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## City Council

### Notice of Motion

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| MM34.19 | ACTION |  |  | Ward: 19 |
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**Keeping our environment on track: requesting Metrolinx to conduct more analysis and plan for environmental stewardship in Small's Creek and Williamson Ravines - by Councillor Brad Bradford, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie**

*\* 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 Brad Bradford, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie, recommends that:

1. City Council request Metrolinx to undertake a thorough, independent technical review of alternative structural design approaches which not only consider cost and schedule, but also analyze the need to protect greenspace and prioritize the environment.
2. City Council request Metrolinx to conduct engineering analysis to explore opportunities to connect Small's Creek and Williamson ravines with a new wildlife crossing or pedestrian underpass, coordinated with their proposed culvert design in Small's Creek, in keeping with the 'connecting' goal of the Council-endorsed Toronto Ravine Strategy.
3. City Council request Metrolinx to provide a proactive ecological restoration and stewardship plan for the Small's Creek ravine in advance of significant work impacting mature trees and a wooded ravine slope, taking guidance from the United Nation's Nature-Based Solutions approach and other relevant standards and best practices.

### Summary

For several years Metrolinx and our Provincial partners have been working to add a fourth track to the Lakeshore East GO line to enable all day two-way transit service. In general, the communities around the rail corridor in Beaches-East York support the changes and the many social, economic and environmental benefits of improving transit access in our City and region.

Through an extraordinary amount of research, education and advocacy, members of the local community have come together to form The Friends of Small's Creek. Their objective is to make sure this much-needed transit expansion is completed in a way that meets the highest possible standards of environmental sustainability, and represents the best available approach to planning for the effective stewardship of this critical creek, ravine ecosystem and wetland.

The community has come together as parents, community activists, planners, artists, geotechnical and civil engineers, architects, forestry ecologists, landscape architects, lawyers, and designers, to propose alternative design concepts and to call on Metrolinx to improve their approach overall.

The current design proposes an extensive concrete retaining wall and culvert reconstruction which is deemed necessary for safe construction of the fourth track. Using their technical expertise, members of the Friends of Small's Creek advocate for an alternative approach that would preserve more of the approximately 260 trees to be cleared for this project.

The community's proposal could also allow for an opportunity to reconnect important ravine ecosystems on the north and south sides of the existing track. Doing so would take important steps in protecting, preserving and enhancing our natural heritage as advocated for by key City policy documents like the Toronto Ravine Strategy.

This Motion requests City Council's support in asking Metrolinx to explore all available engineering options for the proposed work, and to continue engaging the community to achieve important environmental and social objectives as this necessary work moves forward.

### **Background Information (City Council)**

Member Motion MM34.19