



Port Lands Acceleration Initiative 2013
Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project Environmental Assessment
&
Lower Don Lands Master Plan Environmental Assessment Study
Backgrounder

Overview

Waterfront Toronto (WT), the City of Toronto, and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) are amending and finalizing the Individual EA for the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project (DMNP). Concurrently, the 2010 Class EA Lower Don Lands Master Plan (LDL MP) is being finalized to reflect the amendments that arose out of the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative 2012.

These two EAs represent key pieces in the revitalization of Toronto's Port Lands. Their approval will enable the TRCA, the City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto to move forward with the implementation of the flood protection and infrastructure works necessary to support the revitalization of the Port Lands and naturalization of the mouth of the Don River.

The mouth of the Don River is one of Toronto's great unrealized assets and the centrepiece of major revitalization initiatives on the waterfront. A plan has been developed that will integrate this incredible asset into the ecological and urban fabric of Toronto. The Individual EA for the DMNP will provide the basis for transforming the existing mouth of the Don River into a healthier, more naturalized river outlet to the lake, while at the same time, removing the risk of flooding to urban land to the east and south of the river. Once completed, the EA will be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment for review and approval.

The LDL MP EA is being carried out to reflect the amendments to the DMNP and will address all of the infrastructure needed to support the revitalization of the Lower Don Lands. The amended Master Plan will consider servicing (water, sanitary sewers and storm water management), streets and public transit in dedicated rights-of-way and will complete Phase 3 and 4 requirements of the Municipal Class EA for all Schedule C projects in the Lower Don Lands.

History

The Don Mouth Naturalization and Flood Protection Project Environmental Assessment (DMNP EA) was initiated in 2005 by Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA) and Waterfront Toronto. The DMNP EA will transform the existing mouth of the Don River into a more naturalized river outlet, and eliminate the risk of flooding from the Don River to lands east and south of the river.

After consultation with regulators, stakeholders, and the public, the preferred alternative was chosen and the EA was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) for approval in 2010. The EA was amended in April of 2011 as part of the MOE review process to address comments received from stakeholders during the 30 day

public review period. The remainder of the EA review process was paused in July 2011, prior to the completion of the MOE review and release of the EA amendments.

Port Lands Acceleration Initiative

On September 21, 2011, Toronto City Council unanimously adopted a protocol, later to be called the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative (PLAI), to review the city's priorities for the Port Lands. The purpose of the PLAI was to refine the DMNP EA and to develop a business and implementation plan with the objective of accelerating revitalization in the Port Lands. In response to the City's resolution, TRCA and Waterfront Toronto requested that the MOE pause their review and approvals of the DMNP EA until October 2012. The MOE granted the extension.

In October 2011, Waterfront Toronto, the City of Toronto and TRCA initiated planning on the PLAI. As part of the process a number of technical studies were undertaken related to land use assessments, flood modeling, value engineering studies, and funding mechanisms. Extensive community consultation was also conducted. Ultimately, the goal of the initiative was to deliver a strategy for accelerating development and maximizing the value of the Port Lands as a unique city legacy.

The PLAI resulted in an amended concept design based on the original preferred alternative from the DMNP EA. A key recommendation of PLAI was the creation of an implementation plan that phases development, which allows for the significant infrastructure costs to potentially be offset by revenue generated from development.

Key activities of PLAI included, but were not limited, to the following:

- confirmation of the best approach to provide flood protection to the Port Lands within the framework of the approved DMNP EA Terms of Reference;
- conduct a re-evaluation of City of Toronto priorities for development within the Port Lands;
- develop a business plan and strategy for implementation of the necessary flood protection and infrastructure works; and
- conduct value engineering for the construction of the valley system and other infrastructure elements.

City Council Direction on PLAI

A report on the outcomes of the PLAI was presented to City Council at its October 5th, 2012 meeting. Toronto City Council endorsed the recommendations contained in the report and provided further direction to the City of Toronto, Waterfront Toronto and the TRCA. The Ministry of Environment approved a further extension of the EA review pause until September 2013, in order to incorporate the amended concept design as the preferred alternative in the DMNP EA and to conduct appropriate consultation.

Toronto City Council directed that Waterfront Toronto, TRCA and the City of Toronto:

- Amend the DMNP EA based on the 2012 "4WS Re-aligned" option and submit to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) for approval;
- Revise the Lower Don Lands (LDL) Master Plan and Keating Channel Precinct Class EA to align with the PLAI direction as required;
- Protect the proposed valley and stream corridors from encroachment by development;
- Complete a high-level planning framework for the entire Port Lands;
- Confirm precinct boundaries and initiate precinct planning, inclusive of business and implementation planning, for the Cousins Quay, Polson Quay and Film Studio Precincts.

Environmental Assessment Amendments

Following Council's directive, TRCA, Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto, developed a work program in fall 2012 to amend the 2010 Environmental Assessment document to reflect the alignment and phasing strategy determined through the PLAI, coordinated with the amendment process for the Lower Don Lands Master Plan Environmental Assessment Study.

Public consultation continues to be a primary objective of the PLAI. Waterfront Toronto, the City of Toronto, and TRCA have held several meetings with members of the public, stakeholder advisory and community liaison committees, and a Port Lands landowner and user advisory committee, including holding a public meeting on July 24, 2013 to present the EA amendments and obtain feedback and input from the public.

2013 PLAI - Current Status

DMNP EA and LDL MP EA Study Amendments Background

The DMNP EA Amendment establishes:

- River channel and Greenway configurations for flood conveyance;
- Naturalization and city building;
- Adaptive management strategy;
- Proposed phasing strategy for removing regulatory flood zone;
- Minimum elevations for surrounding lands; and
- Flood protection requirements.

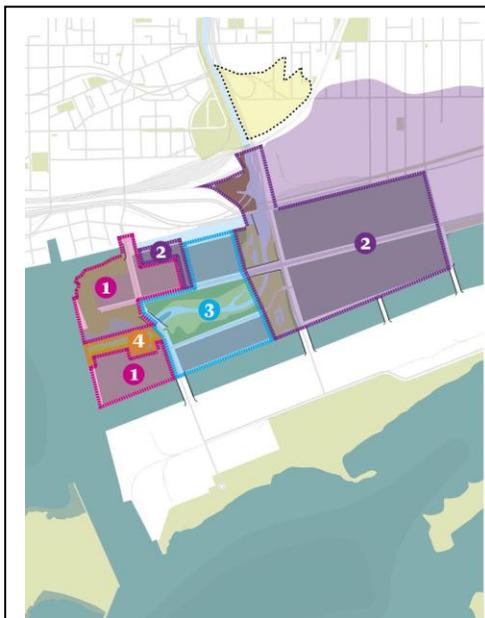
The LDL MP EA Study establishes:

- The transportation and servicing infrastructure necessary to support revitalization and refines it to coincide with the optimized river valley; and
- Minimum elevations of bridges and roads to match DMNP EA.

Phases 3 and 4 of the Municipal Class EA process are being completed for Schedule C projects including streets and coordinated stormwater management infrastructure within the Lower Don Lands.

2013 PLAI Optimized Phasing – Overview

Building the permanent condition in a phased approach minimizes and/or eliminates throwaway costs of interim construction and meets accelerated urban development goals.



Phasing Summary:

- 1 – Phase 1: The majority of the Cousins Quay Precinct can be developed and Polson Quay are flood protected
- 2 – Phase 2: The remainder of Cousins Quay and Film Studio District Precinct and lands east of Don Roadway are flood protected
- 3 – Phase 3: The River Valley Precincts are flood protected
- 4 – Phase 4: Naturalization of the south side of Polson Slip occurs

Phase 1

- **Flood Protection Elements**
 - Phase 1 Interim spillway no longer necessary
 - Construct new Keating Channel bridge
 - Remove old Keating Channel bridge and abutments
- **Additional Works Required to Facilitate Development**
 - Raise the land in the Cousins and Polson Quays Precincts, with the exception of Lafarge
 - Realign and reconstruct Cherry Street
 - Fill Essroc Quay

Phase 2

- **Flood Protection**
 - Construct Greenway, including Ship Channel wetland
 - Construct flood protection landform on First Gulf site
 - Construct valley wall feature between Lake Shore Boulevard to Ship Channel from Don Roadway to approximately Saulter Street
 - Modify Eastern Avenue underpass
 - Construct sediment and debris management area including lengthening of Lake Shore Keating Rail Spur bridges
 - Remove utility bridge and relocate infrastructure north of Lake Shore bridge

Phase 3

- **Flood Protection Elements**
 - Construct Polson Slip bridge
 - Construct river valley system, including the low flow channel and flood control weirs
- **Additional Works Required to Facilitate Development**
 - Raise lands north and south of river valley
 - Construct Basin Street bridge

Phase 4

- **Naturalization**
 - Naturalize Polson Quay south dockwall
- **Additional Works Required to Facilitate Development**
 - Raise the land on Lafarge site for final development with Polson Quay Precinct

For more information on the PLAI, visit the Port Lands Consultation website:

<http://www.portlandsconsultation.ca/>