

City Council

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| MM34.18 | ACTION | | | Ward: All |
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Keeping the Promise - Requesting a Federal Environmental Assessment of Metrolinx's Proposed Don Valley Layover Facility - by Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Paula Fletcher, seconded by Councillor Mike Layton, recommends that:

1. City Council express support for a Federal Impact Assessment, under the Federal Impact Assessment Act, of Metrolinx's proposed GO Layover Facility in the Don Valley and City Council support local residents and community groups' calls for such an assessment.
2. City Council request that a copy of this Motion be provided to the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Provincial Minister of Transportation and the Honourable Jeff Yurek, Provincial Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks.
3. City Council request that a copy of this Motion be provided to the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Federal Minister of the Environment and Climate Change and the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities.

Summary

Toronto's Ravines, like the Don Valley, are gems that enhance our City with many ecological wonders and recreation opportunities. They are also a fragile resource.

As noted in the City staff report on our ravines when City Council adopted the City's new Ravine Strategy in January 2020:

Ravines provide an exciting opportunity to connect people in the city with nature. Approximately 30 percent of Toronto's population lives within 500 metres of ravines...the ravine system provides significant opportunities to reflect the integral connection that continues today between the Indigenous communities that were the original inhabitants of the area and Toronto's natural spaces and waterways.

Ravines provide essential access to urban greenspace and opportunities for passive and active recreation which contributes to the physical health, mental health and well-being of residents. Toronto's ravines provide over \$800 million in services every year from nature-based recreation, avoided health care costs due to inactivity, and reduced rates of

depression.

City Council confirmed its appreciation of the value of ravines in September 30, 2020, when it adopted the following regarding Metrolinx's proposed Don Valley Layover Facility:

10. City Council direct the City Manager and the Executive Director, Transit Expansion Office to advise Metrolinx that the City strongly recommends that Metrolinx undertake a study, in consultation with the City, General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority which considers the possible impacts of this proposed facility on the Don Valley Park and the implications for the City's Ravine Strategy, and a full range of alternative solutions and locations for the Don Valley Layover Facility Metrolinx is proposing as a part of its GO Expansion project

Alas, Metrolinx has not undertaken such a study and has shown no inclination to do so. The Federal Government has the authority, the resources, and a mechanism – Federal Impact Assessment Study – to do a proper environmental assessment of Metrolinx's proposed Don Valley Layover Facility.

The City, community and environmental groups - like Don't Mess with the Don, Evergreen Brick Works, the Rotary Ecosystem Education Program and many more - numerous philanthropists and so many others dating back to the indomitable Charles Sauriol have invested millions of dollars and countless hours to restoring the Don Valley's wonders for the health and joy of current and future residents of and visitors to Toronto. A Federal environmental impact assessment would honour and strengthen that important work.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM34.18