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Parks and Environment Committee

Re: Yellow Creek / Vale of Avoca Master Plan

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

The Yellow Creek and Vale of Avoca areas are beloved parts of Ward 27 and 22. In an urban environment, such green spaces represent a precious resource; offering recreation for residents, a natural habitat for wildlife and an abundance of plant diversity. The area also houses vital infrastructure including sewer lines, stairs, bridges and other public facilities.

In past years this vale and watercourse has been a source of pride for the local community, hosting picnics and hikes, and boasting a beautiful rose garden. Unfortunately, the park is now challenged in many ways. Flooding and overflow has contributed to bank degradation, erosion, washed out bridges and impassable trails. The public's access has been restricted due to broken stairs, closed access points and many areas made dangerous due to tree fall. Yellow Creek itself has been polluted by spills, causing further degradation to the Vale; an area designated as Environmentally Significant by Parks, Forestry and Recreation

With the recognition that a geomorphic study of Yellow Creek, is to be conducted by Toronto Water for 2017, the local community has stepped forward to ask that City divisions come together to address the multiple pressing needs of this Environmentally Significant Area. While the pending Ravine Strategy is a positive step towards increasing collaboration on such projects - and we are willing to work with the City to advance its goals - the need in the Vale of Avoca is pressing and immediate.

In order to protect and restore the Vale of Avoca, we believe it is necessary to create a Master Plan that integrates the budgets, construction schedules, and communication plans of the various invested divisions and their overlapping responsibilities. Such a plan will serve to create a model that will be useful in application to similarly distressed natural areas, and will be supportive of the Ravine Strategy's larger goals. We therefore recommend that the Parks and Environment Committee adopt the following recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

Request the Deputy City Manager of Cluster A to report to the February 2017 meeting of the Parks and Environment Committee on the feasibility and process to develop a Master Plan for the Yellow Creek and Vale of Avoca area that:

- a. includes an inventory and state of good repair of existing facilities;*
- b. considers past and current plans, assessments and studies*
- c. coordinates the planning for future work of Toronto Water, Transportation, Parks, Forestry, Natural Environments, and the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority and other divisions and agencies;*
- d. ensures that the Master Plan identifies relationships and responsibilities for the implementations and maintenance of planned improvements; and*
- e. establishes a working group comprised of relevant community stakeholders to identify areas of priority community concern.*

Respectfully submitted,

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