

June 7, 2026

TO: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

RE: Queen's Park North Donation – Concept Plan Update Report

AGENDA ITEM: IE30.8

RECOMMENDATION: The General Manager, Parks and Recreation and the Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry recommend that the Infrastructure and Environment Committee receive the subject report for information

Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee,

Several members of the Heritage Committee of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association have been involved in the process to revitalize Queen's Park North – participating in numerous information and stakeholder input sessions over the past number of years.

The SLNA Board of Directors supports the revitalization process as it has unfolded to date, and looks forward to the Association's continued participation in the next steps. Although SLNA was not involved from the very beginning, the board appreciates that the City of Toronto has a unique opportunity to revitalize the existing park and transform it into a *destination*, through a substantial private donation. In a city with limited public realm (park) resources, it is critical that we maximize the use of our existing parks through cost effective and engaging programming and animation.

Public spaces have many stakeholders, and for both residents and tourists alike, basic amenities such as washrooms and a café/coffee shop would encourage people both to visit the park and to remain in the park longer, rather than simply passing through it. Given the park's unique configuration, there is a significant opportunity to further animate the space by inviting people to enjoy the "temple of trees," the Indigenous Interpretive Scope of Work, and the broader history of the land.

The City has invested considerable resources in community engagement, and the community in turn has provided thoughtful, sensitive, and constructive feedback. At this stage, both the SLNA Board and its Heritage Committee believe that the City, its consultants, and the private donor have sufficient input and information to begin to move forward with the next phase of the project.

SLNA also suggests that the City can continue to benefit from these types of public-private partnerships in the future and encourages earlier engagement of stakeholders as part of any similar processes or opportunities moving forward.

For Queen's Park North, looking ahead ten, twenty, even as much as fifty years, a café and other amenities would help create a place where people visit, gather, linger, and enjoy the spaces throughout the changing seasons, rather than simply using the park as a corridor. With already strong pedestrian activity in the area, encouraging people to pause and spend more time in the park should be viewed as a desirable and positive outcome.

The City continues to face many pressing social challenges, including housing, making this a welcome opportunity to elevate and celebrate an important public space.

Governance and stewardship of the park is also important, and the City has many successful examples to draw upon, including advisory committees and other stewardship models.

The success of this particular public-private partnership is vital in that it may encourage other donors to support future civic projects. This revitalization has the potential to transform the park into a *destination*, particularly given its proximity to Yorkville, the ROM and other significant visitor attractions.

Expanding the amenity offerings in the park through the addition of a café or restaurant may also create opportunities for modest revenue generation that could help support additional park programming and/or park maintenance.

Park revitalization moving in this direction is not unique to Toronto. Successful examples in other cities, including Bryant Park and Madison Square Park in New York City, have seen amenities and food service become integral parts of vibrant and successful public spaces.

Overall, the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association has been fortunate to be able to participate in rich and robust conversations throughout this process. While there will always be opportunities to review the process and identify lessons learned – including the sequencing of community engagement and consultation – there is now sufficient information and more common ground than areas of disagreement to be able to move this revitalization forward.

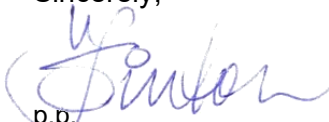
The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA), a non-profit corporation incorporated in 1983, represents over 35,000 residents living in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood of Toronto. The neighbourhood – bounded by Yonge St., Queen St. E., Parliament St. and the rail corridor to the south – is a mixed-income, ethnically diverse residential and commercial community adjoining the Central Business District. The Association advocates for responsible development, heritage preservation, and community engagement by fostering relationships with local businesses, institutions, and all levels of government.

The St. Lawrence neighbourhood includes the oldest neighbourhood in the (now) City of Toronto, the *original ten blocks* of the Town of York (dating from 1793). It includes historic 19th-century low-rise buildings as well as family-friendly, mixed-income residential communities developed in the late 20th century. While Queen's Park North is not contained within the neighbourhood's boundary, it is only a short distance away, and contributes much needed critical mass to the public realm in Downtown Toronto and the Downtown East.

In summary, a generous private donation and the bringing together of significant expertise have led to a shared opportunity to create a meaningful and lasting public space for future generations.

The SLNA Board supports the both the contents and the direction of the subject report and is appreciative of the opportunity to participate.

Sincerely,



P.P.
Board of Directors
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association



cc: Mayor Olivia Chow

Members of the Infrastructure and Environment Committee:

Coun. R. Chernos Lin	Coun. M. Colle	Coun. P. Fletcher	Coun. A. Morley
Coun. J. Pasternak	Coun. A. Perruzza	Coun. D. Saxe	

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Deputy Mayor A. Malik	Coun. C. Moise
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Mr. T. Leka	Mr. S. Linton	Ms. S. Rossovskaja	

SLNA Heritage Committee:

Ms. S. Kavanagh – Chair