

Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee: Final Outcomes

Date:	June 3, 2014
To:	Public Works & Infrastructure Committee
From:	Executive Director, Engineering & Construction Services
Wards:	Ward 30 (Toronto-Danforth) and Ward 32 (Beaches – East York)
Reference Number:	P:\2014\Cluster B\TEC\PW14036 (AFS#19706)

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide: (1) the status of the two capped areas along Lake Shore Boulevard East, which were the subject of remediation activities after the dismantling of the eastern portion of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway was completed in 2001; (2) a mechanism for further monitoring and reporting requirements on the affected areas; and (3) an implementation plan and timeline for the installation of information signage near the capped areas. The report also highlights the need to ensure that all documents related to the mitigation of soil contamination in these areas remain publicly available.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director of Engineering & Construction Services recommends that:

1. City Council formally thank the South Riverdale Environmental Liaison Committee for their participation in the Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee;
2. City Council accept the 2009 Aqua Terre Solutions and the 2010 Terrapex Environmental reports as the final soil and groundwater monitoring reports regarding the capped Areas "A" and "B" (as shown in Figure 1) necessary to complete the environmental requirements of the 1999-2002 Gardiner East Dismantling Project;

3. City Council direct Transportation Services and Toronto Transit Commission staff to continue to ensure that the recommendations for long-term (perpetual) inspections and repair of the soil caps in Areas "A" and "B" in the City's rights-of-way and within lands under the Toronto Transit Commission's operational control are conducted annually;
4. City Council direct the appropriate staff to ensure that all relevant documents and materials associated with the remediation of contaminated soils in the areas identified as a result of the dismantling of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway at Lake Shore Boulevard East are publicly available at the Jones Branch of the Toronto Public Library, located at 118 Jones Avenue; and
5. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services to erect information signage in proximity to Area "A" by October 2014 and Area "B" by the spring of 2015, based on the proposal submitted by Councillor Fletcher contained in Figure 2 of this report.

Financial Impact

The construction and installation of the information signage (up to five (5) sites along the pedestrian and cycling paths) will cost approximately \$5,000.00. Funding for this project is available in the 2014 Capital Budget and 2015-2023 Capital Plan for Transportation Services (CTP714-27 Signs and Markings Asset Management).

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of June 9, 10 and 11, 1999, City Council approved the dismantling of the Gardiner Expressway east of the Don River. A copy of the Council decision can be found at: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/1999/minutes/council/appa/cc990609/ud8rpt.htm> (Clause 4 of UEDCR No. 8).

At its meeting of July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002, City Council adopted a remediation approach for the contaminated soils on the F.G. Gardiner East Dismantling Project in order to complete the sidewalk, bicycle path, walkway, landscaping and public art. This approach included the establishment of a community-based soil monitoring sub-committee, known as the Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee (GECSMRC), under the South Riverdale Environmental Liaison Committee. In addition, Council requested that signage be installed describing: (1) project history; (2) the soil cap; and (3) monitoring requirements. Prior to production and installation, the signage was to be created in consultation with the Ward Councillor. A copy of the Council decision can be found at: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2002/agendas/council/cc020730/wks9rpt/cl005.pdf>

At its meeting of May 14, 2014, the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee requested the General Manager, Transportation Services, to report to the June 18, 2014 Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting providing:

1. An updated report on the current status of the two capped Areas "A" and "B", including any further monitoring requirements or MOE provisions;
2. Determine the mechanism for further reporting requirements on these affected areas;
3. Relevant materials related to the soil mitigation in these areas remain publically available at the Jones Library; and
4. An implementation plan and timeline for the signage to be installed.

A copy of the Committee decision can be found at:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.PW31.23>

BACKGROUND

In May 2001, the dismantling of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway East, east of the Don Roadway, was completed together with the construction of access ramps between the new end of the elevated expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard. In December 2001, the reconstruction of Lake Shore Boulevard from the Don Roadway to Leslie Street was completed, leaving construction of sections of sidewalk, a pedestrian walkway, and bicycle path; and the installation of landscaping and public art as the only remaining components.

The dismantling project identified contaminated soils in the roadway at two locations, referred to as Area "A" and Area "B", as shown in Figure 1. Area "A" is located within the Lake Shore Boulevard right-of-way. Area "B" is located within the Leslie Street right-of-way and within lands that are operationally maintained by the Toronto Transit Commission as part of their Ashbridges Bay Fleet Light Rail Vehicle Maintenance and Storage Facility.

The presence of the contaminated soils was identified in December 2001, and at that time further work was suspended until a contaminant management plan could be developed and implemented.

In June 2002, City Council approved funding and City staff undertook the development of a contaminant management plan using the Site Specific Risk Assessment process approved by the Ministry of the Environment. Development of the plan was assisted by external technical experts with specialized knowledge about remediation and control of contaminated soils.

The Site Specific Risk Assessment process resulted in a contaminant management plan comprised of:

- Removal of heavily contaminated soils;
- Replacement of the removed soils with clean (uncontaminated) soil;
- Covering both areas with clean soil as a "capping material" on top of the remaining soils; and

- Implementation of a monitoring program to ensure there was no leakage from either area.

As part of the monitoring program, Council requested the participation of the South Riverdale Environmental Liaison Committee. Council also determined the need for signage in the affected area.

The South Riverdale Environmental Liaison Committee was set up in 1983 as a forum for area residents to share information and concerns about environmental issues in South Riverdale with government and local planning officials, as well as industry and elected representatives. This Committee established a sub-committee, the Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee, with a mandate to comment on the management and monitoring of the soils in Areas "A" and "B".

City staff maintained regular contact with the Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee for the purpose of: (1) discussing soil remediation and management efforts; (2) reporting on the final soil and groundwater monitoring reports; and (3) developing appropriate language and identifying locations for installation of signage.

COMMENTS

Status of the Capped Areas "A" and "B"

Between 2001 and 2010, the City hired independent technical experts to monitor the soil and groundwater at Areas "A" and "B", and shared the results with the Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee. The final environmental monitoring was conducted in 2009. Based on the information and recommendations received from the independent technical experts at that time, the City concluded that the:

- Soil quality of the engineered cap met the Ministry of the Environment's Generic Table 3 Site Condition Standards for parkland sites (coarse soils) and that the public was not at risk from the underlying soil conditions; and
- Groundwater quality met the Ministry of the Environment's Generic Table 3 Site Condition Standards and that there were no risks or hazards to the public associated with the groundwater.

Based on the above information, the City determined that: (1) further environmental monitoring of Areas "A" and "B" was no longer required; and (2) the Areas "A" and "B" did not pose a significant risk to public health, as long as the soil caps are maintained. The City, through Transportation Services and the Toronto Transit Commission, is aware of the need to inspect and maintain the soil caps. Provided that the vegetative covers are kept in place and that no unauthorized excavation occurs, there is no significant risk of erosion that might expose contaminants in the underlying soils.

All data collected to date has demonstrated that Areas "A" and "B" continue to be safe for public use. Long-term (perpetual care) requirements include annual inspection, repairs if necessary, and documentation. These long-term requirements are consistent with current Ministry of the Environment requirements.

In 2011, City staff presented their final reports to the Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee. The reports stated that the caps were working well and the area continues to be safe.

Recent Toronto Transit Commission construction of the Ashbridges Bay Fleet Light Rail Vehicle Maintenance and Storage Facility and the adjacent roadways is being done in accordance with Transportation Services permits that specify conditions to safeguard workers and the public. The Toronto Transit Commission will reinstate the caps in Areas "A" and "B" when they complete their project. They will also conduct an annual inspection of the cap within that portion of Area "B" that is under their operational control.

Mechanism for Further Monitoring and Reporting Requirements

The monitoring and reporting requirements are as follows:

1. Transportation Services will continue to inspect and manage Areas "A" and "B", in the City's rights-of-way as part of their regular road operations and permitting process;
2. Toronto Transit Commission will continue to inspect and manage those lands within Area "B" that are under their operational control; and
3. No further soil and groundwater monitoring, analysis or reporting is necessary.

Public Availability of Environmental Reports Related to Soil Management

The following documents are available to the public:

1. Paper copies of the 2009 Aqua Terre Solutions and the 2010 Terrapex Environmental reports are available at the Jones Branch of the Toronto Public Library located at 118 Jones Avenue; and
2. Electronic copies of the 2009 Aqua Terre Solutions and the 2010 Terrapex Environmental reports will be available on the City's website.

Implementation Plan and Timeline for Signage Installation

The implementation plan and timeline for signage installation is as follows:

1. Transportation Services will construct and install the signage at up to five (5) sites along the public paths, in consultation with the Ward Councillor, as proposed in Figure 2;
2. Transportation Services will provide funds for the signage using Capital Budget account CTP714-27 (Signs and Markings Asset Management) to an upset limit of \$5,000.00;
3. Signage in Area A is expected to be installed by October 2014; and
4. Signage in Area B will be installed when Toronto Transit Commission completes their Light Rail Vehicle Maintenance and Storage Facility project, which is anticipated to be in the spring of 2015.

This report has been discussed with and concurrence has been obtained from Transportation Services.

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ATTACHMENTS

Figure 1 - Map of Areas "A" and "B"
Figure 2 - Proposed Signage for Areas "A" and "B"

Figure 1: Map of Areas "A" and "B"

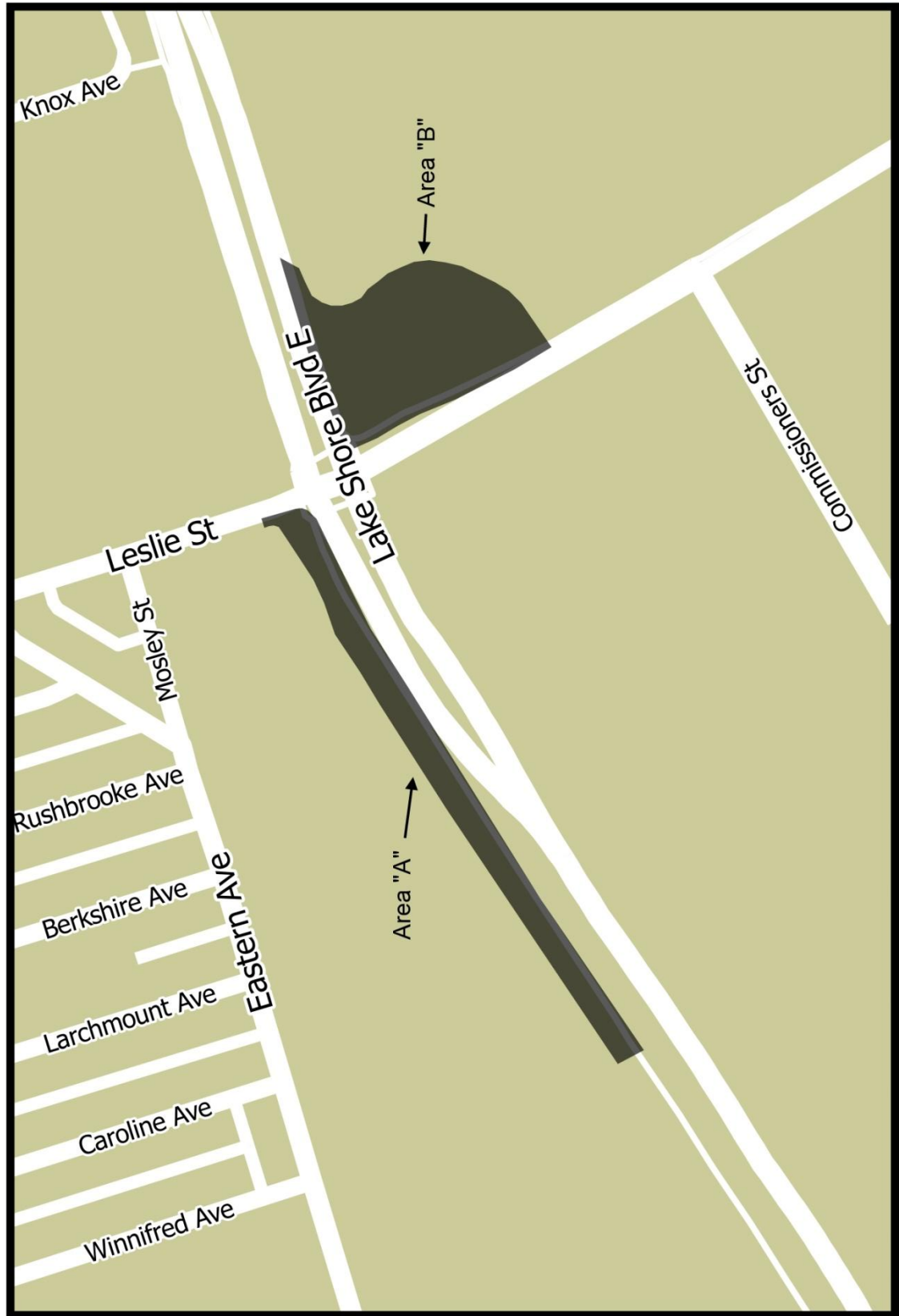


Figure 2: Proposed Signage for Areas "A" and "B"

Between 1999 and 2001, the eastern portion of the elevated Gardiner Expressway was demolished. Efforts by local residents resulted in this strip of land being transformed for walking, cycling and public art. The community-led Gardiner East Contaminated Soil Monitoring and Review Committee worked with the Department of Public Health and the City of Toronto.

Contamination levels of soil and groundwater on the northwest and southeast corners exceeded provincial guidelines.

The City of Toronto acted in accordance with the provincially approved site-specific risk assessment (SSRA) process. The contaminated soil was left and capped with a layer of clean soil. Later it was zoned as parkland.

Environmental damage puts a burden on future generations. This area requires inspection in perpetuity (forever). In order to reduce exposure to contaminated soil, the groundcover on the boulevard must be kept in good condition.

Please report disturbances to the ground cover to the City by calling 311.

For further information, please contact the South Riverdale Community Health Centre.