
2022 CAPITAL BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

The Meadoway

Issue/Background:

- At its meeting on January 28, 2022, Budget Committee adopted a motion requesting Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to provide a Briefing Note on the implementation of The Meadoway including:
 - a. proposed 2022 capital investments, including intergovernmental support; and
 - b. additional intergovernmental funding required in the next 5 years, and pending applications.
- Led by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), in partnership with the City of Toronto and with funding from the Weston Family Foundation, The Meadoway will transform 16 kilometres of hydro corridor in Scarborough into one of the largest urban linear greenspaces in Canada.
- The Meadoway will provide a naturalized link between Rouge National Urban Park and downtown Toronto, stitching together over 15 parks/greenspaces, four ravine systems, four Neighbourhood Improvements Areas, employment centres, and transportation hubs. A multi-use trail connected to city-wide trail networks such as the Loop Trail, in partnership with Evergreen, will enhance the connectivity of the existing urban fabric and be complemented by meadow habitat restoration and opportunities for recreational spaces. In addition to the revitalization of these areas, the project seeks to build meaningful community engagement and educational opportunities that will facilitate an increased sense of community pride and ownership of this important natural connection.
- On April 11, 2018, Mayor John Tory along with the Directors of the Weston Family Foundation, and representatives from TRCA and Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation jointly announced the launch of The Meadoway. As part of this announcement, the Weston Family Foundation pledged up to \$25 million to the Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation in support of the project, with a firm commitment of \$10 million available immediately to support Phase 1 (2018 – 2021) of the project.
- In 2021, the City of Toronto invested a total of \$1.17 million, including:
 - \$0.95 million –reallocation from the Menno-Reesor Restoration Project (as directed by City Council through the 2021 Budget process) within the TRCA's 10-

Year Capital Plan to contribute to The Meadoway Highland Creek Trail implementation and adaptive management of the meadow in 2021

- \$0.22 million – operating funding for planting of shrub nodes and natural area maintenance
- Deliverables associated with the original \$10 million grant to TRCA from the Weston Family Foundation will be complete in Q2 2022, and the associated funds utilized. These funds, which will help Toronto realize The Meadoway, are not part of the TRCA's 10-Year Capital Plan submitted to the City. The additional \$15 million pledge from the Weston Family Foundation is contingent on leveraging matching funding from other sources and continued due diligence and satisfaction of the project by the Weston Family Foundation Board of Directors.
- During the 2022 Budget process, TRCA has identified \$13.4 million in capital needs constraints associated with The Meadoway Multi-Use Trail over 10 years (or \$6.1 million over 5 years) to transform an underutilized hydro corridor primarily between Don River ravine and Rouge National Urban Park, as reflected in Appendix 8 of the TRCA's 2022 Budget Notes.

Key Points:

Proposed 2022 Capital Investments, Including Intergovernmental Support:

- TRCA was successful in obtaining \$1.35 million through the Conservation Ontario Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund Initiative (Federal) to advance capital costs associated with meadow restoration in 2022 – 2024. This significant leverage of funds will allow for meadow restoration activities to be implemented 50% by the Federal grant and 50% by the Weston Family Foundation until the end of 2024.
- Parks Canada contributed \$0.15 million in 2021-2022 for new design elements to be incorporated in the existing multi-use trail to enhance connectivity to the planned Rouge National Urban Park Gateway Visitor Centre.
- Approximately \$0.48 million of the City of Toronto's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) COVID-19 Resilience Fund for the Ravine Strategy will be directed to The Meadoway in 2022, including \$0.30 million toward construction of a trail connection between The Meadoway and Morningside Park and \$0.18 million to advance wayfinding. As referenced in the 2022 Capital and Operating Budget Briefing Note #17: Ravine Strategy; this is included in the \$5.2 estimated carry over of the \$6.2 million cash flow funding as part of the 2022-2031 Staff Recommended Capital Budget and Plan for Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

Additional Intergovernmental and Other Funding Required in the Next Five (5) Years:

- The City of Toronto has submitted an application to the federal Natural Infrastructure Fund for Ravine Strategy projects in the value of \$20 million, which is currently under review by the federal government. This included a \$5 million allocation to The

Meadoway project which will advance two priority multi-use trail gaps in 2022 and 2023 and offset the currently identified capital investment need of \$13.4 million.

- In coordination with the City of Toronto, TRCA will explore opportunities for an application to the Federal funding programs such as the Active Transportation Fund and the Canada Community Revitalization Fund to support continued advancement of the multi-use trail. TRCA will also continue working with Parks Canada and stakeholders to determine if other enhancements of the multi-use trail near the Rouge National Urban Park can be funded.
- TRCA will continue working with the Weston Family Foundation to determine if the leveraging requirements of their pledged funding have been satisfactorily addressed, and to the extent they have, how these pledged funds can be used to match other capital grant opportunities, and whether any of the pledged funding can be directed towards TRCA's non-capital costs such as project coordination, outreach and education (estimated at \$0.5 million annually) in 2022 and beyond.

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