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*Re: TE28.7 Rail Deck Park – City-initiated Official Plan Amendment – Final Report*

To the City Councillors of the Toronto and East York Community Council:

We are writing in support of the staff recommendation to designate the rail corridor lands between Bathurst Street and Blue Jays Way as parks and open space. This is a practical, forward-thinking action to save this space for a future 21-acre signature park.

By now, we are all familiar with the statistics on downtown growth. That the population is set to nearly double by 2041. That the neighbourhoods around the rail corridor have seen some of the most incredible growth—far beyond what the original planning frameworks had anticipated. That these neighbourhoods have some of the lowest levels of park provision in the city—not because there are no green spaces nearby, but because of the huge amount of people using those parks, from residents, to workers, to tourists.

The opportunity presented by the rail corridor to create a new signature park for the city and for downtown is one that will not present itself again if we do not seize it now. The rail corridor is in too high demand and high value an area—eventually someone will build something on top of it, and we want that eventuality to be saved for a public park, not a private development.

There are many locations downtown where condo developments make sense, but little locations left to create new parks, and no locations, save the rail corridor, to create a park of any significant size in the downtown.

This is why we also do not support the competing P.I.T.S. Development proposal to build private development on the rail corridor lands that includes a smaller park. And why we urge you to approve the Official Plan Amendment that would designate the rail corridor lands for parks and open space use, preserving its potential to create an amenity for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Harvey", is written above the name Dave Harvey.

Dave Harvey  
Executive Director, Park People

