management, to be brought forward for Council consideration;
8. request the Chief Planner and/or the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, in consultation with the Waterfront Secretariat, through planning approvals and permit issuance, to ensure that the proposed corridors of the Lower Don River and infrastructure in the Lower Don Lands are protected from encroachment by development;
9. endorse the Affordable Housing Strategy outlined in the Keating Channel Precinct Plan;
10. request Waterfront Toronto to prepare plans and guidelines for urban design, parks and public space, heritage and public art to inform the development of precincts in the Lower Don Lands, in consultation with relevant City divisions and agencies; and
11. The appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Implementation Points

Lower Don Lands Framework Plan (Attachment 2 and 4)

Due to the complex, interrelated nature of the various components of the Lower Don Lands vision, an overarching “framework plan” has been created. It will be used as a basis to seek funding from government and private partners; prepare precinct plans and planning documents, EAs, and design guidelines. The framework plan will also form the basis of a Business and Implementation Plan for City consideration. <http://www.waterfrontoronto.ca/lowerdonlands> (Lower Don Lands documents link)

Lower Don Lands Class EA Infrastructure Master Plan (Attachment 2)

To complement the framework plan, a Class EA Infrastructure Master Plan for the Lower Don Lands addresses water, wastewater, stormwater, roads, bridges (i.e. river crossings) and transit. It completes Phases 1 and 2 of the Municipal Class EA for municipal projects to establish preferred overall solutions. Assessment of alternative design concepts and selection of a preferred design would be done later in Phases 3 and 4 of the Class EA.

Keating Channel Precinct Plan (Attachment 5)

The Keating Channel Precinct Plan will guide overall urban design, planning and development in the precinct by establishing the location, scale, character and function of public spaces, streets, buildings and facilities. It will serve as the basis for the preparation of urban design guidelines, zoning and other regulatory documents; the evaluation of development applications on public and private lands; preparation of government funding agreements; business relocation decision-making and WT developer proposal calls.

Keating Channel Environmental Study Report (Attachment 3)

Together with the Keating Precinct Plan, an Environmental Study Report (ESR) is submitted by WT for Council endorsement. It completes Phases 3 and 4 of the Municipal Class EA.

WT, the City and TTC are tri-proponents of the Lower Don Lands Class EA Infrastructure Master Plan and Keating Channel ESR as described above. Subject to Council support, these documents will be filed on the public record by WT as required by the Municipal Class EA. The public, interest groups and government agencies may request that the Minister of the Environment issue a Part II order (“bump-up”) which would require an Individual EA. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) has been triggered by federal land ownership and impacts to rail, fisheries, navigation and the Toronto Port Authority, and will proceed as a screening report.

Financial Impact

There are no immediate financial implications resulting from the approval of recommendations in this report, but there will be future financial impacts when the proposed Lower Don Lands Project is implemented.

In 2008, Council adopted a report entitled “Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Initiative Five-Year Business Plan/Ten-Year Forecast (2008-2017)” which includes \$7.0 million for Don River EAs including the Don Mouth Naturalization and Flood Protection EA, and \$47.502 million under the Port Lands Preparation Project for preparation of the plans and infrastructure EAs including for the Lower Don Lands. Beyond this, WT will need to obtain new funding in order to design and construct the Lower Don Lands Project. A funding source has not been identified by WT to date.

In the event that detailed design and engineering of Phase 1 of the Lower Don Lands (Don River Mouth) is funded over a 4-year period from 2012 to 2016, WT expects the cost will be a minimum of \$50 million.

If construction of the Don River Mouth is also funded, WT's preliminary estimate of the cost, assuming it occurs over 7 years from 2017 to 2023, is \$600 to \$700 million (in 2010 dollars). This includes \$325 million for the new river, \$200 million for new bridges and utility relocation, \$60 million for the sediment/debris management area and \$40 million for the promontory park landform. This excludes additional related costs such as project management, land acquisition, site remediation and contingency allowance.

Assuming all phases of the Lower Don Lands are funded, and occur in the subsequent 10 to 15 year period (2024 and beyond), there will be substantial new capital costs beyond those for the initial phase. WT has not provided cost estimates for the future phases of the Lower Don Lands Project, but the costs would include new streets, water, wastewater and stormwater facilities, various community facilities, soil remediation, parks and public spaces, and other elements of the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan.

In addition to any contribution by the City towards the capital cost of the Lower Don Lands Project, the City will incur higher operating costs over the long term for the new municipal infrastructure, parks and other facilities.

It is noted that the City has not conducted a due diligence of WT's projections contained in this Financial Impact analysis. This will be done through a Business and Implementation Plan to be provided by WT following Council's endorsement of the plans for the project.

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

DECISION HISTORY

In 2001, when the three governments created the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Initiative, the EA for the naturalization of the mouth of the Don River and flood protection of the Port Lands was identified as one of four priority projects.

In 2003, the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan ("Making Waves") was adopted by City Council. The naturalization and relocation of the Mouth of the Don River was identified as a "big move." A related "big move" in the Plan is to open up the Port Lands to urban development with several major new neighbourhoods. The Plan anticipates the preparation of precinct plans to provide for orderly development, soil cleanup, flood control, servicing, urban design, community improvement, heritage and environmental performance.

In 2004, the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project EA (Don Mouth EA) was initiated by TRCA on behalf of WT. The TRCA undertook technical studies and explored a number of options for changing the Lower Don River to provide both naturalization and flood protection.

http://www.waterfrontoronto.ca/explore_projects2/lower_don Lands/don_mouth_naturalization_and_flood_protection

<http://www.trca.on.ca/protect/environmental-assessment-projects/don-mouth-naturalization-and-port-lands-flood-protection-project/>

In 2006, Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding between the City, TEDCO and WT that requires WT to prepare precinct plans and Business and Implementation Plans for the Port Lands prior to receiving effective control of lands in the area.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/council/cc060131/pof1rpt/cl027.pdf>

(Council decision link to MOU)

In 2007, in order to integrate the river with its urban context, WT held an urban design competition for the Lower Don Lands. The winning design concept formed the basis for an alternative assessed by TRCA during the Don Mouth EA and ultimately selected as the preferred concept. WT refined the design concept to prepare the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan and the Keating Channel Precinct Plan. The result of the collaboration of the river EA and urban design is an overall plan for the naturalized Don River Mouth and the surrounding new communities.

On May 6, 2010, the Board of Directors of Waterfront Toronto endorsed the Lower Don Lands and Don Mouth documents for submission to the City. On May 21, 2010, the TRCA supported the preferred alternative of the Don Mouth EA and authorized the submission of the EA for approval subject to endorsement by WT and City Council.

<http://www.trca.on.ca/dotAsset/82606.pdf>

On June 22, 2010, Toronto and East York Community Council is anticipated to consider a report from the City Planning Division which will recommend that Council endorse an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) for the Lower Don Lands and a Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) for Keating Channel Precinct west of Cherry Street. The OPA would re-configure the land use designations and transportation network in the Lower Don Lands. The ZBA will rezone the lands west of Cherry Street in the Keating Precinct from industrial to mixed use. For remaining lands in the Keating Precinct, the ZBA and completion of the EA for municipal infrastructure would be deferred until the Gardiner/Lake Shore Boulevard EA is further advanced.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Lower Don Lands Today

The Lower Don Lands is located east of downtown in the northwest quadrant of the Port Lands. At 125 ha in size, the Lower Don Lands is twice as large as East Bayfront and West Don Lands combined.

Properties in the Lower Don Lands are currently used by industrial and commercial businesses, or are vacant. There is a mix of public and privately held lands. Most of the public lands are south of Keating Channel and owned by the City or Toronto Port Lands Company.

The Don River in this area is a narrow, hard edged canal that makes an abrupt right turn west at Keating Channel and then outlets into the Inner Harbour. This section of “river” overflows during floods when the volume of water increases dramatically. The Don River is polluted, and natural habitat in the Lower Don Lands is badly degraded.

Preparation Process of the Lower Don Plans

Over the past six years, an extensive public consultation program consisting of public forums, stakeholder sessions and meetings with private landowners has taken place to seek input on these plans and the municipal infrastructure and Don Mouth EAs. Meetings have been extremely well attended and overall, public feedback on the plans has been very positive.

http://www.waterfrontoronto.ca/explore_projects2/lower_don_land/planning_the_community

The Lower Don Lands plan has won national and international awards for its innovative approach to sustainable development. In 2009, the Lower Don Lands was selected as one of 16 founding projects of the Climate Positive Development Program, a Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI). www.clintonfoundation.org/cci. The Clinton projects are intended to demonstrate “climate positive” strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, setting an example for other cities around the world. Waterfront Toronto is partnering with the Clinton Initiative in the Lower Don Lands.

Over 15 City DABCC’s have been working closely with WT and the TRCA from project inception to the final production of the documents. This process has been managed by the Waterfront Secretariat. This report has been reviewed by City Planning, Transportation Services, Technical Services, Toronto Water, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Social Development, Finance and Administration, TTC and TRCA. The comments which follow describing various elements of the plans for the Lower Don Lands reflect the input of the City team. Where areas of outstanding concern remain, the issues are highlighted and addressed.

COMMENTS

New Don River Mouth (Attachment 1)

The new Don River Mouth blends the naturalization of the Lower Don River and flood protection of the Port Lands into a single project. A well-defined flood plain large enough to handle a “Regulatory Flood” and remove 230 ha of land from flood risk is created. Three channel outlets as shown in Attachment 1, will discharge the floodwaters. For minor floods, the main river valley will carry all floodwaters to the Inner Harbour. For larger floods, floodwaters will also spill into the Keating Channel via a weir north of Lake Shore Boulevard. For the largest floods, the Don Greenway will provide a third spillway south to the Ship Channel.

The grade of development lands on both sides of the river will be raised. A flood protection landform will also be constructed on the east side of the Don River, north of Lake Shore Boulevard. Naturalized areas in the new river valley will provide terrestrial, wetland and aquatic habitats. The principal source of water for wetlands in the river valley is Lake Ontario.

The deposit of sediment in the Lower Don River is a natural process due to erosion upstream. The sediment is currently dredged from Keating Channel. A new sediment and debris trap will be created north of Lake Shore Boulevard to prevent silting up of the new valley which could worsen flooding. The dredged material will continue to be disposed at Tommy Thompson Park or will be used as fill.

Lower Don Lands Vision (Attachment 4)

The revitalized Lower Don Lands are conceived as a new urban district of mixed-use communities along the naturalized Don River and Keating Channel. The new mouth of Don at the shore of the Inner Harbour would be its centrepiece. An estimated 13,000 residential units would house a population of 20,000 to 21,000 residents. A range of employment space is also contemplated.

Over 50 ha of green space consolidates the naturalized river, flood zone, wetlands, greenways, promenades and parks into a complex central landscape. A promontory park would project into the Inner Harbour at the new river mouth to take advantage of impressive views of downtown. The park system would provide diverse opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Cherry Street is the planned main access into the Lower Don Lands. It would be re-aligned westward across Keating Channel to increase space between street intersections, allow higher bridge clearances over Keating Channel and avoid pinch points at heritage structures and Gardiner Expressway columns.

Villiers Street would be realigned southward near Don Roadway to connect to Commissioners Street, forming the major east/west street in the neighbourhood south of Keating Channel. The Lake Shore Boulevard bridge over the Don River would be lengthened as the river is to be widened to increase flood flow. Several new bridges and new sanitary, stormwater and water services would be required in order to cross the new river valley. Underground utility ducts are proposed across the river valley to minimize disturbance.

The proposed Queens Quay streetcar line in East Bayfront would be extended east from Parliament Street to Cherry Street and connect with the Cherry Street line being extended south from the West Don Lands to the Ship Channel. On Villiers Street, the streetcar line would ultimately extend across the new river to Commissioners Street. Consistent with the Central Waterfront Plan, the extension of transit to this district should occur during the early stages of development.

Keating Channel Precinct (Attachment 5)

It is anticipated that Keating Channel Precinct will be the first new community to be developed in the Lower Don Lands. Approximately 4,700 housing units are proposed, of which 900 units are “affordable” and 200 units are “low end of market” housing, with an estimated population of 7,500 persons. 170,000 to 200,000 m² of employment space would include offices, businesses and live/work space.

Keating Channel is planned as the central public space for the precinct. It would be the signature location for an outdoor restaurant and entertainment zone due to its canal-like setting, unique in Toronto. Re-use of heritage and cultural resources including the Victory Soya Mills Silos, Essroc Silos and various structures at the Toronto Port Authority Works Yard will give the precinct a distinct identity.

The dominant built form in the precinct would be mid-rise buildings with several high-rise towers. Microclimate is a main shaping force for the precinct plan and is of particular importance due to the site’s exposure to winter winds. Special effort has been made by the design team to ensure that a minimum of five to seven hours a day of sunlight in the spring and fall will be available in major public spaces and streets to provide comfort for pedestrians. Retail uses are proposed along ‘main streets’ on Queens Quay, Lake Shore Boulevard, Cherry Street and in the vicinity of transit stops.

The precinct design responds to the convergence of the rail corridor, the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard, all of which create a relatively narrow band of land north of the Keating Channel. Since the Don Mouth is no longer proposed east of Cherry Street, development is now possible at that location. This will allow a larger new community in the north Lower Don Lands close to downtown and established communities without separation by the river. It will also knit together the revitalized East Bayfront and West Don Lands districts. Based on WT’s work to date, it appears that soil contamination and noise from the Gardiner and rail facilities will not be an impediment to development of the lands.

Transportation

Various existing east/west and north/south transportation and recreational routes are extended into the precinct. In addition, a new pedestrian underpass to the Distillery District at Trinity Street is proposed. The existing Parliament and Cherry Street underpasses would be enlarged to provide space for pedestrians and cyclists, with the Cherry Underpass also accommodating streetcars.

The precinct will be served by transit stops generally within 300 metres of proposed development. The only exception is the northeast corner of the precinct, where the closest transit stop is across the Keating Channel on Villiers Street. Interim streetcar loops are planned on Queen Quay East at Parliament Street and on Villiers Street by the new river.

Affordable Housing

The strategy for delivery of affordable housing in the precinct calls for 20% of the housing units to be affordable rental and 5% to be low-end-of-market. Section 37 agreements will be used to secure the affordable housing. Similar to the requirements for East Bayfront, private owners may provide affordable housing directly, dedicate sufficient land to the City, or provide cash-in-lieu. WT's obligation for affordable housing it delivers is to provide serviced and remediated lands at no cost, in addition to meeting the same obligations as private owners on the lands it owns outright. Ongoing affordability is to be achieved by keeping lands for affordable rental housing in public ownership or control in perpetuity. WT will enter into an agreement with the City to implement the affordable housing strategy for the precinct.

Community Services

An elementary school site relocated from its planned location in East Bayfront will be reserved by WT on its ownership at the east side of the Parliament Slip. The school will serve both the East Bayfront and Keating precincts. The site is an excellent location for the school, offering a prominent setting along the water next to a public park and readily accessible to the community.

Two daycare centres are proposed in the Keating Channel Precinct, one co-located in the school at Parliament Slip and the other integrated in development east of Cherry Street. The proposed recreation facilities in East Bayfront and the West Don Lands are also expected to serve the Keating Precinct. Community services provided by non-government organizations would locate at the base of mixed-use buildings. No libraries are planned in the precinct as a major new facility is proposed in the West Don Lands. Fire stations and emergency medical services facilities are not proposed west of Cherry Street as other stations are located in the vicinity.

Servicing

In the short term, development can connect to the existing sanitary sewer up Cherry Street through the West Don Lands to the 'low level interceptor' trunk sewer. In the long term, a new gravity sanitary sewer is proposed to run east along Commissioners Street towards the Ashbridges Bay Treatment Plant.

A major stormwater inlet is proposed at Cherry Street north of Lake Shore Boulevard due to localized flooding caused by the low elevation at the Cherry Street rail underpass. New stormwater tanks east of Cherry Street would serve both the West Don Lands and northeast Keating Precinct. The stormwater system in East Bayfront will serve the west Keating Precinct. The area of the precinct south of Keating Channel would be serviced later with adjacent lands.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/cc/decisions/2009-09-30-cc40-dd.htm>

(EX33.18) (East Bayfront EA Master Plan)

http://www.waterfrontoronto.ca/explore_projects2/west_don_lands/planning_the_community (West Don Lands Stormwater Quality Facility EA Addendum)

Parks

A parks and open space system is planned to branch off the spine formed by the promenades on both edges of Keating Channel. The park space accommodates passive and active recreation and is linked to Don River Park, Martin Goodman Trail, the water's edge promenades and the Don River trail system. A neighbourhood park beside the proposed school will provide a variety of recreational experiences for school children and area residents. A park underneath the Gardiner Expressway on the north side of Keating Channel would be a venue for events and provide a neighbourhood playground. A bikeway on the north flank offers passive green space connecting major multi-use trails.

Phasing of Development

Development in the north Keating Precinct will be able to proceed ahead of the Don River Mouth as the lands will be removed from the floodplain when the West Don Lands flood protection landform is constructed.

For lands east of Cherry Street, development will need to wait until the Gardiner EA is further advanced and the new Villiers Street is constructed with streetcar service. Development of the lands in the precinct immediately south of Keating Channel would follow completion of the new Don River flood protection and the water's edge public promenade.

Revitalization of the rest of the Lower Don Lands will begin with construction of the new river valley and mouth over a 7 to 10 year period. The phasing of construction is flexible and can be adapted to changing conditions. Further precinct plans and the completion of

infrastructure EAs will be coordinated with the new Don River to provide orderly phasing of the build-out of infrastructure and development. It is expected that full development of new communities in the Lower Don Lands will occur over 30 years, due to the major public works and the large amount of development.

Technical Challenges in the Lower Don Lands

Most of the Lower Don Lands is within the floodplain of the Don River, which extends well beyond this area east through the Port Lands to South Riverdale. The large size of the Lower Don floodplain is due to the flat, low-lying topography of the Port Lands, which lacks a defined valley. A comprehensive grading scheme for excavation and filling is needed to contain flooding within a larger new valley system. Filling alone would result in deeper flood flows and flooding upstream.

Soils are contaminated due to the area's long history of harbour and industrial use, and will need to be treated or disposed. As the lands were created by filling in Ashbridges Bay Marsh and Lake Ontario, the soil contains a variable mix of debris, soil, waste and peat. The fill has a limited ability to support heavy structures such as large buildings and bridges, and the depth of bedrock is deeper than in the Downtown. The soil is waterlogged as groundwater is close to the surface and will flood underground structures.

Opportunity for A 'Carbon Neutral' Community

Inclusion of the Lower Don Lands in the Clinton Climate Positive Program is an opportunity for the City, Ontario and Canada to gain global recognition in the creation of liveable, sustainable and diverse neighbourhoods, and play a leadership role in creating a network of leading edge "climate-positive" communities around the world.

WT's goal for the Lower Don Lands is to aggressively reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve a 'carbon neutral' community. This would be achieved by clean energy, integrated waste and water management, green buildings and reliance on walking, cycling and transit. Strategies may include high efficiency power and water distribution systems, renewable energy production, combined heat and power or cooling, geothermal or ground source heat systems, recycling and recapture of organic waste, greywater systems, on-site stormwater management and energy efficient lighting. A system of standards and metrics are being developed by the Clinton Foundation to measure climate positive outcomes.

The City should support WT's efforts to create a showcase community in the Lower Don Lands which pioneers new sustainability measures that could be used elsewhere. Staff will work with all stakeholders on this initiative.

Consistency with Ongoing EA Studies

The Gardiner Expressway/Lake Shore Boulevard Reconfiguration EA by WT and the City is examining potential changes to the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard from approximately Jarvis Street to east of the Don River. Accordingly, the study area overlaps the Keating Channel Precinct. Since the Keating precinct planning process started well before the Gardiner EA, the current precinct plan is based on the assumption of the Gardiner Expressway remaining in place.

The precinct plan proposes that Lake Shore Boulevard east of Cherry Street be relocated north of the expressway and that space under the expressway be used for a promenade, market and outdoor recreation. Despite these efforts, the Gardiner's structure continues to restrict the room available for new infrastructure in the precinct such as bike paths, streets and bridges as well as public spaces and buildings. The Gardiner EA will provide the opportunity to re-examine such design issues in light of a broader range of options for the Gardiner that include its removal or replacement.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2009/cc/decisions/2009-08-05-cc38-dd.htm>

(EX 33.17)

The Don River and Central Waterfront Class EA by Toronto Water is reviewing methods to intercept overflows of storm and combined sanitary/storm sewers that enter the Don River and Inner Harbour by directing them to an interceptor trunk sewer similar to the systems at the eastern and western beaches.

The EA will recommend how to reduce polluted storm sewage entering the Don River which would help to improve the river's water quality as it flows through the Lower Don Lands. The EA complements the efforts to naturalize the Mouth of the Don River in the Lower Don Lands because better water quality in the Don River will sustain healthier wetlands and higher quality habitat for plants and wildlife. The proposed stormwater system should not have major implications for other initiatives in the Lower Don Lands. Its facilities are located deep underground although access and storage shafts will need to be coordinated with other infrastructure.

<http://www.toronto.ca/civic-engagement/2008/don-river-central-waterfront-july.htm>

Moving from Planning to Implementation

Designing the New River Valley

A major river restoration project like the new Lower Don River will not happen overnight. Flood protection of the Lower Don River was identified thirty years ago in 1980 by the TRCA as its top priority. Naturalization of the Don Mouth was initially proposed by the Task Force to Bring Back the Don nearly twenty years ago in 1991. The EA for the Don Mouth was announced by the government partners as a waterfront initiative a decade ago in 2001.

With such long lead times, it is important to keep advancing the project after completion of the Don Mouth EA. A great deal of project planning, engineering and design is still required before the major capital expenditures upon the start of construction in four to five years. In the meantime, initiation of the design phase of the Don River Mouth should be a priority. This phase would include detailed design of the river, bridges, services and other municipal infrastructure crossing the river, and the preparation of construction staging plans and cost projections.

Protecting the River Right-of-Way

It is essential that a strong policy, regulatory and administrative framework be established to protect the new river valley floodplain from encroachment by development before it is completed in 10 to 15 years. If the new river valley is not delivered as currently proposed, it will put at risk the plans for the Lower Don Lands, and the public investment to that point.

Protection of the 'right-of-way' corridor for the new Don River valley as well as new infrastructure would be achieved in several ways. First, the Lower Don Lands OPA will provide a statutory policy context for consideration of any proposed OPAs, rezonings, land division and development approvals that might affect the river valley. TRCA approvals are required for development within the Don River flood plain, which covers most of the proposed river valley, and would help to assess the implications on the new river. The City, through the Toronto Port Lands Company (TPLC) and the Waterfront Secretariat, should continue to review property leases on TPLC lands to ensure consistency with plans for the river. Other new measures may be required to protect the river right-of-way. Staff is proposing that the Chief Planner and TRCA be requested through planning approvals and issuance of permits to protect the river and infrastructure corridors from encroachment by development.

Funding Design and Construction

The greatest challenge currently facing the Lower Don Lands is to secure capital funding for implementation. As stated in the Financial Impact section, there is no Waterfront funding for the Lower Don Lands Project beyond the ongoing planning and EA phase.

As in the other precincts, an upfront public investment in infrastructure and the public realm is required to kick start the revitalization process and attract private investment. City building initiatives such as the Lower Don Lands will likely rely considerably on public funding. Public costs would be recovered through waterfront land revenues, taxes and development charges. WT estimates that the value of new private development in the Lower Don Lands is over \$11 billion which will greatly exceed the public investment.

The Lower Don Lands Project: Phase 1 (Don River Mouth) should be funded initially as it has a long lead time for implementation, responds to existing flood risk, and will be the catalyst for transformation of the Lower Don Lands over future phases. WT advises that the Lower Don Lands Project has significant economic benefits as it will make approximately 40 ha of land available and more valuable for urban development and protect an additional 190 ha from flooding. The Lower Don Lands Project would also eliminate a potential risk of \$300 to \$500 million in flood damage to nearly 900 existing homes and businesses, consistent with the Province's goal to physically remove developed areas from floodplains.

WT should seek reliable, long term funding of the Lower Don Lands Project. In conjunction with this, WT will be required to submit to the City a comprehensive Business and Implementation Plan addressing capital costs, revenue and expenditures, sources of funding including private sector opportunities, project phasing and land management. This exercise is anticipated to take 1 to 2 years. The City will need to develop a strategy to fund the increased long-term operating costs of the new infrastructure and facilities, as well as address corporate and administrative implications.

Conclusions

The Lower Don Lands will be the next major area of the City's waterfront to be revitalized as downtown Toronto continues to develop. The Lower Don Lands will tie together the other new waterfront communities at East Bayfront and West Don Lands, and open up the vast Port Lands to renewal.

The plan for the Lower Don Lands begins with the successful implementation of flood protection and the new mouth of the Don River. Existing flood risk, if not removed, will restrict future development potential. The alternative is for these lands to languish in an underutilized state or be developed in an ad hoc fashion without a coordinated plan for flood protection, servicing and transit.

Despite significant financial and construction challenges ahead, the long held dream of a naturalized mouth of the Don is one step closer to reality. The proposed longer and larger river valley is an appropriate and necessary solution to protect the Port Lands from flooding, renaturalize the river and provide valuable green space close to downtown.

The Lower Don Lands plan provides a unique identity for the district based on the new estuary for the Don River. Floodplain lands will be transformed into attractive, sustainable new communities, parks and public spaces that will become a major destination on Toronto's waterfront, recognized for progress to counter climate change.

The plans for the Lower Don Lands establish a comprehensive vision, underlying principles and framework to guide the creation of this new city district. They will inform funding requests, business planning and land use and infrastructure approvals. The plans are sufficiently flexible to adapt to changing conditions and to be implemented in phases. Funding will be needed initially for the detailed design of the first phase of the Lower Don Lands Project, the new Don River Mouth.

CONTACT

Jayne Naiman
Acting Project Director
Waterfront Secretariat
jnaiman@toronto.ca
(416) 392-0069

Jamie McEwan
Waterfront Project Manager
Waterfront Secretariat
jmcewan@toronto.ca
(416) 392-8007

SIGNATURE

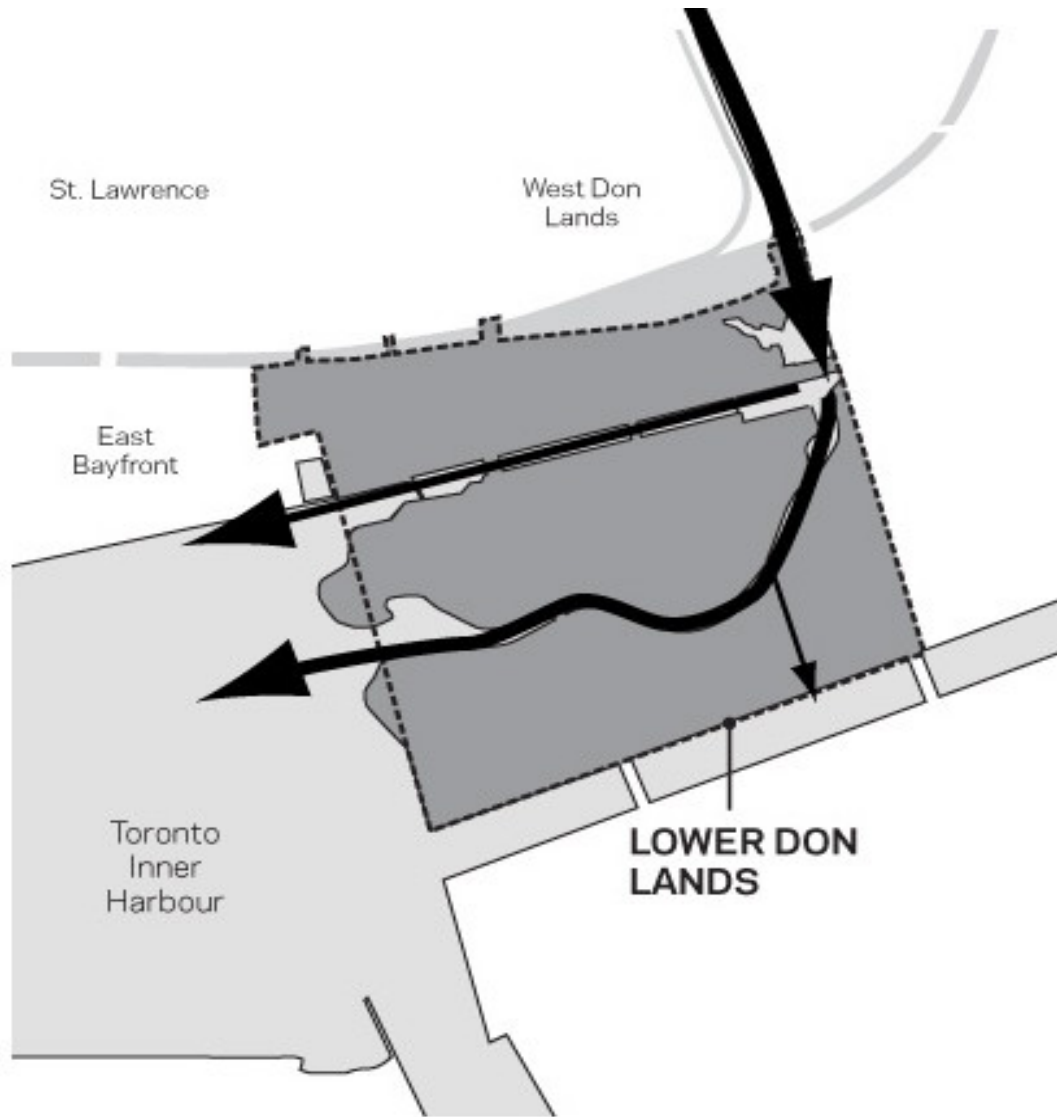
Richard Butts, Deputy City Manager

Attachments:

Attachment 1	New Don River Mouth
Attachment 2	Lower Don Lands
Attachment 3	Keating Channel Precinct
Attachment 4	Lower Don Lands Framework Plan
Attachment 5	Keating Channel Precinct Plan

Attachment 1

New Don River Mouth

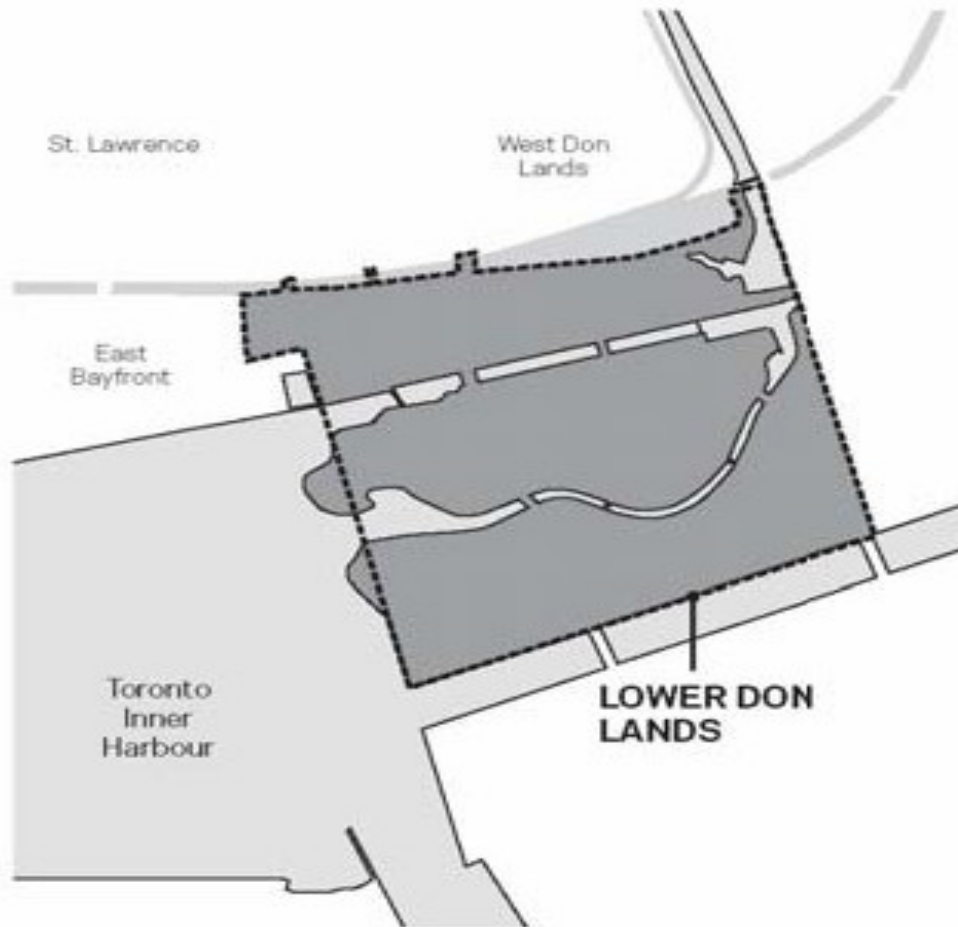


Lower Don Lands Flood Conveyance

Don River predicted flood conveyance under the Regulatory Event.

Attachment 2

Lower Don Lands



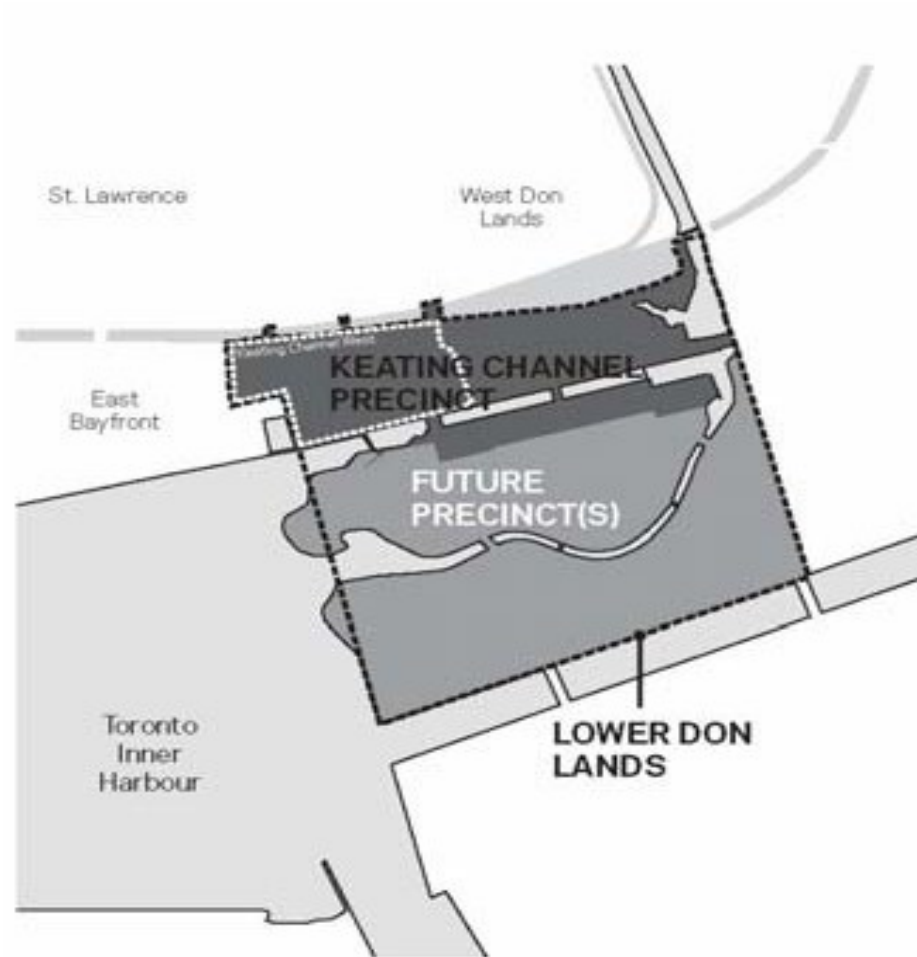
Lower Don Lands Documents

- Framework Plan *
- Official Plan Amendment (OPA)
- Municipal Class EA Master Plan (Phase 1 + 2)

* Non-Statutory

Attachment 3

Keating Channel Precinct



Keating Channel Precinct Documents

- Keating Channel Precinct Plan *
- Keating Channel Urban Design Guidelines *
- Municipal Class EA Master Plan (Phase 3+4)
- Zoning By-law Amendment (for Keating Channel West area)

Attachment 4

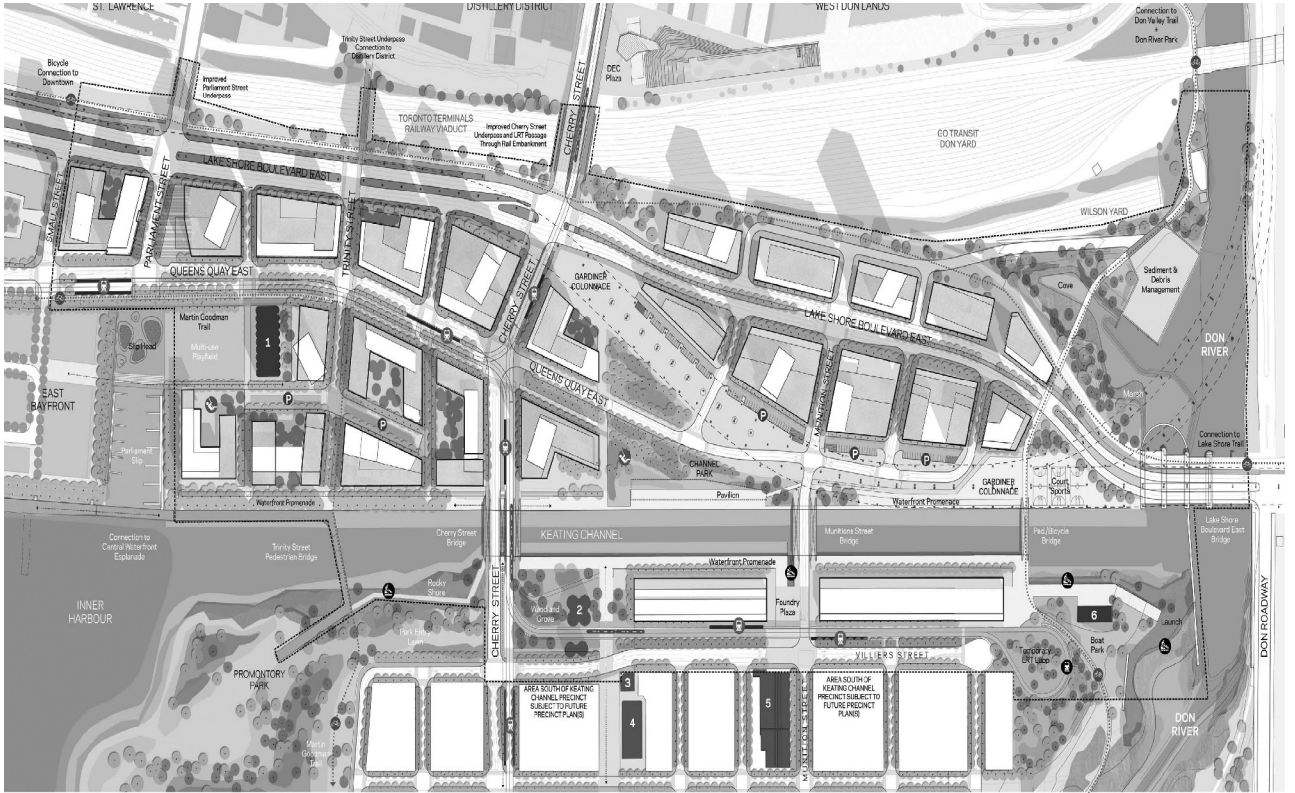
Lower Don Lands Framework Plan



- LEGEND**
- | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| | wooded prospect | | lrt stop | | non-motorized public boat launch |
| | passive use lawn | | bicycle trail | | small boating |
| | multi-use recreation | | school | | party boats |
| | esplanade | | daycare | | court sports |
| | playground | | cultural uses | | |
| | public garden | | library | | |
| | event space | | special commercial | | |
| | water access | | community centre | | |
| | heritage structure | | sports centre | | |

Attachment 5

Keating Channel Precinct Plan



LOWER DON LANDS

KEATING CHANNEL PRECINCT

LEGEND

- TTC (LRT) PLATFORM
- PARKING
- REGIONAL BIKE TRAIL
- NON-MOTORIZED PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH
- PLAYGROUND
- CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES

1. VICTORY SOYA MILLS SILOS
2. ESSROC SILOS
3. CHERRY STREET BANK
4. W.M. MCGILL AND COMPANY
5. QUEEN CITY FOUNDRY
6. HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS STORAGE

