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
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
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 Salt dome 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
OTHER POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY

- NEW GREEN SPACE ON SALT CAMP SITE (C3)
- NEW GREEN SPACE ON SNOW DUMP SITE (A1)
- LOWER DON TRAIL TO BELTLINE BRIDGE (A2, A 3.2)
- LOWER DON TRAIL TO NEW GREENSPACE BRIDGE (A 3.3)
- NATURAL ENVIRONMENT REHABILITATION & ENHANCED USER OPPORTUNITIES
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.