

## Section I – Items for Board of Directors Action

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Board of Directors  
Meeting #8/20, Friday, November 20, 2020

**FROM:** Michael Tolensky, Chief Financial and Operating Officer

**RE: MID-HUMBER GAP MUNICIPAL CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
Request for Delegated Authority

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### **KEY ISSUE**

Update on the status of the Mid-Humber Gap Project and request for delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to award any required contract services to support the advancement of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**WHEREAS** no meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors are scheduled for December 2020;

**AND WHEREAS** Resolution #A184/19, adopted at the October 25, 2019 Board of Directors meeting previously delegated the approval of all time sensitive procurements for the December 2020 time period to the Chief Executive Officer or his designate;

**AND WHEREAS** The City of Toronto funded TRCA to undertake a Feasibility Study in 2019 to address the Mid-Humber Gap which determined that a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, Schedule B was required to further advance the project;

**AND WHEREAS** The City of Toronto has requested that a Letter Agreement be prepared to allow for the transfer of funds to TRCA to lead the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment as a fee for service project;

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT** the update on the Mid-Humber Gap Project be received;

**THAT,** subject to the execution of the Letter Agreement with the City of Toronto, the Chief Executive Officer be delegated authority to award any contracts plus an appropriate contingency, required to move forward with the Mid-Humber Gap Municipal Class Environmental Assessment, if staff is unable to report to the Board of Directors as per TRCA Procurement Policy due to timing constraints;

**THAT** should TRCA staff be unable to negotiate a contract with the successful Proponent, staff be authorized to enter into and conclude contract negotiations with other Proponents that submitted quotations, beginning with the next lowest bid meeting TRCA specifications;

**THAT** authorized TRCA officials be directed to take whatever action may be required to implement the contract, including the obtaining of necessary approvals and the signing and execution of any documents;

**AND THAT** staff report back on the contract award to the future Board of Directors

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meeting.

### BACKGROUND

The Mid-Humber Gap Project was one of 26 multi-use trail projects identified in the *Bikeway Trails Plan* adopted by Toronto City Council in 2012. The project is defined as a 1.4 km gap in the Humber Recreational Trail (HRT) near Weston Road and Lawrence Ave West, in the City of Toronto. This gap constitutes a significant barrier to a continuous trail system from Toronto's north-west boundary to Lake Ontario and is a discontinuity in the 80 km Pan Am Path, which extends from Brampton to Pickering. The Mid-Humber Gap is also identified in TRCA's Trail Strategy for the Greater Toronto Region as a key missing link in the regional trail network.

The Mid-Humber Gap Project study area (Attachment 1) is located between two completed sections of the Humber River Recreational Trail just south of Mallaby Park and west of St. Phillips Road and the southern entrance to Crawford-Jones Memorial Park off Cardell Avenue.

In 2013, the City contacted TRCA to request assistance in planning and implementing a trail connection project to close the gap, via a multi-staged approach.

#### Stage 1 – Trail Construction and Improvement Work (Completed 2013)

In 2013, the City and TRCA completed Stage 1 of the Mid-Humber Gap Project. During Stage 1, a 600-metre trail was constructed to connect Mallaby Park to the HRT system and a pre-existing dirt trail was formalized into a 3.5-meter-wide paved multi-use pathway.

Deliverables:

- Construction of a 600-metre trail connecting Mallaby Park to Cruickshank Park
- Preparation of preliminary trail alignment concepts for Stage 2 – Feasibility Study

#### Stage 2 – Feasibility Study (Completed 2019)

In 2019, the City and TRCA completed Stage 2 of the Mid-Humber Gap project. During Stage 2, a Feasibility Study was undertaken to evaluate conceptual trail alignment options to close the remaining gap in the HRT between Mallaby Park and Crawford-Jones Memorial Park. The Mid-Humber Gap project schedule is aligned with the City's 2019 *Cycling Network Plan Update* (Update to the 2016 *Cycling Network 10-Year Plan*). The 2019 Plan acknowledges that the Stage 2 - Feasibility Study was underway at the time of publishing and anticipated that the scoping of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) could occur in 2020.

The Feasibility Study mirrored a formal MCEA process and provided rationale for pursuing a full MCEA Schedule B planning process. The Feasibility Study evaluated conceptual trail alignments and recommended two trail alignments that would be suitable to move forward in the MCEA process. Evaluation criteria included: cost, ecological impacts, constructability, future maintenance, environmental impacts, user experience, land ownership and impacts to private property and slope stabilization needs.

Trail alignment constraints include a steep slope and private property on the east bank of the river, and a privately owned golf course on the west bank. These constraints increase the complexity of the project, and likely require the construction of bridges, boardwalk structures, and securement of property. The Feasibility Study confirmed the rough order of magnitude costs for each trail alignment reviewed. Implementation costs are expected to be in the range of \$3.5 and \$9.5 million which subsequently makes this project subject to the MCEA Schedule B process.

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The work undertaken as part of the Feasibility Study was informed by limited available baseline data and site topography. Information gaps were identified and recommended to be addressed in Stage 3 of the work. Most notably, a subsurface investigation was deemed required to inform the placement and design of any proposed water crossings. Complete ecological, geotechnical, water resources and geomorphologic assessments were also recommended to inform and refine the proposed trail alignment concepts.

The work on the Mid Humber Gap advances the Loop Trail concept that is being advanced by the City of Toronto, Evergreen and TRCA. The loop trail is an 81 kilometre off road multi-use route connecting the waterfront in the south, the Don Valley in the east, the Finch corridor in the North and the Humber Valley in the west.

### **RATIONALE**

The City of Toronto has requested that the TRCA proceed with advancing the MCEA Schedule B as Stage 3 of the overall project work. A Letter Agreement between the City of Toronto and TRCA that details the required scope of work for the undertaking has been drafted and is currently under review by the City of Toronto, Transportation Services division.

TRCA and the City of Toronto will be co-proponents for the MCEA. TRCA will be engaged as a consultant in the form of Project Management Lead to support the City in the undertaking. Under this model TRCA will procure any third-party technical expertise required to support the MCEA process. The RFP for these services is currently in development with release targeted for early December 2020. The scope of work for the RFP will build off the analysis already undertaken in the Feasibility Study and have specific emphasis on the geotechnical and geomorphological studies required to refine and evaluate the alternative trail alignments.

With the assistance of the procured consultant, at a high level, TRCA will deliver the following to the City of Toronto:

- Completion of the MCEA Schedule B process. The preferred alternative trail alignment will be brought to 30% design with rough order of magnitude costs for implementation made available.
- Completion of all public and stakeholder consultation requirements as per the MCEA Schedule B process. A minimum of two (2) Public Information Centers (PIC) and two (2) Community Liaison Meetings (CLC) will be undertaken in collaboration with the City of Toronto with a provision for a third CLC and PIC should there be a need.
- A project file to be made available to all interested parties throughout the process and finalized upon study completion.

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

This report supports the following strategy set forth in the TRCA 2013-2022 Strategic Plan:  
**Strategy 3 – Rethink greenspace to maximize its value**

### **FINANCIAL DETAILS**

Undertaking the MCEA for the Mid-Humber Gap will be a fee for service project undertaken through a Letter of Agreement with the City of Toronto, Transportation Services division under the Master Service Agreement. TRCA has prepared a budget to encompass the necessary work, which is currently under review by the City of Toronto. Funds will be tracked in account 186-42.

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### **DETAILS OF WORK TO BE DONE**

- Execution of the Letter Agreement between TRCA and the City of Toronto to facilitate the transfer of funds to undertake the MCEA (November 2020).
- Release and award of the RFP for external technical support services needed to support the MCEA process (December 2020).
- Formal initiation of the MCEA process in January 2021 with the estimated completion of the study in November 2021.
- Stage 4 (Implementation) of the project will be discussed with the City of Toronto when TRCA is nearing completion of the MCEA.

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**Date: November 4, 2020**

**Attachments: 1**

Attachment 1: Mid-Humber Gap Project Study Area