

**City Council****Motion without Notice**

MM11.27	ACTION			Ward: 23
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**Advancing Steeles Avenue Widening Archaeological Assessments - by Councillor Jamaal Myers, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll**

*\* This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.  
\* This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

**Recommendations**

Councillor Jamaal Myers, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll, recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Transportation Services, to negotiate and enter into appropriate agreements with The Huron Wendat First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation and Mississaugas of Credit First Nation for the required archaeological assessments for the Steeles Widening project on terms and conditions acceptable to the General Manager, Transportation Services, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

**Summary**

In 2013, the Minister of the Environment issued a Notice of Approval to York Region to proceed with the "Donald Cousens Parkway to Morningside Avenue Link", including the widening of a section of a 1.5km long section of Steeles Avenue from Tapscott Road to Ninth Line. The City of Toronto is undertaking the Steeles Avenue Widening project and is currently in the detailed design stage. The project is jointly funded by the City of Toronto and York Region. The design is currently anticipated to be complete by the end of 2024, with construction starting in 2025.

The project area includes four (4) sites where archeological assessments are required along Steeles Avenue West and in the vicinity of the Ninth Line. Three (3) require a Stage 2 Archeological Assessment and one (1) requires a Stage 3 Archeological Assessment.

In March 2022, the City of Toronto and York Region notified Indigenous communities of the need for this work. The Huron Wendat First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation and Mississaugas of Credit First Nation responded with requests to participate in these archeological assessments. Archaeology is of importance to Indigenous communities to help document their histories and peoples and identify sacred sites and ancestral remains. Engagement of Indigenous communities in the archaeological assessment process is recognized and supported by the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. Initially, City staff were working to address this requirement through York Region's established processes. Utilizing these processes is no longer possible as some of the lands are federally owned and part of the Rouge National Urban Park. As such, legal agreements between the City of Toronto and each of these First Nations is required to advance the archeological work and detailed design.

The City is currently working on a policy regarding entering into legal agreements with Indigenous communities for the purpose of their participation in archeological assessments as outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan (Strategic Action 5c). In advance of such a policy being adopted, Council authority is required to negotiate and enter into legal agreements with the aforementioned First Nations for the Steeles Avenue Widening project for the purpose of conducting archeological investigations.

This matter is urgent so that City staff may negotiate and sign the required legal agreements and be able to advance archaeological work in the Spring of 2024.

**Background Information (City Council)**

Member Motion MM11.27