



RAIL DECK PARK

John Livey, Deputy City Manager Cluster B
Executive Committee September 22, 2016



Existing Rail Corridor



Image by Public Work



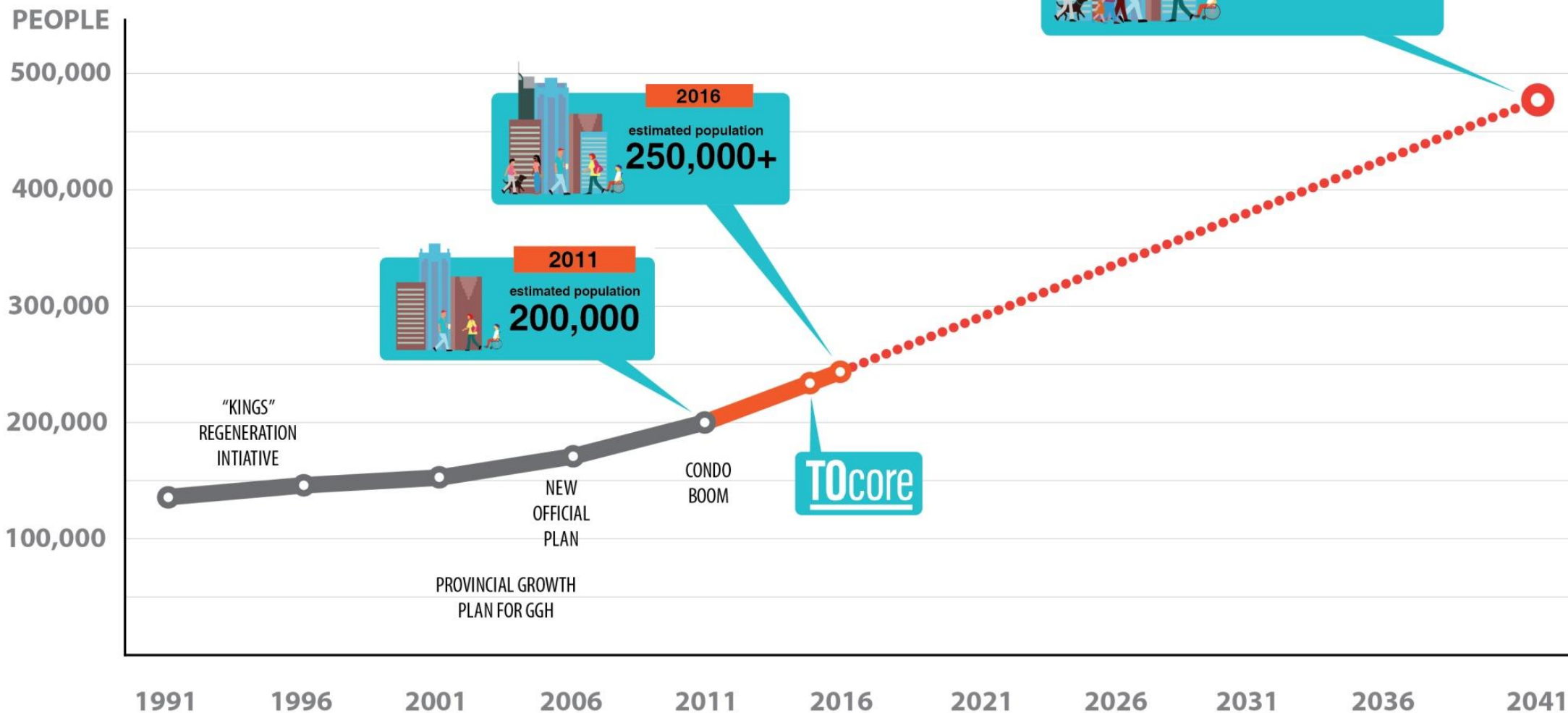
Rail Deck Park Vision



Image by Public Work



Downtown is Growing





Parkland Needs

- Toronto's high growth areas, including Downtown, have low levels of park provision compared to the city-wide average.
- Parks in the downtown are some of the most high-profile and heavily used in the city, serving a daytime population of 830,000+ residents, workers and visitors.
- Rail Deck Park will be a destination park space accessible to residents across the city.
- Rail Deck Park will assist in addressing growth-related park needs in the downtown.



Parkland Acquisition

- Section 42 of the *Planning Act* enables municipalities to acquire new parkland as a condition of approving development through conveyance of land or cash-in-lieu (CIL) payments.
- Toronto collected \$465M in CIL payments between 2006 and 2015.
- **Across the city**, parkland dedication requirements are 2% of the site for commercial or industrial uses and 5% of the site for all other uses, including residential uses.
 - These funds will continue to be equally allocated to local and citywide parkland needs going forward.
- **In parkland deficient areas**, such as Downtown, an additional dedication (i.e. “alternative rate”) is calculated at a rate of 0.4 ha/300 units.
 - The alternative rate is capped at 10% of the total site value for sites less than 1 ha. (Its capped at 15% for sites 1-5 ha and 20% for greater than 5 ha.)
 - The Rail Deck Park work plan will consider opportunities to enhance “alternative rate” provisions to benefit parkland provision in all growth areas in Toronto.



Precedent Decking Projects



Precedent Projects

Size

Cost per acre

Millennium Park, Chicago

24 acres (100% open space)

\$33M

Hudson Yards, New York City

26 acres (50% open space)

\$77M

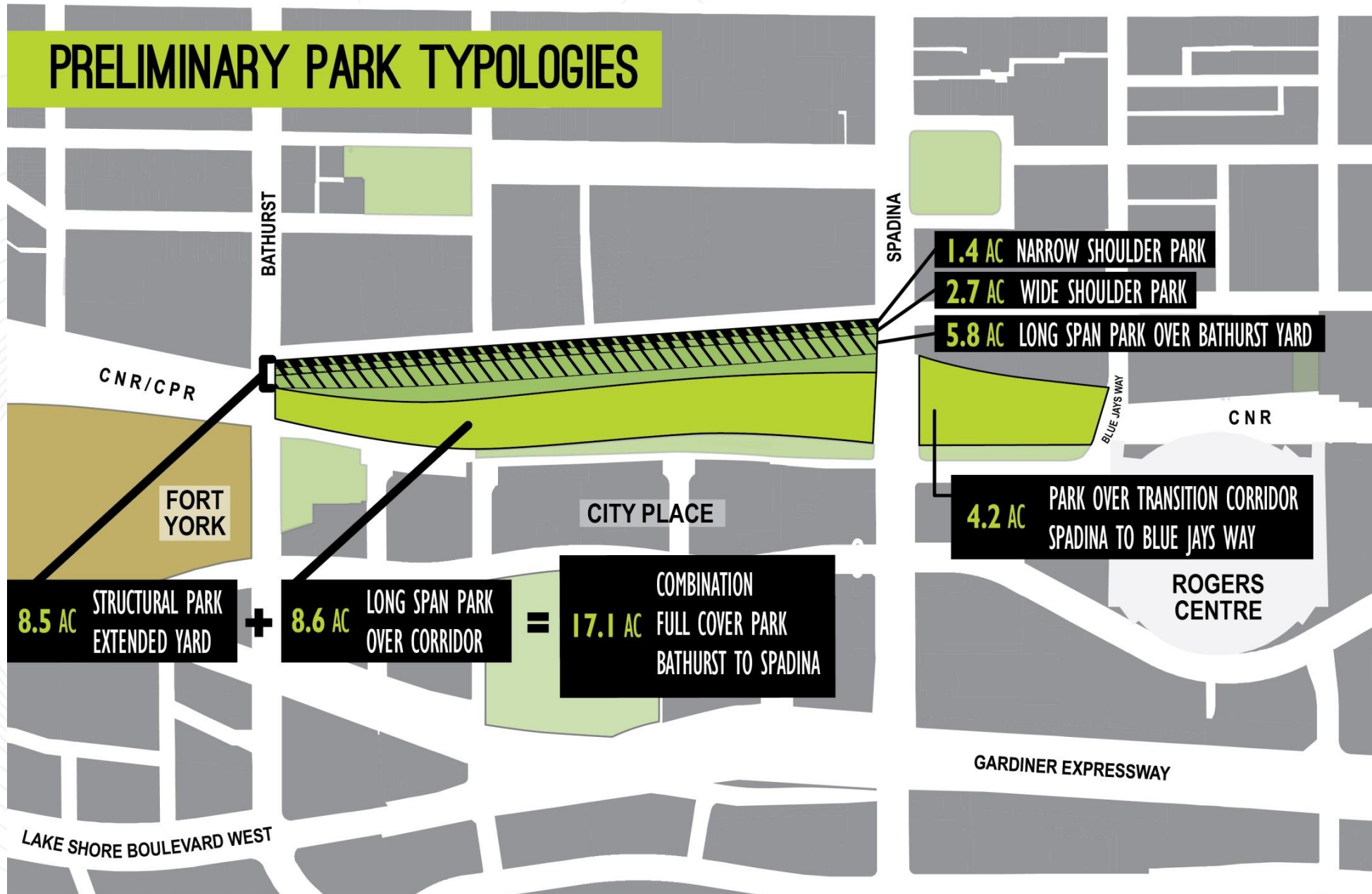
Manhattan West, New York City

5 acres (1.5 acre park space)

\$86M



PRELIMINARY PARK TYPOLOGIES





Preliminary Park Typologies

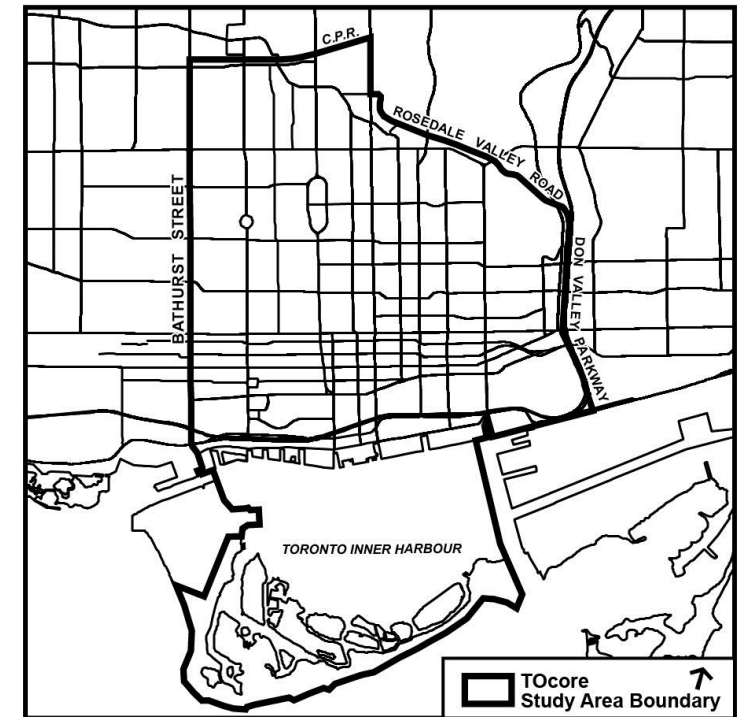
Typology	Size	Preliminary Estimate /Acre*
Narrow Shoulder Park	1.4 acres	\$4 million
Wide Shoulder Park	2.7 acres	\$26 million
Long Span Park over Bathurst Yard	5.8 acres	\$24 million
Structural Park over Extended Yard	8.5 acres	\$36 million
Long span Park over Corridor	8.6 acres	\$32 million
Combination Full Cover Park Bathurst St. to Spadina Ave.	17.1 acres	\$34 million
Park over Transition Corridor: Spadina Ave to Blue Jays Way	4.2 acres	\$29 million
<i>Other Applicable Costs</i>	<i>\$2 million under-deck systems \$3 million landscaping 30% soft costs</i>	

* excludes property rights, track relocation and rail contingency



Planning Context

- *TOCore: Planning Downtown* study currently underway to analyze how growth will be accommodated and shaped.
- It addresses various infrastructure requirements including:
 - Active transportation and surface transit
 - Parks and Public Realm
 - Community Services and Facilities
 - Energy
 - Water infrastructure upgrades
- Priority projects under TOCore include **Rail Deck Park**, **King Street Transformation** and **Tower Separation**.

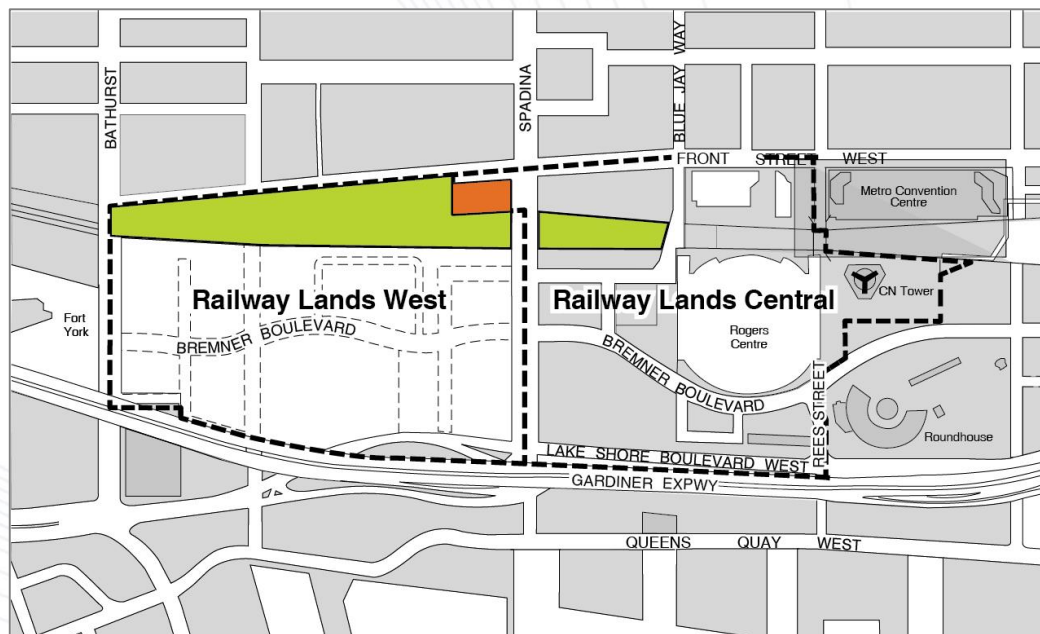


TOcore Planning
Downtown



Planning Framework

- Initiate updates to the Railway Lands West and Central Secondary Plans (passed in 1994; last amended in 1997) to support development of a park over the rail corridor.
- Initiate applicable zoning by-law amendments.
- Undertake community consultation and stakeholder engagement.



- Railway Lands West and Central Secondary Plans
- Rail Deck Park Boundary Area
- Metrolinx Site



Real Estate & Property Ownership Matters

- The City will work with property owners/rights holders to advance plans for a public park above the rail corridor.
- Ownership in the rail corridor is complex and multi-layered.
- A private developer has had initial pre-application discussions with staff regarding their potential interest in the rail corridor.

Structural Design & Engineering Analysis

- A consultant will be engaged to develop design options and preliminary (Class “4”) cost estimates.
- Will provide construction phasing and staging options to address technical constraints and funding scenarios.



Partnership Strategy

- Promote ongoing engagement with community, government and corporate partners.
- Encourage novel approaches to long-term program, operations and maintenance requirements.

Financial Analysis

- Work will be undertaken to assess the financial feasibility, phasing options and timelines for the project.
- A range of funding options will be considered including “growth-oriented” tools, donations and sponsorships, and grants.



“Growth-Oriented” Funding Tools

- A large-scale city park is required to support projected growth in Downtown Toronto.
- Growth-oriented sources will be emphasized in the funding model.
- Cash-in-lieu of Parkland Dedication (Section 42) – Enhance provision through alternative rate in Downtown Toronto.
- Development Charges – Support growth-related park development costs and potential for area-specific DC.
- Section 37 Benefits – Potential for incremental contribution from surrounding development activity.



Recommendations

- 1. & 2.** Initiate Official Plan Amendments for the Railway Lands West and Central Secondary Plans and Zoning By-Law changes to support park use over the rail corridor.
- 3.** Direction to DCM-B to develop an Implementation Strategy for Rail Deck Park and report back in 2017 on the following:
 - Feasibility and options for securing air rights.
 - Costs estimates and phasing options.
 - Funding options, with a focus on growth-related revenues.
 - Partnership strategy to support community/corporate involvement.
- 4. & 5.** Establish a Rail Deck Park capital project with a 2016-2017 budget of \$2.423 million gross (\$0 net) to support phase 1 work.



Phase 1 Resources

- Establish a capital project for Rail Deck Park with \$2.345 million gross (\$0 net) to support the following in phase one:
 - Staff team composed of 7 FTEs:
 - City Planning – 4 FTEs to deliver planning framework and provide corporate coordination for overall work plan.
 - Legal Services – 2 FTEs to advance work concerning real estate and ownership matters.
 - Parks, Forestry and Recreation – 1 FTE for capital planning and engineering work.
 - External consultant expertise in:
 - Real estate appraisal and property ownership matters
 - Financial analysis
 - Engineering & detailed design
 - Planning and park analysis
 - Public consultation



Next Steps

Pending approval of this report by City Council, City staff will:

- Establish a dedicated project team for Rail Deck Park
- Clarify ownership status in the rail corridor and engage with interested parties
- Initiate process and undertake consultation for Official Plan Amendment
- Procure consultant resources to support design and engineering analysis, real estate appraisal, planning studies and financial analysis