

September 6, 2019

EMAILED [iec@toronto.ca]

Councillor James Pasternak and Members of the
Infrastructure and Environment Committee,
10th Floor, West Tower, City Hall,
100 Queen Street West,
Toronto, Ontario,
M5H 2N2
Attn: Ms. Nancy Martins



Dear Councillor Pasternak and Committee Members:

Re: IE7.8 Toronto Biodiversity Strategy

The Toronto Ravines Revitalization Study (TRRS) group is comprised of University of Toronto Forestry staff, students, and citizen volunteers. It has led the way in studying Toronto's Rosedale ravines, monitoring change, and advocating for ravine remediation <https://torontoravines.org/studydetails/>.

TRRS commends staff on a report well-written, ambitious and compelling. If invited, TRRS would be pleased to serve on Ecosystem Services (ES) Working Group.

However, time is **critical** if Toronto's ravines are to be restored to their natural state. It was acknowledged that Toronto's biodiversity was graded a solid 'D' by TRCA at committee debate July 12, 2018 and that there has been at least three years of developing this Biodiversity Strategy. Given the urgency required to restore our natural heritage, time is of the essence as Japanese Knotweed and Norway Maple grow exponentially. We recommend that the ES Working Group be asked to report back to this Committee and Council in September 2020 latest, with recommendations on how to implement the biodiversity strategy with a budget proposal attached.

Additionally, we believe the work done by the ES Working Group on the Biodiversity Strategy should be integrated with that of the Ravine Strategy, whose implementation is currently underway. You will be reviewing this operational plan for the Ravine Strategy in November and will note the many similarities and redundancies between the two initiatives that need to be reduced to avoid confusion between the two initiatives. We respectfully ask that staff recommendation #2 be amended **in bold** to state:

*"2. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto And Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and external experts, to develop an ecological integrity monitoring, reporting an **implementation and budgetary** framework for Toronto's natural areas ravines through the Ecosystem Services Working Group **reporting back in September, 2020** . This work will build on metrics from existing City and TRCA programs and data for monitoring change in the condition of natural areas and ravines."*

We thank you for your attention.

On behalf of the Toronto Ravines Revitalization Study,

Paul Scrivener