

September 19, 2016

City Clerk c/o Jennifer Forkes
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: Rail Deck Park

Dear Members of the Executive Committee,

I am writing in support of the recommendations in the staff report before you on the *Rail Deck Park - Work Plan for Official Plan Amendments and an Implementation Strategy*. The announcement by Mayor Tory and Councillor Cressy to pursue a major 22 acre urban park over top of the open rail corridor from Bathurst Street to Blue Jays Way has garnered considerable excitement both in the community and among design professionals. It is a creative and timely response to the great need both locally and city-wide for additional park space given the extraordinary growth in population we have already experienced and that which is projected over the coming decades. It would meet this need in a form which provides signature park space and at the same time vital connections between a number of existing and emerging neighbourhoods, turning what is currently a barrier into a magnificent new highly accessible “common ground” serving all Torontonians.

This is an ambitious and complex undertaking to be sure. The recommendations before you seek to take the next step by advancing the exploration of this massive public infrastructure investment. A proposal of this scope deserves a full investigation including planning policy, design, costing, technical feasibility and financing options. The opportunity to do this clearly should be taken at this juncture to allow for a fully informed decision-making process.

This kind of innovative project which involves expanding the public realm by utilizing “found spaces” in innovative ways is occurring in leading edge cities around the globe and much can be learned from these emerging best practices. There is everything to be gained and nothing to be lost by taking this the next step and investigating ways and means of making this a reality. I hope you will give it favourable consideration.

Sincerely,



Ken Greenberg
Principal