

Section I – Items for Board of Directors Action

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors
Meeting #10/19, Friday, November 29, 2019

FROM: Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer

RE: **SCARBOROUGH WATERFRONT PROJECT AND SCARBOROUGH BLUFFS
WEST UPDATE**

KEY ISSUE

Update on the status of the Scarborough Waterfront Project and proposed Scarborough Bluffs West Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) project and request for approval from the Board of Directors to proceed with the detailed design of the West Segment of the Scarborough Waterfront Project, including the Brimley Road South multi-use trail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

WHEREAS Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), in partnership with the City of Toronto, undertook an Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) to create a system of greenspaces along the Lake Ontario shoreline between Bluffer's Park and East Point Park in Toronto that will respect and protect the significant natural and cultural features of the Bluffs, enhance the terrestrial and aquatic habitat, and provide a safe and enjoyable waterfront experience (the Scarborough Waterfront Project);

WHEREAS TRCA received approval from the Authority Board on July 28, 2017 (Resolution #A137/17) to submit the Draft Scarborough Waterfront Project EA Report to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) for public and agency review, and to proceed to City of Toronto Executive Committee and City of Toronto Council to request approval to formally submit the Final Scarborough Waterfront Project (SWP) EA Report, once completed, to the Ministry for public and agency review;

WHEREAS TRCA received approval from City of Toronto Executive Committee on May 14, 2018 and City of Toronto Council on May 22, 23 and 24, 2019 (Resolution EX34.5) to submit the Final SWP EA Report to the MOECC, now MECP, for formal Ministry Review in June 2018;

WHEREAS TRCA received funding of \$4.895 million over two years as part of the 2019 City Budget process to refine the preliminary overall costing for the entire SWP EA and report to the City for the City Council-approved stage 2 stage gating review, as well as complete the detailed design of the West Segment, which includes the funding required for the Brimley Road South multi-use trail detailed design and construction;

WHEREAS TRCA received approval for the Final SWP EA Report from the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) on November 5, 2019.

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT staff, in partnership with the City of Toronto, proceed with the detailed design of the West Segment of the SWP, including the design of the Brimley Road South multi-use trail, based on the concept approved through the Individual EA process;

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THAT an update on the status for the SWP be brought forward to the Board of Directors following completion of the West Segment detailed design phase;

THAT staff work with City of Toronto staff to secure budget to allow initiation of the proposed Scarborough Bluffs West Individual EA project in partnership with the City of Toronto;

AND FURTHER THAT an update on the status of the Scarborough Bluffs West Individual EA project and any required approvals be brought to the Board of Directors for their consideration in the Spring of 2020.

BACKGROUND

Toronto City Council on December 16, 2013 adopted, in part, the following resolution (EX.36.17):

City Council amend the Toronto Water budget by including \$1.5 million for Environmental Assessment work on the Scarborough Waterfront Erosion Control and Access Plan, with funding from the Toronto Water Capital Reserve.

At Authority Meeting #3/14, held on April 25, 2014, Resolution #A36/14 was approved, in part, as follows:

... THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT TRCA staff be directed to work with the City of Toronto to initiate the Scarborough Waterfront Access Plan Individual Environmental Assessment.

Based on this direction, TRCA, in partnership with the City of Toronto, initiated a study in 2014 under the Environmental Assessment Act (EA Act) with a vision to create a system of public greenspaces along the Lake Ontario shoreline between Bluffer's Park and East Point Park, which respect and protect the significant natural and cultural features of the Bluffs, enhance terrestrial and aquatic habitat, and provide a safe and enjoyable waterfront experience. This section of the Scarborough waterfront has been the subject of many studies seeking to understand stressors on the ecosystem, public access issues, and the nature of public safety and property risks posed by shoreline erosion. While the Scarborough Bluffs are an iconic feature of the Lake Ontario shoreline, due to limited public access and existing public safety hazards, the water's edge along this section of the waterfront is not formally accessible to the public. Ultimately, the Scarborough Waterfront Project (SWP) has the potential to provide formal public access along a currently inaccessible area of the Scarborough waterfront between Bluffer's Park and East Point Park, while comprehensively addressing the risks to public safety and public property and enhancing the natural heritage system.

The SWP will fulfill the strategic recommendations of previous planning processes and the City of Toronto Council direction, to address the existing risk to public safety and public infrastructure due to erosion along the shoreline, and providing for increased public space while improving and enhancing the natural heritage system. It also supports and advances TRCA's Living City Policies, the City of Toronto Official Plan and the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail initiative, which recognize the need to balance waterfront revitalization, public access, natural heritage, and natural hazard protection and management.

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Public ownership of waterfront lands is a key means to managing natural hazards, while providing accessible open space integrated with opportunities for public enjoyment and aquatic and terrestrial enhancements.

The study was undertaken in accordance with the Provincial *EA Act* (1990), as an objectives-based Individual EA, where the Project Vision and Objectives were established early in the planning process through extensive public and stakeholder consultation, and are used to describe the Project and structure the development and evaluation of Alternatives.

The Project Objectives are to:

- protect and enhance terrestrial and aquatic natural heritage features and linkages;
- manage public safety and property risk;
- provide an enjoyable waterfront experience;
- maintain consistency and coordinate with other initiatives; and,
- achieve value for cost.

Ultimately, a 'Preferred Alternative' was identified which best meets the Vision and Objectives of the Project.

Summary of EA Process

The EA was completed in two stages as required by the *EA Act*. Stage one included the completion and approval of a Terms of Reference. The purpose of the Terms of Reference was to describe how the EA should be carried out and to provide the public, agencies and Aboriginal communities with an opportunity to comment prior to proceeding with the study. TRCA completed the Terms of Reference and it was approved by the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) on December 15, 2015. Stage two of the Project included the completion of the EA and preparation of the EA Report in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference.

Approval was sought and received from TRCA's Authority Board on July 28, 2017 to submit the Draft EA Report to the MOECC on August 17, 2017, and to proceed to City of Toronto Council to request approval to formally submit the Final EA Report, once complete. Following the 45-review day review period for public, agency and other stakeholder comment, the EA Report was revised and finalized. As per the approval by the TRCA Authority Board to proceed to City of Toronto Council (Resolution #A137/17), further approval was sought and received from the City Executive Committee, followed by City Council, in May 2018 to formally submit the Final EA to the MOECC for public and agency review (Resolution EX34.5).

The Final EA was submitted to the MOECC, now MECP, for formal Ministry Review on June 15, 2018. The Final EA was made available for public review for seven weeks, with the comment period ending on August 3, 2018. Following the completion of TRCA's responses to comments received and minor document amendments, the Ministry Review was released for public and agency comment on February 22, 2019 for a regulated five-week comment period, ending on March 29, 2019.

Responses to comments on the Ministry Review were prepared by TRCA and provided to MECP for further internal review by staff, and subsequently the Minister. TRCA received approval for the Final EA from the Minister of MECP November 5, 2019, as per the conditions outlined in Attachment 1.

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Overview of the Preferred Alternative

Overall the Preferred Alternative:

- addresses the existing risk to public safety by providing continuous formal public access outside of the risk line, along the water's edge between Bluffer's Park and East Point;
- formalizes long-term shoreline protection along areas of the shoreline currently protected by interim works (e.g., base of Doris McCarthy Trail / Bellamy Ravine and Guild Park and Gardens shoreline);
- addresses the risk from erosion to Grey Abbey Park and the public infrastructure along Greyabbey Trail;
- provides public access along the shoreline in sections where it is currently restricted by private property and critical infrastructure;
- contributes to minor improvements in water quality by reusing flows from existing stormwater outfalls in the creation of backshore wet features;
- results in 17.6 ha of new naturalized habitat and enhancement of nearshore aquatic habitat along the shoreline;
- results in a net benefit to the sensitive habitats at East Point Park by decommissioning approximately 8 km of informal trails, which are currently fragmenting the ecosystem and resulting in trampling and other impacts from unmanaged use;
- addresses the ongoing need for annual dredging at the Bluffer's Park marina entrance, by reducing sedimentation through the proposed headland expansion; and,
- provides improved access to and along the shoreline for all abilities.

Detailed design and subsequent construction of the project will be undertaken in phases. The West Segment will be the priority as there continues to be an increasing need to ensure safe access to and through Bluffer's Park for thousands of annual visitors. The Preferred Alternative for the West Segment, shown in Attachment 2, involves lakeward extensions of both the east headland at Bluffer's Park and the west headland at Meadowcliffe Drive to allow for the accumulation of sand along Bluffer's Park Beach. It also includes enhancements to Brimley Road south of Kingston Road to allow for safe pedestrian access to the shoreline, and may facilitate an additional construction access route to the Central Segment, potentially alleviating some construction traffic pressure through the Guildwood Village community.

The east headland at Bluffer's Park is an integral component of the Project and its purpose and function are intertwined with other components in order to address two key problems. First, ongoing sedimentation in the entrance to the Bluffer's Park boat basin is a navigation and cost concern for the City. Dredging of the boat basin entrance channel has been ongoing for the last decade, and annual costs continue to increase. The proposed headland addresses this sedimentation by directing the material onto the existing sand beach, and into deeper water, where it is removed through coastal processes. Second, there is the need to provide a safe trail connecting the east end of Bluffer's Park Beach to the existing shoreline protection works at Meadowcliffe. This headland, in conjunction with the expanded Meadowcliffe headland proposed at the east end of the beach, allows for the accumulation and retention of sand, thereby widening the beach and providing this connection.

The expansion of Bluffer's Park Beach will be designed to blend easily with the existing headland beach system at Meadowcliffe, closing the gap below Cudia Park and providing a continuous connection between the West and Central Segments of the Project. Given that the expanded Bluffer's Park Beach would take decades to form through sediment capture after the headlands are in place, it is currently proposed that the beach build-up be accelerated through

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the importation of fill material and the potential use of dredge material from the Bluffer's Park boat basin entrance.

The current access to Bluffer's Park is via Brimley Road South, which is steep, with the grade varying between 4% and 17%, and there is limited safe access for pedestrians and cyclists along this roadway. While a separated informal off-road path does exist on the east side of the road for the lower third of the ravine, pedestrians and cyclists need to walk along the road shoulder above this section without adequate separation from traffic. Pedestrian usage of the roadway can be significant during the summer when Bluffer's Park parking spaces are all occupied. Additionally, the ravine containing Brimley Road South is the site of a former landfill that limits the ability to cut into the ravine. The valley walls are steep and come down adjacent to the road.

Given the identified constraints, the construction of an at-grade path adjacent to Brimley Road with a signed downhill cyclist route has been deemed to be the most viable improvement. A new 1,030± m trail is proposed to the east of the existing roadway, at existing grades, from Barkdene Hills to Bluffer's Park (Attachment 3).

A multi-use trail along Brimley Road South would improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists who currently access Bluffer's Park along a narrow roadway with a steep grade. City Council has directed that the timing of the Brimley Road South multi-use trail project be assessed as part of the Cycling Network Plan update, which was reported to Council on June 13, 2019. The Cycling Network Plan update will review opportunities to include this project within the Transportation Services Capital Program, subject to the approval of the detailed design and taking into account capital budget coordination opportunities.

Completion of the Brimley Road South multi-use trail would address concerns with pedestrian and cyclist safety that currently exist along Brimley Road South, in alignment with the goals and objectives detailed in the Vision Zero Road Safety Plan. As road safety for pedestrians and cyclists is a key priority for the City, the first efforts of the Scarborough Waterfront Project would be to start design and construction on the Brimley Road South multi-use trail project to provide safe access down to Bluffer's Park.

Summary of Consultation and Project Feedback

Consultation is an integral component of the EA process, and was a core principle of the SWP. Consultation activities were initiated early in the process and the Project Team engaged with a range of interested stakeholders through a variety of forums and avenues, including a Stakeholder Committee, five (5) Public Information Centres, and other direct community engagement activities, such as individual meetings with landowners, community organizations and groups; outreach at Bluffer's Park and East Point Park; organized events (e.g., shoreline tours); and attendance at local community events.

Since its inception the Project has received significant public interest; comments received reflected a wide range of viewpoints, including a desire for a formal, continuous trail along the full length of the shoreline, a desire for no additional formal access along the waterfront, and support for the Refined Preferred Alternative as presented in the Draft and Final EA.

Specific to the West Segment, concern regarding potential impacts to one of the identified surfing locations at Bluffer's Park was indicated. The surfing community has previously raised concern that the expanded headland at Bluffer's Park will eliminate the existing 'Lighthouse' surf break. To address this concern as the Project proceeds into detailed design, TRCA has

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committed to engaging the surfing community, and other interested stakeholders, throughout the design process to determine if additional changes may be made to the headland to meet both the needs of the Project and the requirements of regulators, while maintaining the 'Lighthouse' surf break in some capacity.

RATIONALE

The Refined Preferred Alternative, as presented in the Draft and Final EA for the SWP, endorsed by TRCA's Authority Board and City Council and ultimately approved by the Minister of MECP, was identified as meeting the Project Vision and Objectives to the best extent. Overall, the SWP will fulfill the strategic recommendations of previous planning processes and support and advance TRCA's Living City Policies and the City of Toronto Plan, as it results in improvements to aquatic and terrestrial habitat, improved public access to the water's edge which is removed from the hazard risk associated with bluff erosion, a waterfront experience accessible to more people of all abilities, and a project compatible with local, regional and lake wide plans and policies related to the natural and human environment.

Scarborough Bluffs West Individual EA

TRCA continues to receive requests from Councillors and members of the public with respect to improving access to the shoreline west of Bluffer's Park. With the SWP EA now complete TRCA is in a position to re-initiate discussions with the City to confirm funding and other details so as to advance the Scarborough Bluffs West Individual EA project.

At City Council Meeting #11 on December 9 and 10, 2015, Resolution EX10.23 was passed which directed City Council, through the Capital Budget, to include a \$2 million Toronto Water Capital Reserve contribution towards the Scarborough Bluffs West Individual EA, cash flowed over the 2 or 3-year life of the project. This resolution would see the initiation of an Individual EA similar to SWP for the shoreline from Bluffer's Park west to R.C. Harris Water Treatment Plant. As SWP was in the middle of a comprehensive consultation process at this time a mutual decision between TRCA and the City was made to delay the new EA until the active planning process was complete to eliminate potential public confusion.

TRCA staff would like to embark on this Individual EA for Scarborough Bluffs West subject to confirming details around funding recognizing that this EA will be similar in timing and scope to the SWP.

Relationship to Building the Living City, the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan

This report supports the following strategies set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:

Strategy 2 – Manage our regional water resources for current and future generations

Strategy 3 – Rethink greenspace to maximize its value

Strategy 5 – Foster sustainable citizenship

FINANCIAL DETAILS

The total capital investment for the SWP is estimated to be \$170 million, over a 12-year implementation period, and additional post-implementation reporting and monitoring. Given the conceptual level of detail considered in the EA, and annual inflation over the course of the Project, the estimated capital investment includes a healthy contingency of 50%. The total capital investment will continue to be refined during the detailed design process, as concepts are further refined.

As per the staff report submitted to the May 14, 2018 City Executive Committee, and subsequently to City Council on May 22, 23 and 24, 2018, this Project will follow the City

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Council-approved “stage gate” capital planning and approval process. The work undertaken to date confirms the conceptual feasibility of the Project (stage 1). As part of detailed design, TRCA staff will undertake the work required to establish preliminary design and costs associated with the second stage of the process. Detailed costs for each Segment of the Project that would identify the eligibility of funding sources (i.e. erosion control separate from waterfront access and environmental enhancements) is not yet available. Confirmation of these cost estimates requires the 30% detailed design to be completed at the third stage of the City’s stage gating process (stage gate 3, class 3 costing) in conjunction with relevant City Programs.

As part of the 2019 Budget process, TRCA submitted a request and received funding of \$4.895 million over two years to complete the refined preliminary costing of the entire Project, as well as detailed design of the West Segment, which includes the funding required for the Brimley Road South multi-use trail detailed design and construction. Given the necessity to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety along Brimley Road, the Brimley Road South multi-use trail work will be a first priority in the West Segment detailed design process. Funds will be tracked through the 204-17 account code.

For the Scarborough Bluffs West project City Council has authorized \$2 million for the Individual EA which will have to be revisited through discussions with City staff. It is anticipated that the EA would cost approximately \$3.5 million to complete over a period of three or more years based on the experience with the SWP.

DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE

As requested by City Council, TRCA will refine the preliminary overall costing for the entire SWP and report to the City for the City Council-approved stage 2 stage gating review.

Through the remainder of 2019 and into 2020, TRCA, in partnership with the City of Toronto, will proceed with the detailed design of the West Segment of the SWP, including the design of the Brimley Road South multi-use trail. This work will include additional engineering and technical analysis, as well as and construction phasing and costing for the following components: the proposed expanded headlands at Bluffer’s Park and Meadowcliffe, the expansion of Bluffer’s Park Beach, and a multi-use trail through the Segment, including improvements to Brimley Road South and construction of a separated multi-use trail along the east side of Brimley, south of Barkdene Hills to Bluffer’s Park. Given the necessity to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety along Brimley Road, the Brimley Road South multi-use trail work will be a first priority in the West Segment detailed design process.

Following the completion of the West Segment detailed design phase, an update on the status of the SWP will be brought forward to the Board of Directors to present the refined construction costing along with a request for authorization to proceed with any next steps requiring Board approval.

TRCA staff will also engage the City in discussions around proceeding with the formal initiation of the Scarborough Bluffs West Individual EA. An update on the status of this EA will be brought to the Board of Directors which will include a refined workplan and financials after additional discussion with City of Toronto staff.

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Date: November 8, 2019

Attachments: 3

Attachment 1: Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks Decision and Notice of Approval, dated November 5, 2019

Attachment 2: Refined West Segment Preferred Alternative

Attachment 3: Proposed Path Along Brimley Road South