

Section I – Items for Authority Action

TO: Chair and Members of the Authority
Meeting #6/18, Friday, July 20, 2018

FROM: Chandra Sharma, Director, Watershed Strategies

RE: **THE MEADOWAY**
Parking for Community Access

KEY ISSUE

Update on Executive Committee request for parking to access The Meadoway in the Lawrence/Brimley/Midland Avenue area of Scarborough, City of Toronto.

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS The Meadoway is a transformational opportunity that will revitalize 16 linear kilometres and over 500 acres of transmission corridor in Scarborough, City of Toronto, by creating high functioning meadow habitat complete with a connected multiuse trail, recreation and urban agriculture opportunities;

AND WHEREAS requests to establish community access points and connections to The Meadoway, including parking, are important to consider when planning a viable multiuse trail for The Meadoway;

AND WHEREAS a Municipal Class Environment Assessment Schedule C is being initiated in October 2018, in partnership with the City of Toronto, to determine multiuse trail alignment options and access points including parking to complete the active transportation network in The Meadoway;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT staff continue to work with City of Toronto, Hydro One Network Incorporated (HONI) and community stakeholders through the proposed Class Environmental Assessment process to ensure that the alignment and connections associated with the proposed multiuse trail meet the needs of the community in which it will serve while balancing social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts.

BACKGROUND

At Executive Committee Meeting #4/18 held on June 4, 2018, Resolution #B56/18 in regard to Scarborough Butterfly Trail Parking was approved as follows:

THAT Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) staff work with local Toronto City Councillors and community groups, including the Jame Abu Bakr Siddique Masjid Mosque at 2665 Lawrence Avenue East, as well as City of Toronto staff, other landowners and other stakeholders, to examine options for parking that allow the public to gain access to the Scarborough Butterfly Trail in the Lawrence/Brimley/Midland Avenue area;

THAT TRCA request the City of Toronto to consider funding the creation of a parking lot in the Lawrence/Brimley/Midland Avenue area of the Scarborough Butterfly Trail through its own capital budget or through an increase in capital funding to TRCA;

Item 8.6

AND FURTHER THAT TRCA staff report back to the July 2018 Authority meeting on the feasibility of creating/increasing parking supply in this area of the Scarborough Butterfly Trail.

An Overview of The Meadoway

Led by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and The Living City Foundation in partnership with the City of Toronto and The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, The Meadoway is transforming 16 kilometres of transmission corridor in Scarborough into one of the largest urban linear greenspaces in Canada.

Formerly known as the Gatineau Hydro Corridor Revitalization, The Meadoway will provide a green, active, east-west link between downtown Toronto and Rouge National Urban Park, while creating urban agriculture opportunities and connecting greenspaces across Scarborough. The creation of a system that includes high-functioning meadow habitat on a scale never before seen in Toronto, combined with the development of active transportation connections, will help promote low carbon alternatives for the thousands of Torontonians who commute daily in Scarborough.

Toronto is home to some of Canada's most incredible urban parks, from High Park to Morningside. While these natural areas have well-established north-south connections, they lack the east-west connections that are required to effectively establish a connected natural system that is vital to the future of sustainable city building in the Toronto region. At over 500 acres, The Meadoway will provide a vital east-west linkage between the Don River ravine and Rouge National Urban Park supporting the City of Toronto's Ravine Strategy (2017).

The Meadoway will also become a key segment of Toronto's cycling network, supporting overall cycling infrastructure and building a connected link between the East Don Trail and Rouge National Urban Park. It is an opportunity to transform the relationship between the built structure of an urban area and the natural spaces that are vital to the overall health of the system.

To assess the viability of a transformational idea like The Meadoway, two revitalization pilot projects completed by TRCA with funding support from The W. Garfield Weston Foundation were implemented between 2012 and 2017. The first of these pilot projects, the Scarborough Centre Butterfly Trail, has been widely recognized as one of the most successful revitalization projects in Toronto. By transforming a 3.5 kilometre section of the corridor into a naturalized habitat for biodiversity, an active transportation route, and a beautiful wildflower meadow planted by community members, the Scarborough Centre Butterfly Trail showcases the immense potential of The Meadoway.

On April 11, 2018, City of Toronto Mayor John Tory, along with the Directors of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation and representatives from TRCA and The Living City Foundation, jointly announced The Meadoway at a ceremony in Scarborough. As part of this announcement The W. Garfield Weston Foundation announced a pledge up to \$25 million to support the project as it evolves over the coming months, with a firm commitment of \$10 million available immediately. The project has a total proposed budget of \$85 million, nearly 40% of the budget has been pledged to date.

Item 8.6

Community Connections and Access Points to The Meadoway

The City of Toronto has committed \$6.3 million in its Capital Budget and Plan for infrastructure investments that will help to realize the shared vision for The Meadoway by supporting the trail and cycling infrastructure, and will continue its responsibilities for ongoing operations and maintenance in the corridor.

Establishing effective connections for the community to access the proposed multiuse trail is a vital component of integrating The Meadoway into the Scarborough community, to determine trail alignment alternatives along with appropriate community access points and associated parking along The Meadoway. This will be accomplished through consultation and engagement of local stakeholders, community and project partners through the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process to be initiated in October 2018 by TRCA in partnership with the City of Toronto.

At TRCA Executive Meeting #4/18 on June 4, 2018, Members requested staff to examine options for parking that allow the public to gain access to the Scarborough Butterfly Trail in the Lawrence/Brimley/Midland Avenue area adjacent to the Jame Abu Bakr Siddique Masjid Mosque at 2665 Lawrence Avenue East.

TRCA staff met with the representatives of Jame Abu Bakr Siddique Masjid Mosque on July 10, 2018 to gain a better understanding of the proposed request, share TRCA's planning process, and to ensure that this landowner continues to be consulted as part of the proposed Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Schedule C.

Staff will continue to follow-up on initial discussions with the Mosque representatives as well as other stakeholders such as HONI and City of Toronto to ensure best possible outcomes.

RATIONALE

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process is designed to ensure that the alignment and connections associated with the proposed multiuse trail meet the needs of the community in which it will serve while balancing social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts.

To effectively manage public interest and provide a transparent process to evaluate proposed access and associated parking opportunities for the multiuse trail in The Meadoway, staff will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure these request are addressed through the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

- In partnership with the City of Toronto, initiate the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (October 2018) for the multiuse trail in The Meadoway.
- As part of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process, review all public requests for access to The Meadoway, and establish preferred options for access and potential parking along the entire trail system.

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