

Scarborough Bluffs West Environmental Assessment: Community Advisory Group Meeting #4

Date: Tuesday May 12, 2026

Meeting Type: In person

Start time: 6:00 p.m.

End time: 8:00 p.m.

Meeting Objectives:

Receive feedback on the draft information that will be shared with the public during Consultation Round #3 as the first step of the Environmental Assessment phase, including the preliminary proposed alternatives and draft evaluation criteria. Feedback will be used to refine materials prior to the public drop-in event on June 1, 2026.

Meeting Overview:

The meeting was facilitated by Marc Rose from SLR Consulting and was arranged as an informal and interactive workshop session that allowed the project team to share draft public consultation materials in the same manner as is being planned for the public drop-in event. Andrew Harkness, Project Lead from Stantec presented an overview of the draft public consultation materials, grouped into sections including:

- Project Background, Process, Timeline and Study Area
- Project Vision + Objectives
- Existing Conditions
- What We Heard During the Terms of Reference Phase
- Alternatives Development Process
- Segment 1A alternatives
- Segment 1B alternatives
- Segment 2 alternatives
- Segment 3 alternatives
- Segment 4 alternatives
- Preliminary Evaluation Criteria
- Next Steps

Andrew was supported by Jane Graham, coastal engineering consultant from Shoreplan Engineering and Mike Diez de Aux, geotechnical consultant from Grounded Engineering. Members had the opportunity to ask questions and comment throughout the workshop.

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Discussion:

Below is a record of key points, concerns and follow ups from the meeting.

- Suggestions
 - Develop an FAQ and/or panel to better explain the risk lines and stable slope
 - Include more information on the baseline and existing conditions, including the natural heritage features (ESAs, ANSIs, Species at Risk), and cultural and recreational uses
 - Demarcate existing flood hazard line on the “Do Nothing” drawings
 - Present preliminary evaluation criteria before the segments
 - Include more information about the larger Scarborough shoreline and bluffs, referencing the adjacent Scarborough Waterfront Project in particular
 - Transit access / stops should be noted (Note: Transit stops are already shown on the Site Opportunities maps)
- Comments
 - Consider public washroom facilities and other amenities (e.g., skating oval), noted particularly in Segment 1A.
 - Varying opinions about whether the beaches in Segment 1B have changed over time. Jane clarified that the beach material between the groynes is part of the shoreline protection system. The bluff is protected by an engineered groyne and beach system. The groynes hold the beach material in place. The beach material is able to move within the groynes.
 - Victoria, BC is an example of a waterfront with a mixture of urban, natural and industrial areas, all subject to wave conditions and closures at times. Waterfront trails are still planned despite flood risk, it just means you have to plan carefully.
 - In Toronto, islands and bridges have to be looked at for safety risk and seasonal constraints (ice, wave overtopping, etc).
 - Crescentwood park and road are falling into the lake. Is this the time to put a dead end at Kildonan?
 - Existing waterfront trail is often blocked by parked cars and delivery vehicles on the narrow connecting lanes.
 - Consider gathering nodes in tableland options too.
 - Segment 4 is a prominent surf spot.
 - Segment 4 would be a good area for an off-leash dog use.

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- Differing opinions on the proposed bridges in Segment 4. Some noted it would be an eyesore and could impact view of the Bluffs, and others commented that it would be beautiful. It was suggested that consideration should also be given to a shoreline trail (with lake infill) in front of the Needles. Andrew stated that the aesthetics of the bridge would have to be given a lot of thought if this option were to move forward.
- The informal trail along the top of bluffs in Segment 4 is already a special place.
- BLUFFS Inc does not agree with the wetland assessment in the Terms of Reference. Concerned about impacts to species at risk (e.g., bank swallows, butternut trees).
- Ecology integrity is important. Alternatives should look at ways to protect and enhance.
- Toronto Field Naturalists suggested that more information about habitat enhancement opportunities as part of the alternatives would be beneficial.
- Public access and a trail do not have to conflict with ecological integrity and protecting natural habitat.
- Social responsibility and justice are important and that includes human beings. When thinking of existing conditions, you must consider human use, including the existing unofficial uses. Broader social justice must be balanced with ecological considerations. This is a huge part of the city and for a vast majority of the population, this is their waterfront and recreational area and they have a right of enjoyment.
- People are looking for water access and beaches.
- Water quality is important, and people are already swimming here.
- Pleased to see the project is looking to make the Fishleigh access safer. Fast track this as a priority element as it's used all the time by the community and is part of the lifestyle of the neighbourhood.
- Existing conditions include current use of the water by sailing community, swimmers, paddlers, etc. Consider how to enhance water use through the project and reflect this in the evaluation criteria.
- 'Party culture' at Secret Beach is part of the existing condition. Need improved access for EMS.
- Cliffcrest SV SW Residents Association noted that there is reference to other guiding studies and initiatives, but Scarborough Waterfront Project (the neighbouring project) is not referenced – the broader context of the Scarborough shoreline needs to be considered and communicated.

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Additionally, the cumulative effect of the proposed project on the shoreline to the west must also be considered, as the lake drift on the north side is westward. (Note: the project team added a new board to highlight the entire Scarborough shoreline and coordination between projects).

- Questions/Comments
 - Why is the risk line shown in the lake?
 - **Response:** The toe of slope risk lines reflect the expected long term stable slope conditions of the Bluffs assuming slope toe protection is in place to allow for future infrastructure beyond the risk line (e.g. multi-use trail).
 - Are you showing the existing baseline conditions in your segments? What is the flood risk?
 - **Response:** We're showing existing conditions as part of the 'Do Nothing' but also consider how conditions may change over time for each of the segment alternatives. We looked at wave actions and at what elevations would be safe to place a trail at. The flood hazard is the 100-year water level plus an allowance for wave action/uprush.
 - The horizontal slope constraint information has been presented at length, however, the vertical constraint presented by the lake is not presented. The elevation required to protect the infrastructure from normal dynamic lake forces (100 year storm, wave uprush) should be included in the figures, and a line should be shown on the plan view that reflects the elevation of the vertical platform that is required to protect the proposed alternatives from the lake forces. An increase in elevation of approximately 5m was mentioned in the meeting.
 - **Response:** Each alternative has been developed considering the design coastal conditions. Some alternatives will be subject to more wave overtopping or wave spray than others, which will be considered during the evaluation of alternatives. During the meeting, it was noted that the elevated boardwalk in Segment 3 would need to be higher to be above the talus profile at the toe of the slope.
 - What does your coastal engineer say about what happens when bluff material lands at the bottom of the beach?
 - **Response:** Where the shorelines are protected by groyne and beach systems some of the bluff material will be retained by the groynes and some of the material will be washed away. In the areas that are protected by armour stone revetments, the cohesive bluff material will either fall behind or on the revetment depending on the position of the revetment. The bluff material exposed to wave action will be washed away.

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- The bottom of slope risk line assumes that the bottom of slope is stable. This can be accomplished by local stabilization at the existing toe of slope. This approach is reflected in the presentation materials where the elevated boardwalk alternatives illustrate this compact, localized stabilization.
 - **Response:** The elevated boardwalk is one of many shoreline protection alternatives being assessed under a variety of criteria as part of the EA.
- The bottom of slope risk line is misleading. It is not an outcome associated with the desire to stabilize the base of the slope. As outlined above, localized treatment achieves that requirement. Rather, the bottom of slope risk line is associated with a design decision to eliminate the existing beach and fill the lake to create a platform for a new thoroughfare, as explained below.
 - **Response:** Per the materials provided, the bottom of slope risk line is assessed for the positioning of a potential waterfront trail, which is an objective of the EA.
- The bottom of slope risk line is a line that reflects the accumulation of soil from the eroding bluff. This line does not exist as presented and is not an existing condition. As is well known, the normal dynamic lake processes pick up any bluff erosion deposits on the beach and distributes the material through the lake due to wave action. The bottom of slope risk line as presented is an artificial condition that could only exist if Lake Ontario did not exist. Since the lake does exist, it is not a valid representation. Accordingly, the bottom of the existing slope is the existing risk line. This should be corrected on all figures.
 - **Response:** The bottom of slope risk line is assessed for the purpose of locating a potential waterfront trail. It assumes that the lake effects creating erosion (e.g. wave action) are mitigated through the coastal protection required to protect a waterfront trail, which would then allow talus/debris to accumulate. Where ongoing slope erosion is expected according to the analysis criteria, the risk line will be lakeward of the toe of slope. Coastal processes are central to the analysis. The lake does exist in our analyses.
- The bottom of slope risk line is an artificial condition that only exists if you remove Lake Ontario from all interactions with the bluff. The figures and text should clarify the conditions that must exist for it to occur.
 - destruction of existing natural beaches
 - filling the beach and lake to create tableland at an elevation where the lake has no influence on the bluff or any erosion deposits that may accumulate from the bluff until the bluff self-stabilizes (flattens).

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- **Response:** The bottom of slope risk line is assessed for the purpose of locating a potential waterfront trail. We can verify that the lake does exist in our analyses. Coastal processes are central to the analysis.
- You must clarify on which alternatives this line is relevant, and clearly state that it is a design characteristic of that alternative and not a natural risk line inherent in the bluffs. This is a significant change in the existing ecosystem that has far reaching impacts.
 - **Response:** The bottom of slope risk line is relevant to any alternative the considers a) the existing slope condition (with a caveat as follows), and b) the provision of adequate shoreline protection required to protect a trail. Caveat: if future alternatives require stabilizing the existing slope, as may be required at Crescentwood Park/Road independently of this EA, and if stabilization is to proceed in the short term, the bottom of slope risk line could reflect that stabilized condition instead. This would be clearly indicated.
- Since the bottom of slope risk line is unnatural, you should clarify that the bottom of slope risk line is an engineered line which can move based on the intent of the designer. The panels that were presented showed two different engineering approaches for the risk line - one which pushed the risk line into the lake to the greatest extent possible, and an alternative approach, where the designer decided to limit the lake filling by providing a basin for sediment.
 - **Response:** The bottom of slope risk line is an engineering assessment of slope stability according to the parameters and criteria of the EA (e.g. the creation of a shoreline trail, the applicable factors of safety, etc.). It is not a survey of an existing condition.
- Do the risk lines exist today or is this a future condition?
 - **Response:** Wherever the bluffs are not fully stabilized, some erosion and slope instability is still expected as the slope flattens through natural processes. Risk lines exist today – this is an existing condition. If we want to think about risk lines within the context of the existing shoreline, and we see a risk line in the lake, we might think "slope instability is still expected according to the design criteria, and if there were an instability, talus could spread this far". However, we acknowledge that talus won't be able to *accumulate* in the lake – it would be washed away.
 - **Post meeting follow up:** Following the CAG meeting, BLUFFS advised the City/TRCA that the top of slope risk lines illustrated on their figures were inconsistent with the 2023 TRCA initiated and endorsed geotechnical study that was undertaken as part of this EA. The study was undertaken with the knowledge of the affected property owners and with

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copies of the findings provided to the affected owners by the TRCA. BLUFFS questioned the need for a new study when there was already a current study for this EA and why the affected owners were not notified of a new study. BLUFFS asked the City to stop the public release of EA consultation materials pending the resolution of this matter. It was the City/TRCA who chose arbitrarily to remove risk lines on private property and proceed with the public release of information. The underlying issue remains unresolved.

- **Post meeting response:** It was clarified by the project team that the 2023 Terraprobe report was undertaken for a separate purpose and was not undertaken as part of this EA. The risk lines developed for this EA are specific to siting and protecting public infrastructure, and the assessment has been completed by a different geotechnical engineer. Owners were not notified of a new study because the conclusions remain the same between both assessments. BLUFFS Inc. raised concerns about implications to private property by sharing the risk lines, and in response, the City/TRCA removed risk lines on private property on all public facing materials. As the purpose of the risk lines is specific to public infrastructure, only risk lines on public property need to be shown. Continued engagement with BLUFFS Inc. has been had to discuss concerns about how risk lines are derived and what they mean.
- Does the analysis consider groundwater conditions?
 - **Response:** Yes. Multiple groundwater surfaces are included in every numerical model of slope stability, based on the nearest factual information (boreholes and monitoring wells) as well as our visual observation of the slope face (visible seepage on the slope itself, indicating drainage). A theoretical high groundwater table (temporary, infrequent) has also been assessed according to the appropriate factor of safety criteria.
- In Segment 1A, did you explore putting a trail in front of the R.C. Harris Water Treatment Plant seawall?
 - **Response:** Yes, but there is a lot of existing infrastructure in place that would make it difficult. Toronto Water staff were supportive of a trail in front of (along Queen St) or across the property where users already frequent.
- Could you add a gentle fence and signage along the proposed boardwalk in Segment 1A to help avoid conflict?
 - **Response:** That would be a detailed design detail at a future stage, should this alternative be selected.

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- In Segment 1B, with the 'T' shaped groyne alternative, would beaches form again and would this area see more beach?
 - **Response:** We would design it with beach material, and it would need to be nourished (material added).
- In Segment 1B, the islands look interesting. Have you considered making them more natural as habitat islands?
 - **Response:** No, we have only proposed them for the trail system at this time. However, habitat enhancement features are important considerations for all alternatives that will be explored.
- Could you include islands solely for nature, and place the trail on the shoreline?
 - **Response:** No, as the trail along the shoreline would be located within the risk line. The purpose of the islands to facilitate a trail location outside of the erosion risk area.
- Is parking a criteria?
 - **Response:** Effects within the community is considered in the evaluation table. The Preliminary Evaluation Criteria can be refined based on feedback received.
- Are you doing a parking study? Are you looking at parking impacts for both tableland and shoreline options?
 - **Response:** Proximity to parking and transit stops was considered when identifying the potential access points. Community impacts will be considered as part of the assessment of alternatives.
- In Segment 3, would waves hit the elevated boardwalk?
 - **Response:** No, the boardwalk is proposed to be far back and is elevated.
- What's the plan for Fishleigh construction access?
 - **Response:** Fishleigh is being studied to see if there are ways to make it more accessible. We are looking at a variety of options to create a gentler path, perhaps through switchbacks.
- Could you build headlands at the base of Fishleigh to create more sandy beach conditions?
 - **Response:** Depends on how it was shaped, but a headland would be exposed to wave action and change surfing conditions.
- Is there the ability to fast track construction of the Fishleigh access? Brimley road still isn't completed and that was identified in the adjacent Scarborough Waterfront Project Environmental Assessment.

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- **Response:** There is no timeline for Fishleigh. Brimley Road South Multi-use Trail is under construction now. It is important to note that Environmental Assessments can have an overall vision but be implemented in phases, with elements prioritized.
- In Segment 4, how much lighting would you need on any proposed bridge for boats?
 - **Response:** Navigation protection measures would be needed.
- In Segment 4, what is the depth of water. Boats like to anchor close to the Bluffs.
 - **Response:** The depth varies based on the option. Depths around bridge alignment 1 (further offshore) vary between 2-3 metres below average water level. Depths around bridge alignment 2 (nearshore option) vary between 1-2 metres below average water level.
- When you are evaluating constraints and looking at alternatives, have you looked at wetlands?
 - **Response:** Yes, impacts to the natural environment, including vegetation communities of concern, and species at risk are included in the evaluation criteria.
- Wetlands are not discussed in the Terms of Reference and existing wetlands in the study area have not been assessed to date. The City of Toronto identifies very few wetlands in the Official Plan, however, the Study Area is clearly identified in the OP Maps as including significant wetlands. Based on Provincial, City and TRCA policies, significant wetlands require protection. Wetlands must be assessed in accordance with the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System. No such evaluation has taken place. **[note: this was a statement with no response requested during the meeting]**
 - **Post meeting response:** Consideration of wetlands are included in the Terms of Reference, along with their mapping in Appendix D. As has been previously communicated to BLUFFS Inc., an Ontario Wetland Evaluation System study will not be undertaken for the Project Study Area. In December 2022, the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System was changed through Bill 23. These updates included removal of wetland complexes, where individual wetlands are grouped based on their functional connection. As a result, no wetland along the Scarborough Bluffs West Project Study Area shoreline would be eligible for evaluation through the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System as they are all individually less than the minimum 2 hectares in size. The City of Toronto Official Plan's Map 12B includes up-to-date mapping of Provincially Significant Wetlands, which are not located in the Project Study Area.

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- Minimum standards should not be applied to the study area which includes zoning such as an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) and an Environmental Significant Area (ESA) and Natural Area. The study area also includes "unevaluated wetlands", species at risk, and Lake Ontario beaches with dynamic forces. Notwithstanding the above, the TRCA ecology inventory is 10 years old (animals) and 15 years old (vegetation), which is apparently TRCA's maximum duration between studies. How can the Environmental Assessment proceed when the environmental information is obsolete before the study starts, even by even the most generous interpretation of study frequency. Surely the sensitivity of this area deserves more than minimum standards, and reliance on statements about catching up after the study has commenced.
 - **Response:** We are following TRCA's standard for monitoring which is 10-15 years (10 years for animals, 15 years for plants and vegetation communities). However, we are currently updating the terrestrial inventory information this year, as 2026 is when the fauna data expires. Data is collected seasonally (spring, summer, fall) and this year's data set will be used in the evaluation of alternatives.
- Have you considered ecology properly as a constraint? It was pointed out by two attendees that the presentation materials included almost no environmental content, which they felt was unusual for an environmental assessment.
 - **Response:** The natural environment is an important part of the Environmental Assessment. We heard the concerns raised through the Terms of Reference phase and have developed a wide range of alternatives – some of which are not even on the shoreline.
 - **Post meeting response:** The existing natural environment conditions were presented in the earlier rounds of consultation during the Terms of Reference phase. QR codes linking to these materials were included on the Round #3 information panels. This information is also detailed in the Terms of Reference document itself. However, in response, additional existing conditions boards, including those describing the natural environment, were included as part of the final consultation materials for Round #3. These were available in person at the Public Drop-in Event on June 1, 2026, as well as on the project website.
- It was pointed out that it is impossible to provide comments due to the absence of any environmental constraints. For example, provincial policies related to species at risk, wetlands and dynamic beaches could invalidate some or all of the concepts. It is premature to prepare alternatives, let alone comment on them.

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- **Response:** The existing conditions, including species at risk, wetlands and other vegetation communities of concern, have been detailed in the Terms of Reference. These are factored into the evaluation of alternatives.
- There is reference to other guiding studies and initiatives, but Scarborough Waterfront Project (the neighbouring project) is not referenced – the broader context of the Scarborough shoreline needs to be considered and communicated, along with the cumulative effect of the proposed project on the shoreline to the west. It is understood that the construction of Bluffer's Park, and formation of the beach over 50 years, has robbed sand from the western Bluffs, Beaches and Toronto Islands and may be contributing to erosion there. Is this being studied now?
 - **Response:** Yes, existing and future sediment transport processes are being considered as part of this project.

Attendees

CAG Members:

- BLUFFS Inc.
- Bluffer's Park Boating Federation
- Cliffcrest SV SW Residents Association
- Surfing Community
- Toronto Field Naturalists
- Waterfront for All
- Waterfront Regeneration Trust
- *Regrets: Cycle Toronto, Scarborough Greenway Network Project, Unbounded*

Councillor Offices:

- Otis Abbott, Councillor Bradford's Office

City of Toronto:

- Meg St John, City Planning, Waterfront Secretariat
- David O'Hara, Parks and Recreation, Parks Planning & Strategic Initiatives
- Pranav Bhajiwala, Transportation Services, Cycling & Pedestrian Projects

TRCA:

- Katherine Learney, Special Projects
- Amy Roots, Special Projects

Consultants:

- (Host) Marc Rose, SLR Consulting
- Andrew Harkness, Stantec
- Jane Graham, Shoreplan Engineering
- Mike Diez de Aux, Grounded Engineering

Additional Post Meeting and Post Public Drop-in Event Feedback:

Bluffer's Park Boating Federation:

Identified that certain areas need more attention:

- Safety on the water because of increased paddle board and small craft traffic.
 - **Post meeting response:** Comment noted.
- Safety on land in low traffic months and wooded areas. Any plan for lighting?
 - **Post meeting response:** Feasibility of trail lighting will be explored during detailed design.
- Safety on the Bluffs access because of steep hill.
 - **Post meeting comment:** A primary objective of the project is to improve access to and along the shoreline, and this will include new and/or enhanced access points to the water. The extent to which each potential access point can meet accessibility guidelines currently under review, and opportunities to reduce grades, where technically feasible, are being explored.
- Safety for Fire, Police & Ambulance access.
 - **Post meeting comment:** Public safety is a critical objective, and this considers options for improved access for Emergency Services to and along the shoreline.
- Neighborhood considerations -- currently no parking plan, no study of neighborhood problems with the Brimley hill and the Brimley hill overcrowding on busy days.
 - **Post meeting response:** Impacts to the local community are included as part of the evaluation of alternatives, and the project is exploring the feasibility of undertaking a study of transportation options during the Environmental Assessment, recognizing the limitations of that data.
- Question about how this plan fits with the local Councillor Parthi Kandavel's plan for Bluffer's Park area.
 - **Post meeting response:** The Bluffer's Park Action Plan (BPAP) is still in the early planning stages, but will align and build on the outcomes of the Scarborough Waterfront Project and Scarborough Bluffs West Project. For more information about the BPAP, please view the [City's website](#).

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- Could not find any news about TRCA contacting Parthi's office.
 - **Post meeting response:** Notice of the public drop-in event scheduled for June 1, 2026 was provided by TRCA and the City to Councillor Kandavel's office, and was included in Councillor Kandavel's newsletters released on May 23, 2026 and May 30, 2026.
- At SBSC, we have a Swan program to assist and help these birds and I am worried about habitat loss for both bird and local animals on the Bluffs at the expense of "progress". Saw a deer last week at Kingston Road and Birchmount. Also have many other animals and are a stop for Monarch butterflies.
 - **Post meeting comment:** One of the project objectives focuses on the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Alternatives will be evaluated based on their impact to the natural environment, and will consider habitat loss, as well as the opportunity for habitat creation and/or enhancement.
- Also worried about the amount of small fish with increasing number aggressive birds like cormorants.
 - **Post meeting comment:** Comment noted. Cormorant management is outside the scope of this project. However, TRCA currently manages two cormorant colonies along the Toronto waterfront at Tommy Thompson Park and Toronto Island Park. We will pass along this concern to the TRCA team who administers the cormorant management program and are happy to share more information about the program, if interested.
- As for the bridge going at the foot of the "needles" it should not be very far off shore
 - **Post meeting response:** Comment noted.
- We should accommodate boats anchoring near the Bluffs in a sheltered area.
 - **Post meeting response:** Comment noted.
- Last comment is about the current need for Police closing Bluffers Beach at night in the Summer months and the water fatality last summer at Bluffers and the water fatality at Cherry beach in May 2026. Does the City of Toronto have the resources and \$\$ to go ahead with this project in a safe environment? As Commodore at SBSC I have asked for on water help for years. The answer -- not in the Budget. Is this going to change?
 - **Post meeting response:** Currently only the Environmental Assessment phase of the project has been funded. At this time, there is no funding secured for the design or construction of the future preferred option that will be selected through the Environmental Assessment process and subject to Ministry approval. Broader City priorities and resource needs will be considered to inform how, when or if this project advances to the later design and construction phases.