

Lower Don Trail – Access, Environment + Art Master Plan

**Presentation to Parks & Environment Committee
May 20th, 2014**

THE MASTER PLAN IN CONTEXT

- **Intensification** of Lower Don Valley neighbourhoods will bring estimated 80,000 new residents within the next twenty years.
- Need to improve **environmental protection** and provide better **access & connections** within and to the Don River Valley Lands
- Consider possibilities for **public art** in the lower Don River valley lands.
- To incorporate all existing studies, plans and initiatives in the study area.

STUDY PARTNERS

- **LEAD:** Parks, Forestry & Recreation (NECP)
- **INTERNAL SUPPORT:** Transportation, Cycling Infrastructure, Culture, City Planning, Urban Design, TRCA.
- **EXTERNAL PARTNERS:** Evergreen, Waterfront Toronto, Metrolinx
- **CONSULTANT:** DTAH (Lead Consultant), Aecom, Public Space Workshop, LURA, Andrew Davies Design, SPH Planning + Consulting

KEY FINDINGS

Environment Strategy

- Highly significant natural space in Toronto
- Continue ongoing restoration efforts
- Consider restoring the snow dump site as a new green space
- Connect valley to 'Green Streets' with plantings to extend the valley, especially in the urbanizing Narrows

Existing Ecological Communities

- Forest (>60% Mature Tree Cover)
- Woodland (35-60% Mature Tree Cover)
- Savannah (15-35% Mature Tree Cover)
- Thicket / Meadow (<25% Woody Cover, Dry)
- Marsh / Swamp (<25% Woody Cover, Moist/Wet)
- Manicured (Turf/Lawn)
- Green Streets

Developed from Toronto Region Conservation Authority Vegetation Community Categorization (2013)



KEY FINDINGS

Access Strategy




- Access is a major challenge
- Create a number of new entrance points
- Connecting structures (bridges, stairs) should be installed
- Wayfinding system should be enhanced
- Parallel on-street routes should be highlighted



KEY FINDINGS

Art Strategy

- High priority locations for major permanent works to be considered
- Temporary sites for revolving works
- Incorporate art into existing structures
- Interpretation points/kiosks with art incorporated

-  Permanent Installations
-  Revolving Temporary Installations
-  Art and Design: Bridges, Structures
-  Interpretation: Wayfinding and Branding
-  Street Art / Urban Installation
-  Art Train: Special Events



RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

SITE-SPECIFIC

- A1 New Green Space on Former Snow Dump
- A2 Lower Don Trail to Beltline Trail Bridge (west)
- A3.1 Pottery Road Bridge
- A3.2 Lower Don Trail to Beltline Trail Bridge (east)
- A3.3 Lower Don Trail to New Green Space (snow dump) Bridge
- A3.4 Existing Bridge Crossing Realignment (Riverdale Pedestrian Bridge)
- A4 Belleville Underpass Improvements
- A5 Trail stops / Observation Points
- A6.1 Bayview Multi Use Path (Phase 1)
- A6.2 Bayview Multi Use Path (Phase 2)
- A7.1 Gerrard Stairs
- A7.2 Dundas Stairs
- A8 Bayview On-Ramp Walkways
- A9.1 Broadview Streetscape Improvements
- A9.2 River Streetscape Improvements
- A10 Rosedale Valley Road Intersection Improvements
- A11 Narrows Trail Widening, Surface Improvements and Art Fence

NON-SITE-SPECIFIC

- B1 Movement limitations
- B2 Wayfinding & Interpretive System

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE EXPLORATION:

- C1 Future At-Grade Rail Crossings
- C2 Todmorden Mills Trail Extension/Underpass
- C3 New Green Space On Saltdome Site
- C4 Castle Frank Link
- C5 Rosedale Valley Bridge
- C6 Riverdale Trail
- C7 Eastern Avenue Bridge Walkway And Stairs
- C8 West Don Lands - South Of Eastern Bridge



CURRENT RFP



POTTERY RD. BRIDGE & CONNECTION (A 3.1)

BAYVIEW MULTI-USE PATH
(A 6.1)

LOWER DON TRAIL
CONDITION AUDIT

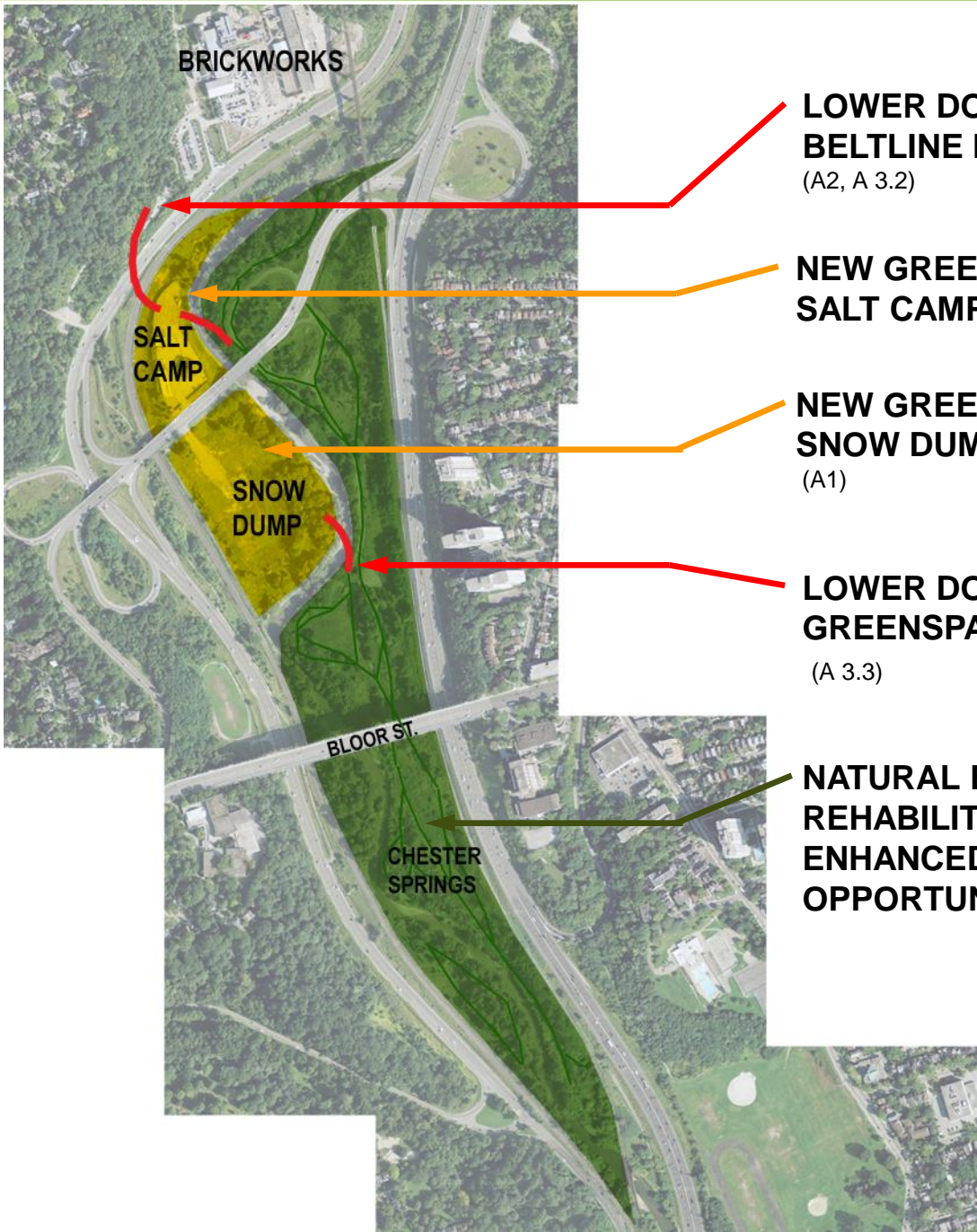
BELLEVILLE UNDERPASS
(A 4)

DUNDAS & GERRARD STAIRCASES (A 7.1 & 7.2)

LOWER DON TRAIL
WIDENING, SURFACE IMPROVEMENTS
& ART FENCE (A 11)



OTHER
POTENTIAL
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR
STUDY



**LOWER DON TRAIL TO
BELTLINE BRIDGE**
(A2, A 3.2)

**NEW GREEN SPACE ON
SALT CAMP SITE (C3)**

**NEW GREEN SPACE ON
SNOW DUMP SITE**
(A1)

**LOWER DON TRAIL TO NEW
GREENSPACE BRIDGE**
(A 3.3)

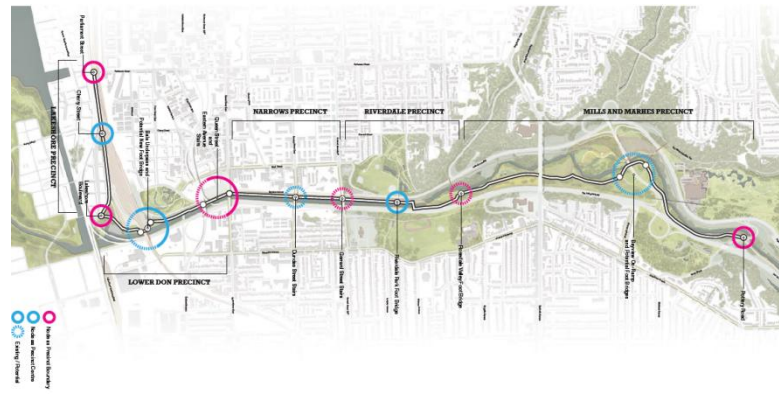
**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
REHABILITATION &
ENHANCED USER
OPPORTUNITIES**

Evergreen Investment Partnership

Phase One: Raise \$5 million in donations from individuals (pre Pan-Am / Para Pan Am Games)

Strategy:

- Launch “Ribbon Campaign” with a \$5 million fundraising target
- During this “kick off” phase, garner 5-10 donors who would ideally pledge minimum of \$500,000 in contributions each
- The \$5 million would be split 50-50 between the City and Evergreen
- City's portion directed to Lower Don capital improvements
- Evergreen's portion allocated to temporary art, special events, nature and heritage programming on the trail, public awareness, community engagement, and campaign costs including promotion and donor recognition.



Evergreen Opportunity

Benefits to Partnering with Evergreen include:

- Resources to raise funds for City priorities
- Skilled, competent partners with a track record in procuring private funders
- Existing Evergreen donors already indicating preliminary interest in the project
- Understanding of environmental and conservation issues
- Ability for Evergreen funding to complement current City projects in the Lower Don Trail area that are presently in process

A Partnership Agreement with Evergreen will address:

- Clarity on projects eligible for fundraising
- Who can be approached
- Donor Recognition
- Compliance with City policy
- How the funds will be managed, including reporting and accountability
- Programming and publicity
- City approval processes at key phases in the project execution
- Term of agreement and options for renewal

NEXT STEPS:

- Lower Don Valley Access Improvements contract, for detailed design and construction administration, has been awarded to DTAH.
- Construction to commence in fall 2014. Repairs to trail south of Riverdale foot bridge required for safety & liability.
- Lower Don Trail Master Plan is available online, and a link is available via toronto.ca/parks/trails.
- Negotiate partnership agreement with Evergreen upon Committee and Council approval.