



**East Don Trail  
Environmental Assessment**

**Public Open House February 13, 2013**

**Public Consultation Report**

Prepared by  
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority  
In cooperation with  
Maogosha Pygor  
Sr. Public Consultation Coordinator  
City of Toronto  
March 18, 2013

# 1 Introduction

On February 13, 2013 the City of Toronto (the City) and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) hosted a Public Information Centre (PIC) to introduce and gather feedback for the East Don Trail Environmental Assessment (EA) study. Local residents and interested individuals were invited to learn about the project through panels and conversations with City and TRCA staff. Participants were also encouraged to fill out comment forms and participate in an interactive mapping exercise to identify where they access the East Don Corridor, how they use the area and what they notice while visiting. Overall, the event was well attended, solicited a range of feedback about the project, and facilitated an exchange of ideas and opinions amongst residents, interested individuals, TRCA, and City staff.

Following the event, the display panels were made available on the project web page:  
[www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/eastdontrail](http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/eastdontrail)

## 2 Communications Received

- 77 participants signed in at the open house.
- 41 comments were received during the comment period: 25 comment forms were submitted at the event and 16 comments were received after the event (5 via email; 11 were mailed in).
- Conversation topics between City and TRCA staff and Open House participants have also been incorporated into the summary below.

All submissions have been documented, acknowledged and/or responded to appropriately.

## 3 Key Comments and Ideas Expressed

Below is a summary of the key ideas and opinions expressed by stakeholders through various communications. Points have been amalgamated, summarized, and organized by topic.

Points have been numbered within topics for referencing convenience and do not represent the priority of importance.

### Overall

While the majority of public responses support this project, there is also some opposition. Support for the project can be mainly attributed to the benefit of: increasing opportunities for recreation, making larger cycling network connections, providing safe routes for cyclists, and providing better access for a wider demographic. Opposition for the project can be mainly attributed to the potential environmental impacts, concern over impacts on personal enjoyment of the trails with increased use, and peoples' experiences with a lack of bicycle etiquette.

### New Design Concerns/Ideas

1. Support for the connection, but many people believe it should be a broader opportunity for connections and access to other areas.
2. Support for the provision of stairs and hand rails in areas with steep grades.
3. Some residents requested the installation of an asphalt (or similar) surface due to accessibility issues with granular surfaces and uneven surfaces for elderly users.

4. Some residents are adamantly opposed to concrete or pavement in the valley, they feel it will damage the natural environment and ruin the natural feel of the area.

### **Community & Recreation**

5. Conflict of uses, specifically between bikers and walkers. Each group does not want the other to disturb their enjoyment and use of the space.
6. Mountain bikers are concerned about the impact the trail may have on their sport. The concern is that a new trail would restrict mountain biking opportunities within the area through increased enforcement and demolition of existing trails.
7. Concern about the trail connection bringing more people to the area, causing overcrowding and decreasing the enjoyment for current users

### **Safety**

8. Concern about water levels, and the trail becoming flooded.
9. Slope and grades are one of the most prevalent concerns raised by the public. People are concerned that the steep grades may compromise the safety of the trail when wet, icy or snowy and prevent some residents from enjoying the use of the trail, such as the elderly, who may have a difficulty climbing up and down the slopes.
10. The safety and stability of the hills and other slopes that are highly eroded.
11. Railroad tracks are a safety concern for some residents; currently the informal trails follow the tracks in some areas.

### **Maintenance**

12. The majority of the public would like to see a high quality paved trail implemented with proper maintenance for year-round enjoyment.
13. Proper maintenance of trail amenities was noted (i.e. regular clearing of snow and ice; cleaning garbage cans and washrooms).

### **Access/Connections**

14. Wheelchair accessibility and provision of stairs in areas with steep grades.
15. Access through Flemington Golf Course is important to many residents.
16. Provision of more and improved access points. Multiple access points have been requested from various spots across the trail network.
17. People are supportive of the connection, especially to the downtown. Excellent alternative to the major roads for people who commute by bicycle.

### **Environmental Impacts/Aesthetics**

18. Many residents are concerned about the impact of the trail on the natural environment:
  - a. Negative effects on wildlife, such as deer, turtles etc.
  - b. Further habitat fragmentation.
19. Participants would like to see the current high quality forests and wetlands preserved; do not put the trail through these areas, or any other areas of habitat that may be negatively affected.
20. Some residents see the project as an opportunity to remediate areas of erosion, improve current habitat and remove invasive species.
21. Other residents are concerned that invasive species may become more of a problem with the implementation of the trail network.

22. Residents are concerned that the trail will increase the amount of litter in the area, pollute the river and degrade the quality of the current natural areas.
23. Maintain natural ambience in the area; avoid having the trail exposed to the Don Valley Parkway.

### **Amenities**

24. Important to provide adequate signage and way finding.

### **Specific Suggestions/Concerns**

25. Some residents are frustrated that the trail network has not already been implemented. Most of those in support of the project would like to see the trail be constructed very soon.

### **Out of Scope Interests**

26. Creation of new recreational areas.
27. Provide access to other areas including a connection to The Brickworks.
28. Provide an access point at Don Mills and Overlea Blvd.
29. Implementation of off-leash dog parks in the trail network.
30. Provide adequate number of garbage cans, washrooms and drinking fountains along the trail.

## **4 Going Forward – How Key Comments will be addressed**

This list above provides a summary of what was heard during the open house and in comments sheets submitted during the comment period. These key comments will be addressed through a variety of means including: Frequently Asked Questions that will be posted on the project website and provided at upcoming public open houses, a project newsletter, and ongoing correspondence with City and TRCA staff.

To stay informed about the East Don Trail Project, please visit the project website at:

[www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/eastdontrail](http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/eastdontrail)

or contact      Maogosha Pyjor  
Public Consultation Coordinator  
City of Toronto  
Metro Hall, 19th Fl.  
55 John St.  
Toronto, ON M5V 3C6  
Tel: 416-338-2850  
Fax: 416-392-2974  
TTY: 416-397-0831  
E-mail: eastdontrail@toronto.ca