



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### West Don Lands Class EA Master Plan and Front Street Design

<b>Date:</b>	June 12, 2008
<b>To:</b>	Planning & Growth Management Committee
<b>From:</b>	Richard Butts, Deputy City Manager
<b>Wards:</b>	Toronto Centre-Rosedale Ward 28
<b>Reference Number:</b>	<b>P:\2008\Cluster B\WF\pg08006</b>

#### SUMMARY

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The purpose of this report is to seek City Council endorsement for Waterfront Toronto's proposed design modifications to Front Street East, between Cherry Street and Bayview Avenue.

Through the process of developing detailed designs for the new parks and road facilities in the West Don Lands area, Waterfront Toronto has proposed a design modification for Front Street East between Cherry Street and Bayview Avenue. The proposed modification includes replacing the four-lane divided roadway design, separated by a large park-like median, with a two-lane, undivided roadway that includes a wide, park-like boulevard on the north side of the street and parking lay-bys on both sides of the street. The previously approved right-of-way widths will not change.

Waterfront Toronto's rationale for the proposed design changes include significant improvements in the ability to use the wide north boulevard area for park purposes, as opposed to the former centre median area, and improved safety with minimal change in the traffic access and level-of-service characteristics due to the provision of more standard intersection designs. Waterfront Toronto has indicated that these modifications do not require any amendment to the existing Environmental Assessment approvals. However, notification of the proposed design revision has been provided to all stakeholders involved in the West Don Lands Class Environmental Assessment Master Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**The Deputy City Manager whose responsibilities include the waterfront recommends that City Council:**

1. Endorse Waterfront Toronto's proposed modifications to the design of Front Street East between Cherry Street and Bayview Avenue, specifically the reduction of lanes from four to two, and the change in design from a divided roadway to an undivided roadway; and
2. Authorize and direct the appropriate City officials to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

### **Financial Impact**

There are no immediate financial implications to the City resulting from the recommendations in this report.

The City's contribution to the implementation of the West Don Lands precinct, including the costs for the design and construction of the Front Street East between Cherry Street and Bayview Avenue, is funded through the Capital Program for the Waterfront Revitalization Initiative. Funding for the West Don Lands precinct will be updated as required through the annual Capital Budget process, and through the annual tri-government review and approval of the Long-Term Funding Plan for the Initiative.

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

### **DECISION HISTORY**

At its meeting on May 17, 18 and 19, 2005, City Council adopted, as amended, Clause No. 1 of Report No. 5 of the Policy and Finance Committee, entitled "West Don Lands Precinct Plan and Environmental Assessment Master Plan", which, in part, endorsed Waterfront Toronto's proposed redesign of Front Street East between Cherry Street and Bayview Avenue. The full clause can be viewed at:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2005/agendas/council/cc050517/pof5rpt/cl001.pdf>

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Waterfront Toronto, in consultation with City of Toronto staff, has been preparing the detailed designs for the infrastructure elements of the West Don Lands area as described in the West Don Lands Precinct Plan and Environmental Assessment Master Plan. This process has resulted in a more detailed understanding of the physical and operational feasibility of infrastructure elements, the interactions between some of these elements,

and the identification of improved designs to better achieve the overall goals of this ambitious redevelopment plan.

Through this process, Waterfront Toronto has identified potential improvements to be gained through a modified design for Front Street East between Cherry Street and Bayview Avenue. Although Waterfront Toronto has determined that the proposed design modification does not require any amendment to the existing Environmental Assessment approvals, it does require the endorsement of City Council.

## **COMMENTS**

The design for Front Street East previously endorsed by City Council through the West Don Lands Class EA Master Plan is shown in Attachment 1. Between Cherry Street and the first new local street (now referred to as Street “D”) approximately 75 metres east of Cherry Street, Front Street East includes one through lane in each direction and a westbound left-turn lane at Cherry Street, all provided in the existing right-of-way of approximately 20 metres. Between Street “D” and Bayview Avenue, Front Street East is a four-lane, divided roadway with a 16.6 metre centre median, all provided within a 42 metre right-of-way.

Through the course of preparing the detailed design for this section of Front Street East and for Bayview Avenue, the following issues were identified:

- The park features envisioned for the wide centre median would be under utilized because its location between traffic lanes would make it less accessible and less desirable for potential users;
- The divided roadway design would require more curbing and more storm sewer infrastructure, making it more costly than an undivided roadway design;
- The requirement to transition between the divided and undivided designs at Street “D” would limit the accessibility of Street “D” from Front Street East to right-in/right-out only, and prevent north-south through movements at the intersection;
- Turning movements at the two other local streets intersecting Front Street East would be problematic due to the wide centre median; and
- Traffic control signal operations at the Bayview Avenue intersection would be more complex due to the centre median, resulting in lower intersection capacity and difficulties for pedestrians.

To address these issues, Waterfront Toronto developed an alternative design for Front Street East which is shown in Attachment 2. This revised design maintains the previously approved right-of-way widths, and also maintains the same basic cross section for Front Street between Cherry Street and Street “D”. East of Street “D”, Front Street is modified from a four-lane, divided roadway to a two-lane, undivided roadway with lay-by parking on both sides of the street. In addition, the roadway is located asymmetrically within the 42 metre right-of-way to permit the creation of a wide, park-like boulevard on the north side of the street.

In terms of the traffic lane arrangements, Waterfront Toronto's proposal essentially maintains the current situation on Front Street East, where a single traffic lane plus parking is provided in each direction. To assess the potential impacts of this revision from what was proposed in the Master Plan, Waterfront Toronto conducted a supplementary traffic analysis which, in part, built on new information provided through the West Don Lands Transit Class EA Study that developed the design for the new transit facility on Cherry Street. The findings from this supplementary analysis include the following:

- By maintaining the previously proposed cross section on Front Street East at Cherry Street, there is no projected change in traffic level-of-service at this intersection;
- Due to the very low volume of eastbound right-turning vehicles projected for the Front Street East and Bayview Avenue intersection (approximately 25 vehicles out of a total of approximately 575 eastbound vehicles), the projected impact on the level-of-service at the Front Street East and Bayview Avenue intersection will be minor; and
- Due to the capacity constraints at the intersections with Cherry Street and Bayview Avenue, which are the main access points to the West Don Lands, a single traffic lane per direction on Front Street East will be adequate to accommodate the projected traffic volumes.

City Planning and Transportation Services Division staffs generally concur with these findings. However, it is recognized that these conclusions rely on both the provision of two-way, north-south "Stop" control at the intersections of Front Street East with the three new local streets in the West Don Lands, and that the east-west left-turning volumes at these local intersections will be relatively minor. Staff will monitor the operating conditions on Front Street East during the build out of the West Don Lands developments, and may, if warranted, recommend peak period traffic control measures to ensure the proposed operation is successful.

## **Public Involvement**

The preparation of the detailed designs for Front Street East and other infrastructure elements in the West Don Lands has been proceeding in consultation with key representatives of the communities surrounding the West Don Lands area. Waterfront Toronto has received support for the proposed design revisions through this process. Notwithstanding, Waterfront Toronto has notified all stakeholders involved in the Master Plan process of the intended design change.

## **Next Steps**

If endorsed by City Council, Waterfront Toronto, in consultation with City staff and local community representatives, will continue to prepare the detailed design for Front Street East according to the recommended revision. Waterfront Toronto anticipates completion of the detailed design process and construction of Front Street by 2011.

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## **SIGNATURE**

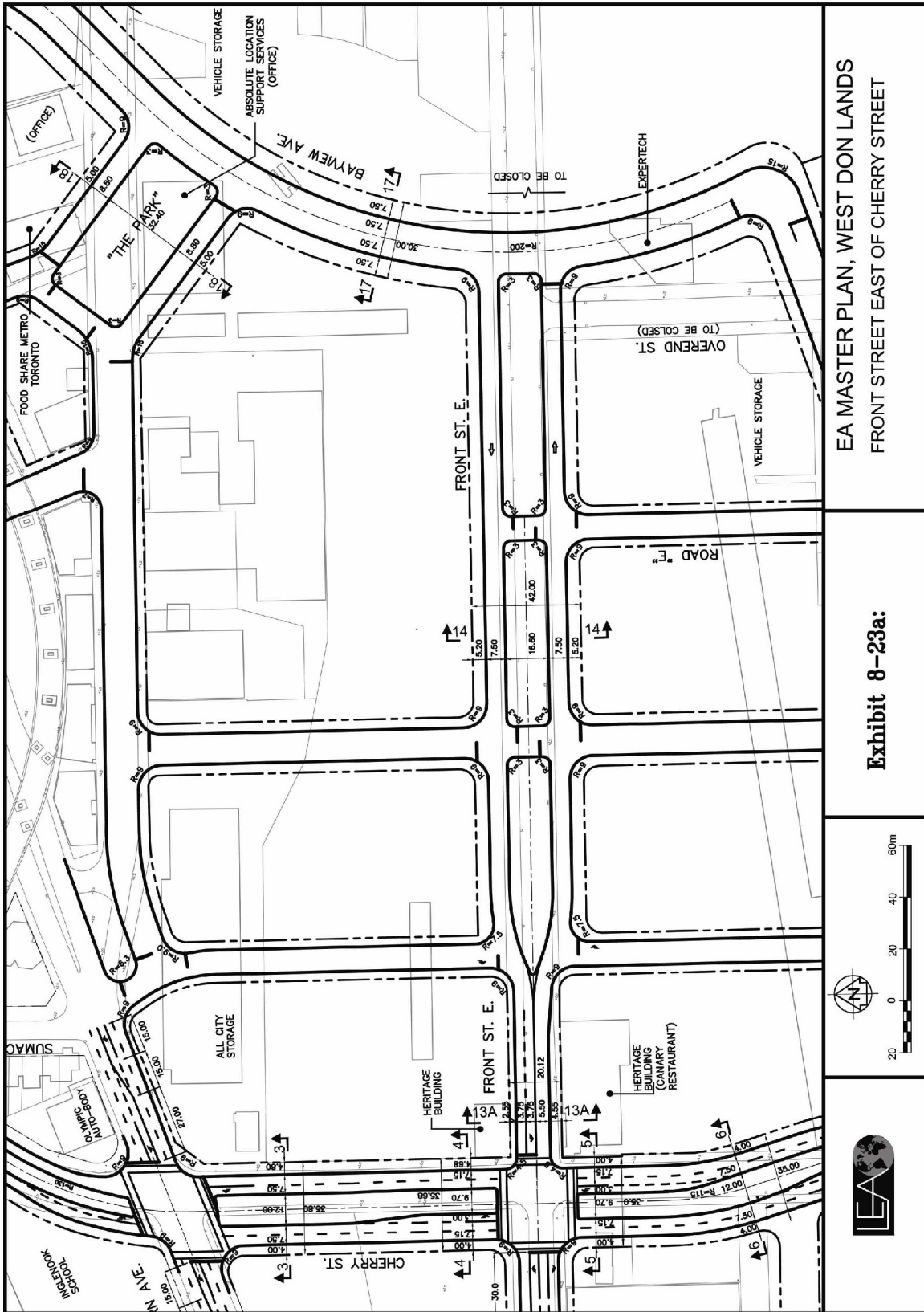
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Richard Butts, Deputy City Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 - Front Street East Design from West Don Lands EA Master Plan  
Attachment 2 - Proposed Revised Front Street East Design

Attachment 1 – Front Street East Design from West Don Lands EA Master Plan



Attachment 2 – Proposed Revised Front Street East Design

