

Metrolinx's Proposed Don Valley Layover Facility and the Wonscotonach Parklands

Date: April 9, 2022

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

From: General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and Executive Director,
Transit Expansion Office

Wards: Wards 10, 11, 13, 14, and 15

SUMMARY

To achieve service-level targets that support Metrolinx's GO Expansion Program ("GOE Program"), track improvements, infrastructure modifications and new facilities are planned across the rail network. On-Corridor ("OnCorr"), the GOE Program's largest package of work, is focused on corridor electrification and includes any outstanding infrastructure not constructed as part of earlier work packages, such as new track, facilities and a number of grade separations throughout the rail network. The Don Valley Layover Facility ("Facility") is one of three new layover facilities planned through the Metrolinx GOE Program's OnCorr package of work.

Metrolinx plans to locate the Facility north of the Prince Edward Viaduct at Bloor Street East, between the Don Valley Parkway and Lower Don Trail, along the Don Branch Rail Corridor (currently not operational), and within Toronto's park network with a variety of informal names, including Lower Don Parklands, Don River Valley Park, or "Wonscotonach Parklands". Through stakeholder engagement and outreach, the name Wonscotonach Parklands has emerged as a potential official name that could be used moving forward. Wonscotonach is understood to be the Anishinaabe place name for the Don River and likely translates to "burning bright point".

Metrolinx has noted it requires a new Facility at this particular location to reduce the congestion currently experienced at Union Station and to provide a location for storage and light maintenance of trains during day-time off-peak periods. Earlier designs identified a three-track electrified facility south of the Bloor Viaduct within a City of Toronto-designated Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). However, following significant feedback from the City of Toronto, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), and local stakeholders, Metrolinx proposed several modifications to the Facility to minimize the impacts on Toronto's park network.

The purpose of this joint staff report is to respond to direction from EX29.3 *Update on the Metrolinx GO Expansion Program – First Quarter 2022*¹ considered by City Council

¹ <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.EX29.3>

on February 2 and 3, 2022. To begin, this report will provide an update on the current proposal for Metrolinx's Facility, including the size and location of the land needed, including City-owned land, and details on any land-use changes since the last report on this matter. This report will subsequently detail the Facility's anticipated impacts to Toronto's park network and will provide updates on Wonscotonach Parklands consultations to date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and Executive Director, Transit Expansion Office recommends that:

1. Infrastructure and Environment Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the information included in this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and the Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY - DON VALLEY LAYOVER FACILITY

On February 2 and 3, 2022, City Council adopted, with amendments, EX29.3 *Update on the Metrolinx GO Expansion Program - First Quarter 2022*, which provided a status update on key components of Metrolinx's GO Expansion Program. Through the report, City Council adopted several directives related to Metrolinx's Don Valley Layover Facility.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.EX29.3>

On December 15 and 16, 2021, City Council adopted, with amendments, EX28.12 *Metrolinx Subways Program - Real Estate Protocol and Land Valuation Principles for Subways and GO Expansion Programs* and authorized staff to utilize specific land valuation principles for the City lands required for the GO Expansion Program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX28.12>

On June 8, 2021, City Council considered MM34.18 *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 and requested Council to express support for a Federal Impact Assessment of Metrolinx's proposed Don Valley Layover Facility.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.MM34.18>

In November 2020, City Council considered EX18.3 *Update on Metrolinx Transit Expansion Projects – Fourth Quarter 2020* and adopted directives related to several Metrolinx transit expansion projects, including the Don Valley Layover Facility.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX18.3>

In September 2020, City Council adopted, with amendments, EX16.4 *Metrolinx-City of Toronto Master Agreement for the GO Expansion Program* and authorized the City Manager to execute a Master Agreement with Metrolinx for the GO Expansion Program based on principles identified in the report. This report also noted previous City Council decision history on the GO Expansion/Regional Express Rail Program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX16.4>

DECISION HISTORY - WONSCOTONACH PARK

On February 2 and 3, 2022, City Council adopted, with amendments, EX29.3 *Update on the Metrolinx GO Expansion Program - First Quarter 2022*. Through this report, City Council also adopted directives concerning previous Wonscotonach Parkland consultations, and the Don Valley Layover Facility's implications to the Don Valley Park.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.EX29.3>

On April 24, 2018, City Council considered PE26.4 *Update on the Partnership with Evergreen and Establishing an Identity for the Lower Don Parklands*, which provided an update on the progress and next steps of the partnership with Evergreen to implement the Lower Don Trail Access, Environment and Art Master Plan. The report sought authority to undertake community consultation on the proposed naming of the network of parks surrounding the Lower Don to the "Wonscotonach Parklands". Through the report, City Council requested the General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation to undertake community consultations on the Wonscotonach Parklands naming initiative, and to report back with a recommendation based on the criteria and process outlined in the Property Naming Policy.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.PE26.4>

On November 3, 2017, the Aboriginal Affairs Committee received a report from City Planning and Parks, Forestry and Recreation on *Incorporating Indigenous Place-Making in City of Toronto's Parks Capital Projects*. The report included a proposal to name the network of parks in the Lower Don Valley the "Wonscotonach Parklands" as part of the City's Indigenous place-making efforts and its commitments to Indigenous peoples.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.AA12.5>

COMMENTS

Metrolinx's Don Valley Layover Facility

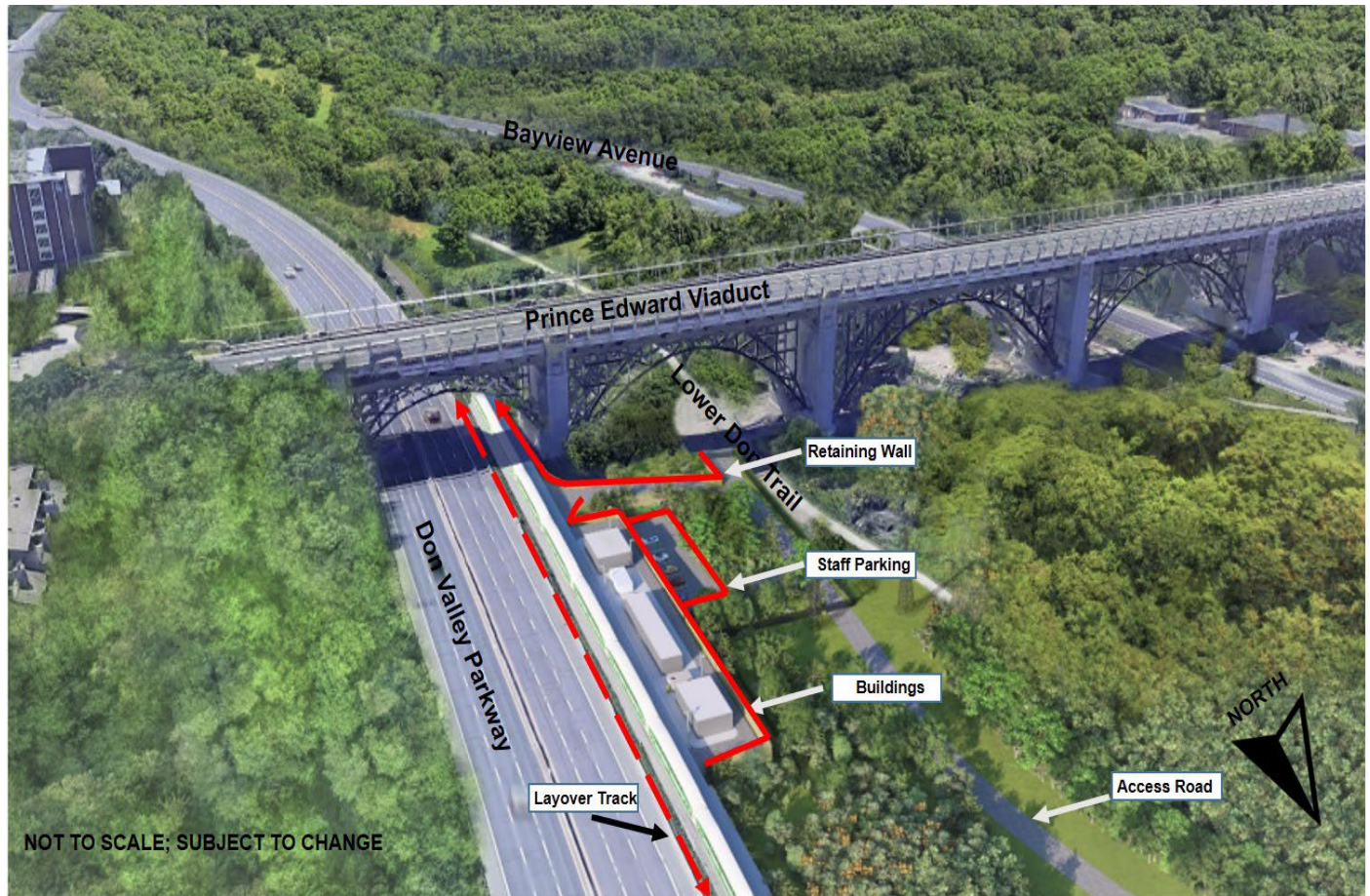
Background

Metrolinx plans to locate the Don Valley Layover Facility ("Facility") north of the Prince Edward Viaduct at Bloor Street East, between the Don Valley Parkway and Lower Don Trail, along the Don Branch Rail Corridor (currently not operational) (Figure 1). The proposed Facility is also located within the limits of Wonscotonach Parklands, further detailed in the *Wonscotonach Parklands* section below.

Metrolinx continues to reiterate its preference to situate the layover site on the Don Branch as the Facility will be able to use both the existing track infrastructure and

access road to minimize the implementation of new infrastructure and reduce property requirements. The Don Branch is also in close proximity to Union Station, reducing the non-revenue kilometres that empty trains would need to travel to the Facility during off-peak periods for storage and light maintenance.

Figure 1: Metrolinx's conceptual illustration of the proposed Don Valley Layover Facility. Image is not to scale and subject to change during Metrolinx's detailed design and implementation phase.



At its June 29, 2021 Virtual Open House², Metrolinx presented alternative sites considered for the Facility to participants. Metrolinx informed participants that existing nearby facilities, such as Don and Bathurst Yards, have already been expanded and do not have the capacity to support storage and light maintenance activities for additional trains during day-time off-peak periods. Several locations on the west side of the Don Valley were also considered but rejected by Metrolinx as it would require the construction of new tracks and an access road, resulting in a larger impact on the Don Valley³.

Metrolinx notes that this particular Facility is required in order to alleviate train congestion currently experienced at Union Station. Metrolinx anticipates that only three

² <https://www.metrolinxengage.com/en/engagement-initiatives/don-valley-layover-facility>

³ https://www.metrolinxengage.com/sites/default/files/layover_comparison_chart_en1.pdf

"consists" (one consist is a set of up to 12 railroad vehicles forming a complete train) will enter and exit the site each day, parking elsewhere overnight for refuelling and other maintenance activities. The Facility is proposed to house various one-storey service buildings, facilities related to the cleaning of parked trains, and equipment, such as a power supply, required for the short term/daily layover of trains (e.g. during day-time off-peak periods).

City staff provided Metrolinx with comments on the Facility throughout the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP) and during the public review of the New Tracks and Facilities Environmental Project Report (EPR)⁴. The latest set of City staff comments on the final EPR were submitted in January 2021. City staff commented on several aspects, including but not limited to: Engineering, Natural Environment, Transportation, Land Use and Socio-Economic, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology.

Following feedback received in 2020 from City staff, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and local stakeholders through the final rounds of the TPAP's virtual consultations⁵, Metrolinx proposed several modifications to the Facility to minimize impacts, outlined in detail in Attachment 1, including:

- Relocation of proposed facilities to the north of the Prince Edward Viaduct, at Bloor Street East, and outside of City of Toronto-designated Environmentally Sensitive Areas, the Chester Springs Marsh and the Helliwell's Hill Wetland;
- Adjustment of staff facilities and service buildings outside of the 100-year floodplain, to a higher elevation adjacent to the storage track, contained primarily within Metrolinx's right-of-way and the area recently disturbed during rehabilitation work on the Prince Edward Viaduct, creating an increased setback from the Lower Don Trail;
- Reduction of the amount of required storage tracks from three tracks to one existing track by parking trains in a linear fashion; and,
- Reconfiguration of building placement to reduce the Facility's footprint within Metrolinx-owned land by 23%, from roughly 3 hectares (7.4 acres) to 2.3 hectares (5.7 acres).

Current Configuration & Property Requirements

City staff last reported to Council in November 2020⁶ on the estimated size of total footprint of the Facility within Metrolinx-owned property. The estimated size was based on information available to City staff through Metrolinx's reference concept designs in the EPR. As of April 2022, the total footprint of the Facility remains to be approximately 2.3 hectares (5.7 acres) of Metrolinx-owned property. Approximately 1.7 hectares (4.2 acres) of City-owned property is also required to further facilitate the Facility's configuration. These calculations include:

- the area of land required for the Facility itself (e.g. one-story buildings and layover power supply-related equipment);

⁴ <https://www.metrolinxengage.com/en/content/new-track-facilities-environmental-project-report>

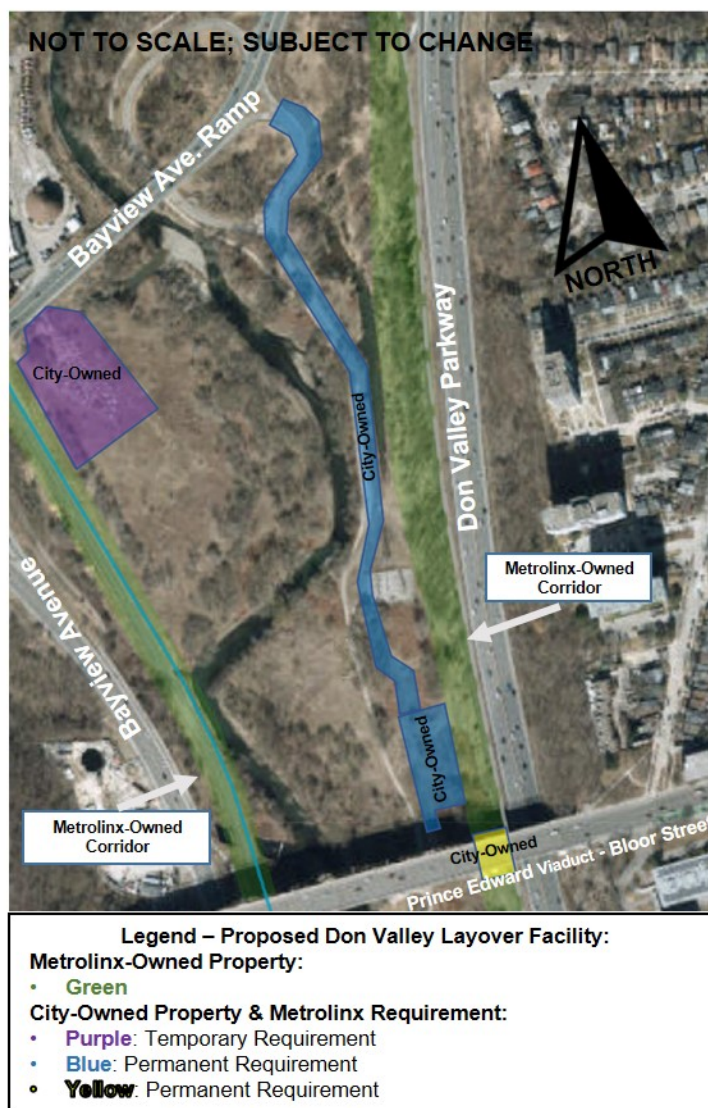
⁵ <https://www.metrolinxengage.com/en/content/new-track-facilities-your-feedback-0>

⁶ <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.EX18.3>

- the area of the proposed track access road and track, to be used for train storage;
- the area of land required for permanent access and parking; and,
- the area of land potentially required for temporary construction staging or laydown.

Through the property access and acquisition process, Metrolinx is seeking to temporarily access approximately 0.65 hectares (1.7 acres) and permanently acquire via fee simple approximately 1.1 hectares (2.7 acres) of City-owned property.

Figure 2: Metrolinx's proposed Don Valley Layover Facility's City-owned property requirements. Image is not to scale and subject to change during Metrolinx's detailed design and implementation phase.



Permanent dispositions of City land to Metrolinx as well as temporary access through licences will be in accordance with the GO Expansion Master Agreement - Real Estate Protocol as well as environmental provisions and land valuation principles adopted by

City Council under EX28.12 *Metrolinx Subways Program - Real Estate Protocol and Land Valuation Principles for Subways and GO Expansion Program*⁷.

Metrolinx requires City-owned land on a permanent basis for the Facility's staff parking lot (Figure 2, colour Blue). In addition, Metrolinx has requested to acquire an existing City-owned access road, located parallel to the Don Valley Parkway, on a permanent basis to access the Facility itself and the staff parking lot (Figure 2, colour Blue). As part of its permanent acquisition, Metrolinx has committed to fund and undertake works to expand, upgrade and improve the access road while continuing to allow the City and utility companies, such as Hydro One Networks Inc. to utilize it.

Metrolinx will also request temporary licence of a portion of City-owned property for construction staging, laydown and material storage to support work on the Facility (Figure 2, colour Purple). This location is accessed via the Bayview Avenue ramp, was previously utilized as a snow storage area and has not been re-naturalized by the City. Metrolinx has proposed to utilize this site due to its previous uses, lack of vegetation, vehicular access and location away from the Don River and Lower Don Trail.

On February 28, 2022, the City was served with *Notices of Application for Approval to Expropriate* by Metrolinx for the City-owned properties required to facilitate and support work on the Facility (as illustrated in Figure 2). At any time during the expropriation process, Metrolinx and the City can come to a negotiated settlement on the transfer of rights to Metrolinx, the value of such rights and any terms and conditions related to such transfer of rights in accordance with the Real Estate Protocol and land valuation principles adopted by City Council under EX28.12. Should Metrolinx choose to continue to rely on its expropriation rights, it must comply with defined regulatory timelines.

The City-owned property Metrolinx requires is either designated as Natural Area and Green Space System per the Official Plan or classified as Public Highway or Public Road - all which will be confirmed through detailed design. All City-owned lands Metrolinx is seeking are also within the Ravine and Natural Protection By-Law area and within the Natural Heritage System. At present, the only portion of the Facility located within an Environmentally Significant Area is south of Bloor Street East and within Metrolinx-owned land.

Currently, Metrolinx does not require TRCA-owned lands for the Facility; however, all of the City-owned lands Metrolinx requires to accommodate the Facility's configuration are within TRCA Regulation Limits. As a Crown Agency, Metrolinx is exempt from the TRCA's Regulation Limit's permitting process, per *Regulation of Development, Interface with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses* (O. Reg. 166/06)⁸. In lieu of the formal permitting process, Metrolinx has committed to working with TRCA in this same context on a voluntary basis. As such, Metrolinx has indicated to City and TRCA staff that it will request a TRCA-led Voluntary Project Review (VPR). The VPR process is consistent with TRCA's O. Reg. 166/06 permitting process. Through the VPR process, the TRCA will assess the detailed design based on its expertise as a watershed management agency. The TRCA will ensure its interests related to natural

⁷ <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX28.12>

⁸ <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060166>

hazards (e.g. flood and erosion) and natural heritage (e.g. pollution and conservation of land) are considered throughout the detailed design stage, to ensure that the design meets TRCA requirements. The VPR process has not yet commenced and it is unknown at this time which studies Metrolinx will consult with TRCA on.

Potential Impacts

Based on the information provided by Metrolinx, City and TRCA staff have determined that Metrolinx's permanent property requirements of City-owned lands may result in the following impacts:

- Temporary construction impacts on the Lower Don Trail and maintenance access road;
- Loss of Official Plan-Designated Natural Areas and Green Space System, which is zoned as Open Space Natural;
- Tree and vegetation removal, in addition to grade changes to establish a supporting base for the relocation of structures within Ravine Natural Feature By-Law Protection Limit identified as part of Natural Heritage System and within TRCA Regulation Limit;
- Encroachment and visual impacts on recreational parkland, licenced areas and natural features surrounding the Lower Don Trail, significantly altering the character and experience in the Lower Don Parklands;
- Increased impervious surfaces within the Lower Don River floodplain, resulting in greater levels of storm water runoff/drainage impacts and potential for water contamination;
- Reduced ecological connectivity by constricting terrestrial, riparian and trail linkages; and,
- Intrusion on the view shed of the Prince Edward Viaduct, a designated cultural heritage resource.

To balance the needs of the GOE Program and a commitment towards protecting ecological spaces, City and TRCA staff will continue to work closely with Metrolinx to provide feedback that aims to minimize the impacts of the Facility on the Lower Don Valley while enhancing its ecological function through restoration. This work will be guided by several City strategies, including Toronto's Ravine Strategy⁹.

In general, the Ravine Strategy provides an intentional and coordinated vision and approach to managing ecological spaces on an ongoing basis. While the Ravine Strategy details the importance of ravines as natural spaces, and a part of the City's green infrastructure, ravines are also recognized to contain critical grey infrastructure that must be maintained and upgraded. To balance both interests, it is important to undertake capital work in a coordinated manner to mitigate impacts and implement plans for compensation that will enhance the long-term outcomes of the ravines. The Facility is located within one of the Ravine Strategy's *Priority Investment Areas*, specifically, the Lower Don Parklands. City staff will work towards upholding guiding actions, including Action 2, which states: ensure high quality planning, design,

⁹ <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/9183-TorontoRavineStrategy.pdf>

construction and maintenance in our ravines by continuing to develop and implement best practices for capital projects and on-going maintenance of infrastructure and natural ecosystems, including trail accessibility, dumping and litter, and invasive species management.

City Divisions, including Parks, Forestry and Recreation will also review and provide comments to Metrolinx on the Facility through the Transit Expansion Office during the detailed design and implementation phase of the project. City staff expect Metrolinx to fulfill several conditions supporting the mitigation measures and commitments outlined in the EPR, which are further detailed in Attachment 2.

The City also believes the Facility will not affect the Wonscotonach Parklands naming initiative and consider specific consultation on the proposed Facility and proposed impacts on City property, including parklands, a Metrolinx responsibility.

Current Status & Next Steps

In early fall 2021, Metrolinx initiated a procurement process for a technical advisor (TA) to undertake engineering services that will advance the Facility's design. The Request to Qualify and Quote (RQQ) was subsequently published on December 17, 2021, providing a brief scope overview and details concerning associated project components. Metrolinx has advised City staff that a detailed scope of work, as well as the Facility's design, footprint and configuration will be further advanced, clarified and confirmed by the TA, who is anticipated to begin work in mid-2022.

At present, there is no further information on the total footprint or proposed configuration of the Facility as previously reported to City Council. As Metrolinx proceeds with refining the Facility's design and requirements in consultation with the TA, the property requirements and overall impacts may be adjusted.

In late 2021, Metrolinx also initiated work to inform studies that will further evaluate and consider the impacts of the Facility on the Lower Don Valley, including heritage impact assessments of heritage features in the area, such as the Prince Edward Viaduct. In early 2022, work including biological assessments of the habitat features in the adjacent area; arborist evaluations of trees in the vicinity of the proposed layover; and, engineering analyses of the current infrastructure began to further inform Metrolinx's studies. At present, City staff have not received a tree inventory and/or arborist report; therefore the full scope of tree and vegetation impacts are currently unknown. These reports are required to allow City and TRCA staff the opportunity to assess impacts to the ravine area as a whole. Lastly, Metrolinx has proposed to also undertake a planning study to examine the infrastructure requirements in the Don Valley, which is also anticipated to take into consideration community inquiries with respect to trail creation (e.g. East Toronto Railpath).

Metrolinx has committed to continued community and stakeholder engagement through this refinement of project requirements stage, and through to detailed design and construction. Metrolinx has also communicated that it will continue to address stakeholder comments with the aim to further minimize impacts and enhance the ecological function of the Don Valley. In addition, as part of the EPR process, Metrolinx

documented Indigenous Communities Consultation¹⁰ and has also committed to undertake additional community and stakeholder engagement as detailed design progresses.

City staff are committed to providing updates on the Facility as it develops through future reports on the Metrolinx GOE Program.

Wonscotonach Parklands Consultation

All Wonscotonach Parklands consultations to date occurred prior to Metrolinx announcing its plan for the Facility. As stated above, the City considers specific consultation on the proposed Facility and proposed impacts on City property, including parklands, a Metrolinx responsibility; however, opportunities to collaborate may be considered pending consultation schedules.

In November 2017, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and City Planning staff delivered a report on Indigenous Place-making in Toronto parks to City Council's Aboriginal Affairs Committee¹¹. The report included a proposal to name the network of parks and trails in the Lower Don the Wonscotonach Parklands, as part of the City's broader Indigenous place-making efforts and commitments to Truth and Reconciliation. Following this review by the Aboriginal Affairs Committee, in April 2018, City Council directed staff to begin consultations on the Wonscotonach Parklands proposal.

Wonscotonach Parklands would have a southern border at the Lakeshore rail corridor over the Don River and Lower Don Trail, near Corktown Common, and a northern border at the Forks of the Don, where the East Don and West Don branches of the river converge, as shown in Attachment 3.

Individual parks and trails within the valley would retain their existing names (e.g. Riverdale Park East). Wonscotonach Parklands would be a general area name and identity for the network made up by these spaces, similar in approach to the Emerald Necklace network of parks in Boston. Evergreen's Don River Valley Park project has been one catalyst for thinking of the network of parks and trails in the Lower Don as "one space."

Wonscotonach is understood to be the Anishinaabemowin place name for the Don River, though there is evidence of other names, other spellings, and different definitions for the word Wonscotonach. The word exists in historical documents, on a plaque, on a mural and in song.

Since the April 2018¹² Council meeting, Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff in collaboration with the Indigenous Affairs Office have held four stakeholder engagements with the Indigenous community: three in Toronto with representatives from various First Nations and Indigenous organizations, including a Language Circle with Indigenous Scholars, and one trip to engage with members of the Mississaugas of the Credit First

¹⁰https://www.metrolinxengage.com/sites/default/files/final_epr_appendix_p8_consultation_record_indigenous_communities_consultation.pdf

¹¹ <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.AA12.5>

¹² <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.PE26.4>

Nation, as the treaty holders, at their location near Hagersville. Sessions focused on the name and spelling of "Wonscotonach" and its meaning, as well as the potential for Indigenous place-making and programming in the Wonscotonach Parklands. On the name, there was general recognition for the existing records and history, but also an understanding that meanings and spellings can be fluid, and that this should be recognized in any formal documentation such as plaques and identity programs. Participants in the place-making session highlighted the fact the Lower Don, while improving, has been polluted through industrialization and development. Restoring the lands and waters to health is a primary consideration, following which programming like medicine gardens and wild rice growing might be considered, for example. Land-based programming and water-based learnings with Indigenous cultural components were top requests, particularly for youth and elders. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations subsequently formally endorsed the proposal in January 2021.

Public consultation was further held at Regent Park Community Centre in September 2019. The consultation was focused on proposed capital project work in the Lower Don and was led by Parks, Forestry and Recreation. A presentation on the Wonscotonach Parklands proposal was also given. Participants were keenly interested in the capital project work and none expressed concerns over the Wonscotonach Parklands naming proposal at the meeting. Of the 24 letters received after the public consultation, all about the capital projects, three referenced the Indigenous naming, saying it was important, that it should not take so long, and that the new name should be supported and that any capital projects should not negatively affect natural areas.

Evergreen's Don River Valley Park project website¹³ has also published two articles on the Wonscotonach Parklands initiative, in collaboration with Parks, Forestry and Recreation. The first publication, "Rivers, Parks and Reconciliation: Wonscotonach Parklands Proposal,"¹⁴ outlined the naming proposal that came to the Aboriginal Affairs Committee in 2017 and the subsequent motion at City Council in April 2018, while also providing some history around the naming of the Don River. The second, "Wonscotonach Parklands: What We're Hearing"¹⁵ summarized the discussions from the first two engagement sessions, focusing on Indigenous place-making and programming opportunities in a newly named space.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation also held three pop-up outreach events through 2019. Two were held at Indigenous Social events at Evergreen Brick Works (informal events held with members of the Indigenous community), and another at the Brick Works Saturday Farmers' Market, attended by members of the general public.

The COVID-19 pandemic slowed public consultations on the proposal but Parks, Forestry and Recreation in coordination with the Indigenous Affairs Office plan to undertake final consultations on the Wonscotonach Parklands this year acknowledging Metrolinx's plans, and will bring forward a final recommendation to Toronto and East York Community Council for approval, per Council direction under 2018.PE26.4 *Update*

¹³ Wonscotonach Parklands: What we're hearing | The Don River Valley Park

¹⁴ <https://donrivervalleypark.ca/news/rivers-parksand-reconciliation-wonscotonach-parklands-proposal/>

¹⁵ <https://donrivervalleypark.ca/news/wonscotonach-parklands-what-were-hearing/>

*on the Partnership with Evergreen and Establishing an Identity for the Lower Don Parklands*¹⁶ City staff will report out on the naming in early 2023.

An Indigenous name for the Lower Don Parklands would be just the beginning of a project that would include Indigenous programming, place-making and identity projects, with Indigenous leadership. Discussions on these topics are in the early stages. Wonscotonach Parklands is just one of many Indigenous place-making projects currently under way across the city, coordinated by the Indigenous Affairs Office in collaboration with various City divisions and other organizations.

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Detailed Conceptual Don Valley Layover Facility Plans

Attachment 2: City of Toronto Expectations for Metrolinx's Don Valley Layover Facility

Attachment 3: Proposed Wonscotonach Parklands Boundary

¹⁶ <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.PE26.4>
Metrolinx's Proposed Don Valley Layover Facility and the Wonscotonach Parklands

Since the TPAP's completion and EPR's publication in 2021, Metrolinx has hosted two additional community engagement sessions, as well as site visits and stakeholder workshops to answer questions from participants about the Facility. At the April 15, 2021 Virtual Open House, Metrolinx provided the below *Proposed Site Plan* to participants.



Attachment 2: City of Toronto Expectations for Metrolinx's Don Valley Layover Facility

City staff comments will continue to focus on how the Facility impacts the City's Official Plan Policies related to Parks and Open Space and Green Space System, Ravine Strategy Implementation (2017), Strategic Forest Management Plan (2012-2022), Toronto Biodiversity Strategy (2019), Lower Don Trail Access, Environment + Art Master Plan (2013), Reconciliation Action Plan (2022) among other City Plans and Strategies. When detailed design submissions become available, City Divisions, expect Metrolinx to fulfill several conditions currently outlined in the EPR, including some of the following:

A. Recreational Uses and Lower Don Trail System

- preparing phased construction management plan to ensure public and park operations and emergency access to the Lower Don Trail during construction;
- mitigating construction impacts (e.g. erosion protection and enhanced construction hoarding and signage for public safety);
- restoring park infrastructure to current City standards (e.g. trail improvements, wayfinding signage);
- maintaining existing art installations (e.g. the Gargoyles) and previously identified gathering spaces licensed with Evergreen;
- reducing visual impact of the Facility from the park and licensed areas through landscaping and restoration plans; and,
- applying anti-graffiti coatings on public facing surfaces including greening of retaining walls.

B. Natural Habitat/Heritage

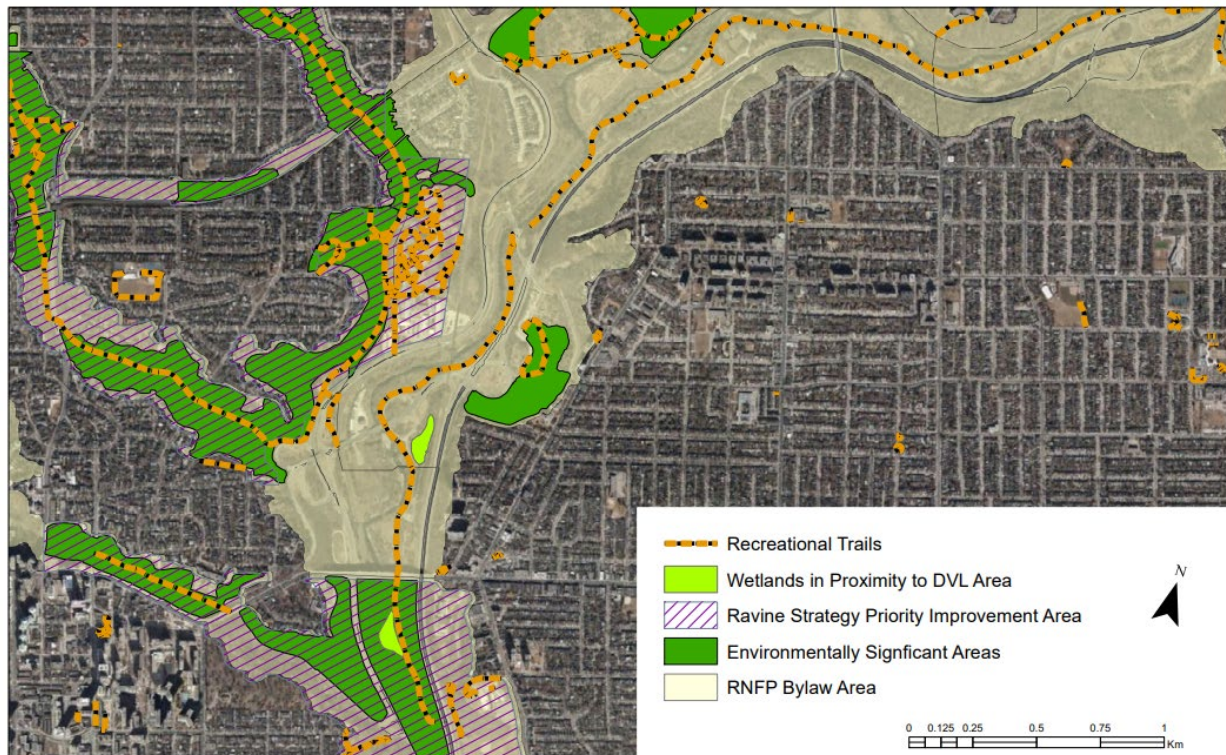
- ensuring impacts to the natural heritage system are minimized, and wherever impacts cannot be avoided, options are identified for restoration, and/or compensation, to ensure no net loss as a result of this project;
- conducting a thorough vegetation and species at risk assessment of the area to determine appropriate mitigation and restoration plans in support of any City permit or TRCA VPR applications;
- minimizing vegetation removals and injuries; providing compensation to the satisfaction and approval of the City per applicable bylaws, TRCA requirements and Metrolinx Vegetation Guidelines;
- reducing visual impacts of the Facility through design, landscaping and restoration plans that include native species;
- minimizing light sources that impact park and environmentally sensitive areas; and,
- preserving views to and from the culturally significant Prince Edward Viaduct bridge.

C. Wetlands (Figure 3)

- ensuring that the proposed access road located between Helliwell's Hill Wetland community and the watercourse does not impact/impair the wetland function as a result of the road alignment both during and post construction;

- recommending further wetland hydrology assessments, including a wetland water balance risk assessment, to identify impacts to surrounding wetlands; and,
- protecting existing wetland functions and not precluding any planned Natural Environment & Community Programs project improvement areas (e.g. Chester Springs Marsh) and Ravine Strategy Priority Investment Areas.

Figure 3: Context Plan for Lower Don parklands. Image not to scale.



D. Don Valley Flood Risk

- ensuring fill in the flood plain is minimized;
- ensuring all buildings and track upgrades can be removed from the flood plain, or flood proofed to the regulatory storm event, plus freeboard;
- ensuring no impediment to safe passage of flood flows, that the risk to life and property as a result of natural hazards is addressed; and,
- ensuring the works will not result in impacts to flood storage and conveyance upstream or downstream of the site.

E. Erosion Impacts

- identifying the extent of disturbance to the valley slope as a result of the earthworks needed for both track upgrade and layover facilities, and ensure the disturbance is mitigated for erosion hazards and instability;
- mitigating and monitoring impacts on the Don River both during and post construction;
- preparing an erosion and sediment control plan for review and approval; and,
- avoiding permanent fencing off of the shared access road to maintain multi-use access allowing access by Parks and Hydro staff to the area and allowing for its current use as overflow from the Lower Don Trail during high season.

F. Additional Opportunities for Compensation

- securing opportunities for park system expansion identified in City of Toronto plans and strategies through the restoration of lands used for construction staging (e.g. Snow Drop Park area used for construction staging be restored and provided back to the City in base park condition);
- securing funding to support the Toronto Parks & Trails Wayfinding Strategy in the Lower Don Valley;
- protecting for the implementation of future trail improvements and connections both north and south of the Facility (e.g. Loop Trail);
- removing barriers and protecting for positive user experiences to create inclusive places that are equitably accessible including identifying gaps in the trail system and not precluding planned capital projects; and,
- protecting for future public art and culture opportunities planned in the vicinity of the Facility project site and Prince Edward Viaduct, including but not limited to the Luminous Veil Phase 2 Project.

City staff will also continue to promote the following Official Plan Policies:

Policy 2.3.2.4: The sale or disposal of publicly owned lands in the Green Space System will be discouraged. No City owned land in the Green Space System will be sold or disposed of. However, City owned land in the Green Space System may be exchanged for other nearby land of equivalent or larger area and comparable or superior green space utility.

Policy 2.3.2.5: Within the Green Space System, development will not result in the loss of public space.

Policy 4.3.3: The areas shown as Natural Areas on Maps 13-23¹⁷ will be maintained primarily in a natural state, while allowing for:

- a) compatible recreational, cultural and educational uses and facilities that minimize adverse impacts on natural features and functions; and
- b) conservation projects, public transit, public works and utilities for which no reasonable alternatives are available, that are designed to have only minimal adverse impacts on natural features and functions, and that restore and enhance existing vegetation and other natural heritage features.

Policy 4.3.6. Any development provided for in Parks and Open Space Areas will:

- a) protect, enhance or restore trees, vegetation and other natural heritage features and maintain or improve connectivity between natural heritage features;
- b) preserve or improve public visibility and access, except where access will damage sensitive natural heritage features or areas, or unreasonably restrict private property rights;
- c) maintain, and where possible create linkages between parks and open spaces to create continuous recreational corridors;

¹⁷ <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/official-plan-maps-copy/>

- d) maintain or expand the size and improve the usability of publicly owned Parks and Open Space Areas for public parks, recreational and cultural purposes;
- e) respect the physical form, design, character and function of Parks and Open Space Areas; and
- f) provide comfortable and safe pedestrian conditions.

Policy 4.3.8: The sale or disposal of publicly owned lands in Parks and Open Space Areas is discouraged and no City owned lands in Parks and Open Space Areas will be sold or disposed of. However, City owned land in Parks and Open Space Areas may be exchanged for other nearby land of equivalent or larger area and comparable or superior green space utility.

Attachment 3: Proposed Wonscotonach Parklands boundary. DTAH, 2022.
Image is not to scale.

