

NOTICE OF MOTION

Protecting the Cottonwood Flats and the Lower Don Lands

Moved by: **Councillor Fletcher**

Seconded by: **Councillor Nunziata**

SUMMARY:

The Lower Don and Cottonwood Flats are vital green spaces that support biodiversity and offer residents a peaceful connection to nature. The illegal raves that took place this summer and last summer in the Cottonwood Flats and the Lower Don area have caused significant damage to the lands and ecosystem there.

Community groups including Don't Mess with the Don (DMWTD), Toronto Field Naturalists, and Nature Stewards have shared strong concerns with these non-permitted events which have caused great harm and undermined years of dedicated restoration and stewardship efforts by these organizations.

Vehicles entering the site have severely damaged the landscape—leaving tire marks, destroying plants, and damaging sensitive soil. Local residents have reported noise complaints and waste left behind here.

It will be necessary to create an action plan to deter unpermitted events, restore and protect these lands, and uphold the City's environmental parkland and sustainability goals in the Don Valley.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. City Council request the Deputy City Manager, Community and Emergency Services, in collaboration with the Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Services, the local Councillor, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Toronto Police Services 55 Division, Toronto Police Services Canine Unit, local naturalist groups and neighbors to develop a plan to deter and shut down unpermitted illegal events from occurring in the Cottonwood Flats and the Lower Don area prior to the end of Q2 2026.
2. City Council request the Deputy City Manager, Community and Emergency Services to direct the immediate and ongoing restoration and protection of the natural environment of Cottonwood Flats and the Lower Don, which may include the installation of a fence.