
Section K.11:

Pre-Assessment of Project Impacts for Discussion with Indigenous Communities



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Waterfront East Light Rail Transit (LRT) Transit and Rail Project Assessment Process

City of Toronto, Waterfront Toronto, and Toronto Transit Commission

This pre-assessment document provides a summary of the anticipated impacts of the Waterfront East LRT project that the project team understands may be of interest to Indigenous communities. The summary is based upon the work performed to date on the project, along with feedback received from Indigenous communities through several meetings and presentations. This pre-assessment gives an overview of impacts in the following categories, along with a summary of proposed mitigation measures:

- Terrestrial Habitat
- Aquatic Habitat
- Archaeological Resources
- Built Heritage Resources

The project team understands that this document is based only on our interpretation of Indigenous community interests that has been expressed to us. We request that communities identify any other areas of interest, any areas where further information would be helpful, or anything that you feel has been missed in this pre-assessment. We remain committed to working closely with Indigenous communities through completion of the project assessment process under Transit and Rail Project Assessment Process (Ontario Regulation 231/08), as well as through design and implementation of the project.

For additional background information on the project and more detailed assessments of impacts and mitigations, please refer to materials previously provided, including the introductory letter, briefing slides, and draft Environmental Project Report and relevant technical reports (e.g., natural heritage report, cultural heritage reports, etc.).

1 Project Overview

The City of Toronto, Waterfront Toronto, and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) are proposing an expansion of Toronto's streetcar service to the eastern waterfront, referred to as the Waterfront East LRT (project). The portion of the network included within the project area spans slightly over 2 km, including an underground connection from Union Station to Queens Quay using existing streetcar tunnels underneath Bay Street, and dedicated surface streetcar right-of-way along Queens Quay East to the future Street A (immediately east of Parliament Street). The purpose of the project is to bring much needed higher capacity transit service from Union Station to the eastern waterfront to serve current and future residents, visitors and workers in the area as dense existing and planned development proceeds. Environmental approvals for the project are being sought through the project assessment process, previously transit project assessment

process, as an update to the previously approved 2010 East Bayfront Transit Class Environmental Assessment, which has since expired.

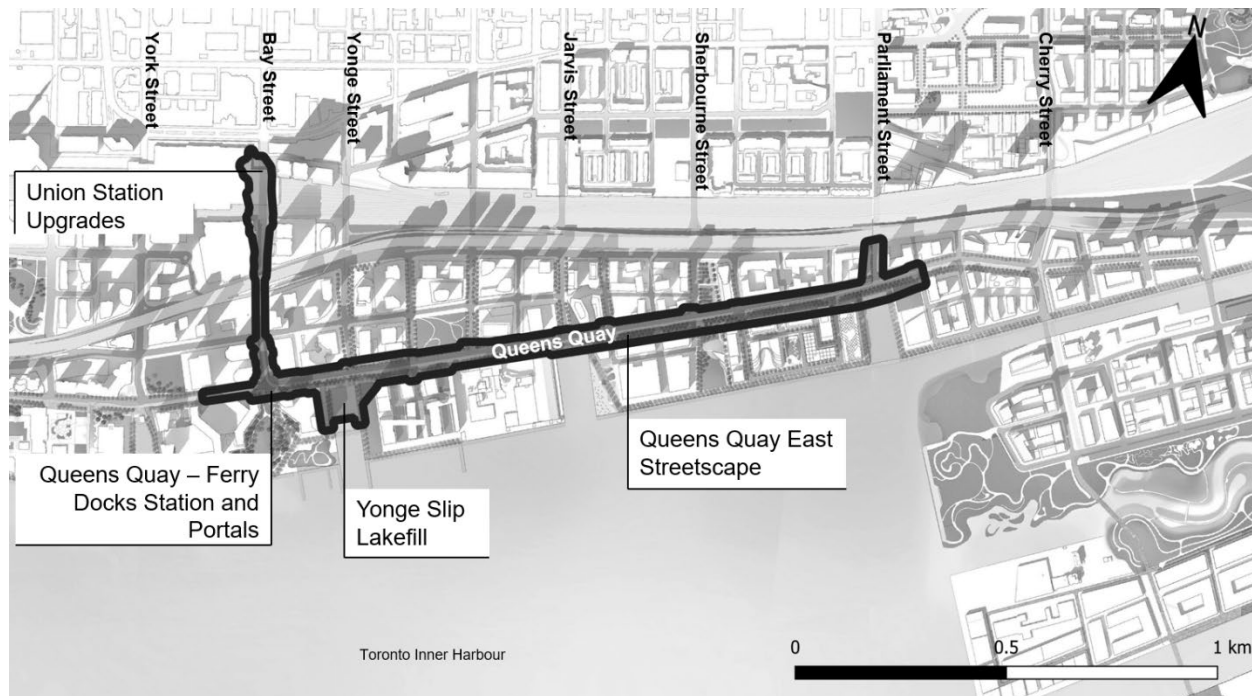


Figure 1. Map of the Waterfront East LRT TRAP Project Footprint

2 Terrestrial Habitat (EPR Section 4.3.3)

Anticipated Impact on Indigenous Interests: Improvement

As this project proposes an overall significant improvement to the Terrestrial Habitat, the project team does not anticipate negative impacts to Indigenous interests.

Identified Impacts: Relative to the existing condition, the concept design offers a more diverse and structured riparian habitat. As part of the project, there is an increase in number of trees at an approximate ratio of four new trees to every displaced tree. There is also an increase in planted surfaces. During construction, removal and injury of some existing trees will be required.

Proposed Mitigation: During construction, mitigation measures will be employed including implementing tree preservation, protection, or injury measures as required, including tree-sensitive demolition and root-sensitive excavation and root pruning. Additionally, the project will strive to adhere to City of Toronto guidelines for planting, which will include replacement trees.

3 Aquatic Habitat (EPR Section 4.3.2)

Anticipated Impact on Indigenous Interests: Improvement

As this project proposes an overall improvement to the Aquatic Habitat, to be developed as part of a planned habitat offsetting plan, the project team anticipates a net improvement to Indigenous interests.

Identified Impacts: Lakefilling is proposed in the Yonge Street Slip as part of the project, along with construction of new dockwalls to enclose the infill area. During construction as a temporary impact, lakefilling activities may impact physical conditions in the slip and habitat for aquatic species. Mitigation measures are proposed accordingly. The existing habitat in Yonge Street Slip is degraded, with contaminated substrates, absence of habitat structure and submergent vegetation, and uniform vertical dockwall edges. As a result, the inclusion of various habitat enhancements in the project design is expected to significantly improve the overall function and quality of habitat within the Yonge Slip in the future permanent condition. It is also acknowledged that the lakefill would result in reduced space to carry out traditional activities.

Proposed Mitigation: Aquatic habitat enhancement features are planned to be implemented as part of the design to replace the lost habitat (conceptual habitat improvement measures are discussed in the draft EPR Appendix D), and a Request for Review process will be undertaken with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. This is anticipated to improve the long-term aquatic habitat conditions. Numerous measures to mitigate any short-term negative impacts during construction are identified in the draft Environmental Project Report, including practices such as erosion and sediment control measures, isolation of in-water works, fish removals, materials inspections, and considerations for operating machinery. The public realm enhancements at the water's edge to be delivered through the project will allow people to more easily access the water, and is expected to thus continue to support traditional activities such as fishing.

4 Archaeological Resources (EPR Section 4.4.1)

Anticipated Impact on Indigenous Interests: Minimal

As the identified potential impacts relate to non-Indigenous Archaeological resources and the broader study area was not found to retain archaeological potential as a result of previous deep and extensive disturbance or being previously assessed, the project team does not anticipate impacts to Indigenous interests. Stage 1 Archaeological Assessments were previously circulated for review with Indigenous communities in October 2023.

Identified Impacts: Based on the Stage 1 Archaeological Assessments completed, it is anticipated that during construction, potential impacts are limited to the 30 Bay Street/60 Harbour Street property and localized area near Parliament Street and Lake Shore Boulevard, during excavation. These potential impacts relate to identified archaeological

resources including the Harbour Square Wharf and 1870 Don Breakwater. Other areas of the project are primarily located on filled lands, and as a result of previous deep and extensive disturbance or being previously assessed, were found not to retain archaeological potential.

Proposed Mitigation: As detailed in the draft Environmental Project Report, a program of archaeological monitoring during construction is proposed for excavations below identified depths that are near the resources noted (75m ASL for Harbour Square Wharf, 76m ASL for Don Breakwater). This program would be undertaken by a monitoring archaeologist, and the monitoring plan would include a procedure in the event that archaeological resources are discovered unexpectedly.

5 Built Heritage Resources (EPR Section 4.4.2)

Anticipated Impact on Indigenous Interests: None

As these potential impacts relate to non-Indigenous Built Heritage resources, the project team does not anticipate negative impacts to Indigenous interests.

Identified Impacts: Possible impacts to identified or potential Built Heritage resources are documented, including Union Station Complex, Dominion Public Building, Postal Delivery Building, Union Station HCD, Brookfield Place, Royal Bank Plaza, Gowans Kent Building, Toronto Harbour Commission Building, Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto Star Building, Redpath Sugar Plant, Gardiner Expressway over Parliament Street, and Victory Soya Mills Silos. Impacts are generally limited to potential property takings or alterations for access, and indirect impacts due to construction activities (e.g. vibration, adjacent lay down area).

Proposed Mitigation: As a first option, heritage attributes relating to several built heritage resources will be avoided. Alternatively, Heritage Impact Assessments would be prepared for these resources. Protection measures are to be implemented for the Union Station, the Dominion Public Building, the Postal Delivery Building, the Toronto Harbour Commission Building, and the Westin Harbour Castle Complex. Vibration monitoring is planned for some other heritage resources. Mitigation measures are documented in greater detail in the draft Environmental Project Report.