April 8, 2013

To: Toronto and East York Community Council
RE: West Don Lands Parks Naming -“Don River Park” Naming Competition and Lawren Harris Square

SUMMARY:

When “Don River Park”, the spectacular new waterfront park in the West Don Lands, opens this summer it will transform a former industrial site into a much needed public greenspace. Located between Bayview Avenue and the GO/CN railroad lines, from King Street to the rail corridor in the south, this 7.3 hectare (18 acre) park will become the heart of the new West Don Lands community.

Don River Park was selected as a working name for the park during the design phase because of its location in the West Don Lands and proximity to the Don River. To encourage public involvement in the revitalization of the waterfront, it is proposed that a park name be chosen through a public competition process. The goal is to select a name that reflects the park’s unique setting on Toronto’s waterfront in the heart of what will become one of Canada’s newest, most technologically advanced and sustainable communities.

The competition will be led by Waterfront Toronto in association with local media outlet “The Grid”, an online and print magazine, and will feature two key components: an online submissions period followed by a public voting process. A selection committee representing the City, Waterfront Toronto, Toronto Parks, The Grid and a variety of key stakeholders will be established to vet the publicly submitted park names prior to the voting period. Their deliberations would respect the City's parameters for naming parks and would result in a shortlist of three to five suitable park names. At that point, the public will then have an opportunity to select a final park name (from the approved short list) during the online voting period. Formal approval of the selected park name would then be sought from Toronto and East York Community Council.

At the same time, confirmation is being sought on the naming of another new Park bounded by Lawren Harris Square and Bayview Avenue as "Lawren Harris Square". In June 2006, City Council requested the West Don Lands Committee, Heritage Toronto and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority establish a Heritage Naming Committee to recommend the naming of the streets and other sites on the development, including, but not limited to, parks and schools to capture the history of the community. Lawren Harris was a Canadian painter and member of the Group of Seven. His association with Toronto and the proximity of the park to
the naturalized landscape of Don River Park were considered appropriate reasons for commemoration. The West Don Lands Committee has reaffirmed the recommendation at its recent meetings since the initial proposal in 2006.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That Toronto and East York Community Council:

1. Authorize a public competition to select the name for "Don River Park" located in the West Don Lands neighbourhood, between Bayview Avenue and the GO/CN railroad lines, from King Street to the rail corridor in the south, with the judging criteria respecting the City's parameters for naming parks;

2. Direct the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report back to Toronto and East York Community Council on the results of the public competition to formally name the park.

3. Direct the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to report back, at the same time as the results of the public competition for Don River Park, on the official naming of River Square to Lawren Harris Square, respecting the City's parameters for naming parks.