

## **Supplementary Information: Scarborough Bluffs West Project, Environmental Assessment Agreement**

**Date:** May 21, 2025

**To:** City Council

**From:** Director, Waterfront Secretariat

**Wards:** Scarborough Southwest (Ward 20)

### **SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to provide additional information on DM30.1, Scarborough Bluffs West Project: Environmental Assessment Agreement. This report includes recommendations that: authorize staff to enter into an administrative agreement necessary to facilitate the Environmental Assessment; and direct staff to report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee with the results of the completed Environmental Assessment, prior to submitting it to the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Director, Waterfront Secretariat recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the City Manager on behalf of the City of Toronto to enter into the Agreement for the Application of the Environmental Assessment Act: Scarborough Bluffs West Project with the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority so that the Environmental Assessment for the project is subject to the rigour of a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment process under Part II.3 of the Environmental Assessment Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.E.18.
2. City Council direct that the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Parks and Recreation, Toronto Water and Transportation Services, report to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee with the results of the completed Comprehensive Environmental Assessment indicated in Recommendation 1, prior to submitting it to the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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There are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report, in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

## DECISION HISTORY

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On April 23 and 24, 2025, City Council deferred consideration of MM29.18 - Scarborough Bluffs West Project: Environmental Assessment Agreement.  
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.MM29.18>

On December 15, 16, 17, 2021 (EX28.6), City Council approved a Toronto Water Capital contribution towards the following project, identified as a priority restoration project by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, as part of the 2022 Toronto Water Capital Budget, with funds from the Toronto Water Capital Reserve and administered by Transportation Services, and Parks, Forestry and Recreation as follows: \$2,912,000 for the Scarborough Bluffs West Project Environmental Assessment with a total project cost of \$2,912,000 cash flow in 2022 (\$728,000); 2023 (\$1,456,000); and 2024 (\$728,000). City Council also requested the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to include in their 2022 Budget submission a request for the Scarborough Bluffs West Project Environmental Assessment as part of the 2022 Budget process. Further, City Council directed the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to complete the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment Project.  
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2021.EX28.6>

## COMMENTS

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### General Comments

In November 2023, following Council's directive in December 2021 and subsequent budget approval in 2022 (EX28.6) the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment commenced as an Individual Environmental Assessment, first with the Terms of Reference phase that included two rounds of stakeholder engagement.

In 2024, the Province changed legislation replacing Individual Environmental Assessments with the new Comprehensive Environmental Assessment framework requiring waterfront projects to meet a certain threshold of impact (1km of shoreline alteration and 4 hectares of lakefill). Following Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's confirmation that it is unknown at this time whether those new thresholds will be met, as alternatives are not developed at the Terms of Reference stage, the Ministry

of Environment, Conservation and Parks advised Toronto and Region Conservation Authority that the only way for the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment to proceed as a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment was through the signing of a voluntary agreement to undertake a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment.

In April 2025, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks sent Toronto and Region Conservation Authority a copy of the voluntary agreement for the City and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to sign as co-proponents. As the original City Council authority to undertake the Environmental Assessment predated the changes to the Environmental Assessment Act, City staff did not have authority to enter into an agreement with the province for the voluntary agreement. Approval of the recommendations in this report would allow staff to enter into the agreement with the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, an administrative step required for the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment to proceed as already started.

### **Provincial Legislative Changes and the Effect on the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment**

To undertake a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment for waterfront projects, two thresholds of impact now need to be met. These thresholds are that the preferred alternative for the project must include 1 km of altered shoreline and 4 hectares of lakefill. While the eventual preferred alternative for the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment may result in this extent of shoreline alteration, this will not be known until the alternatives are developed and evaluated as part of the Environmental Assessment process and a preferred alternative has been selected. No alternatives have been developed yet for the Scarborough Bluffs West Project as this happens in the 'Environmental Assessment' stage of a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment. The project is currently in the 'Terms of Reference' stage of the Comprehensive Environmental Assessment.

To address the updates to the Environment Assessment Act legislation, the Ministry of Conservation, Environment and Parks has suggested that the Comprehensive Environmental Assessment for the Scarborough Bluffs West Project be undertaken through a voluntary agreement with the Minister. Entering into the Agreement with the Minister of Conservation, Environment and Parks is the step required to continue the already commenced Environmental Assessment, as communicated by Ministry staff, given legislative changes to the Environment Assessment Act. Following Council approval to enter into an Agreement to undertake a voluntary Comprehensive Environmental Assessment for the Scarborough Bluffs West Project, the Agreement will serve to allow the project to continue as a Comprehensive Environmental Assessment (as defined under the new Environment Assessment Act). The Comprehensive Environmental Assessment process is the most rigorous Environmental Assessment process (it replaced the previous 'Individual Environmental Assessment').

## **Next Steps in the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment Process**

Once the Agreement is signed and the Terms of Reference is accepted by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks, the Terms of Reference will be posted by the Ministry, along with the Record of Consultation and a table of all previous comments received and how each of those comments were addressed in the Terms of Reference. The public, agencies, Treaty Holders and Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to submit comments directly to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks on the Terms of Reference over a 30-day review period. Comments submitted will be provided to the project team by the Ministry for response. The project team's response to each of these comments will then be evaluated by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks and presented to the Minister for a decision. If there are substantive issues identified during the review period that have not been adequately addressed in the proposed Terms of Reference, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks will inform the project team that changes to the document may be required.

The Minister's decision options are: approve, approve with amendments, or, reject.

If the Minister approves the Terms of Reference, or amends and approves the Terms of Reference, the project team can begin preparing the Environmental Assessment. The Environmental Assessment must be prepared in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference, including any amendments made by the Minister. During the Environmental Assessment phase for the Scarborough Bluffs West Project, there will be three rounds of consultation with the public, Community Advisory Group, landowners, Treaty Holders and Indigenous communities, agencies, and other stakeholders.

## **Alternative Concepts for the Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment**

No alternatives for the project have been developed yet. Plan view concepts and renderings of proposed alternatives will be created and made available to the public in the 'Environmental Assessment' stage of the Comprehensive Environmental Assessment process. Environmental Assessments do not involve development of detailed designs. Following completion of the Environmental Assessment and approval by the Province, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority would seek funding to undertake detailed design work of the preferred alternative, in partnership with the City.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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