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FIVE WATERFRONT PARKS SET TO PROCEED *Environmental Conditions Placed On Their Development*

TORONTO – Plans for developing five city parks along Toronto’s waterfront can proceed without an environmental assessment providing certain conditions are met, Environment Minister Laurel Broten announced today.

“These parks will revitalize former industrial land, create new wildlife habitats and help to invigorate the city’s waterfront,” said Broten. “That’s great news for the environment and for the residents of Toronto.”

The parks, part of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation’s 20-year plan to revitalize the waterfront, are Don River, Sherbourne, Commissioners, Don Greenway and Lake Ontario.

At the request of the corporation, the Ministry of the Environment undertook a review to determine the need for environmental assessments (EAs) for each of the parks. The ministry has ruled that five EAs would not be necessary, and has placed conditions on the parks’ development to further protect the environment.

“We are delighted with this decision,” said Mayor David Miller. “These parks are an important step towards realizing our dream of a revitalized Toronto waterfront. The water’s edge is for the people of Toronto.”

The Declaration Order exempting the projects from EAs, requires the corporation to:

- Consult with the public on the detailed designed plans for each of the parks
- Work with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority during the design phase to protect natural features and aquatic and terrestrial habitat, and prevent flooding and erosion
- Consult with the Ministry of Natural Resources on any work near Lake Ontario or the Don River that might affect fishery resources
- Develop monitoring and remedial plans for construction impacts on surface and groundwater and for reducing air emissions from dust and odours
- Minimize or eliminate discharges of sediment into Lake Ontario and the Don River
- Report back to the ministry on contaminated soil and clean up efforts.

The corporation must now seek environmental approvals under the Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Water Resources Act.

Corporation Chair Robert Fung welcomed the news. “The design of Don River Park in the West Don Lands and Lake Ontario Park in the Port Lands will begin early in the new year. The Parks Declaration Order will help us achieve real results in a timely manner *and* protect the environment.”

“This brings us closer to getting shovels in the ground and projects underway in our renewal of Toronto’s waterfront,” said David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. The parks projects are being funded in part under ReNew Ontario, the government’s five-year, \$30-billion infrastructure investment plan.

“A revitalized waterfront will help Toronto become even more of a culturally vibrant, economically strong and environmentally sustainable city,” said Broten. “Safe, clean, livable communities are a priority for this government.”

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