

MIDTOWN RAVINES — UPDATE AND ISSUES

1. *Continuing erosion in the Vale of Avoca (VofA)*

The VofA Working Group has not met since January 2020. However, the ongoing Toronto Water-sponsored geomorphic study has progressed behind the scenes, and we look forward to the Working Group reviewing its work and recommendations early in 2022. Councillor Layton's office is arranging a Working Group meeting as soon as staff has reviewed the consultant's recommendations. We are also hoping to arrange an on-site meeting with the consultant and City staff to review issues and recommendations at each critical location.

Storms do not wait on Toronto Water and its consultants, And global warming is giving us more frequent serious storms. Since summer 2020, much of the east bank of the creek below Summerhill Gardens that was rebuilt by the TRCA with too-small revetment stones has been washed away. In addition, the path on the west side of the creek between the TRCA work and the footbridge has experienced severe and increasing erosion — half gone in the last two months (see below). We need to continue to bring pressure on the City to expedite repair.



Retaining wall (previously just under rightmost yellow ribbon) undercut by Aug-Sept storms. Wall to north (built just before 1900) soon to go.

Road south of footbridge, 100 m to north: another few feet of the road gone since summer.

And much more erosion elsewhere.



2. *Mud Creek improvements*

Work is underway to complete the path between Heath St and Moore Avenue, adding a switchback at Moore to make the Mud Creek path more accessible.

3. **HydroOne tree ‘trimming’**

HydroOne will be removing trees likely to grow up into the hydro line beside Summerhill Avenue in North Rosedale, as well as further east alongside the CP Rail east-west line to Bayview and down the east side of the Don Valley to the waterfront. We have been told in public meetings that most of trees to be removed are invasives.

4. **Metrolinx layover facility in Don Valley**

Metrolinx proposes to use the former CP Rail right-of-way below the Don Valley Parkway (abandoned since 1980) between the Bloor Viaduct and the rail bridge over the Con as a service and holding area for diesel GO trains serving Milton and the western GTA. Its plans are to widen the existing rail corridor, removing many of the trees on the east bank of the valley, so as to be able to store and service three trains at a time, holding them for rush-hour use.



Don Valley today



Don Valley with layover facility

Everybody recognizes that we need to promote expansion of the GO train system to get commuters out of cars. But citizens have fought for decades to ‘Bring Back the Don’.
We need to find effective ways of lobbying the provincial government to find a better solution that does not use Don Valley parkland as a “cheap” way of providing needed service facilities.

5. **Proposed East Don rail path**

Councillor Layton successfully moved a motion at the last Council meeting asking the City manager to explore possibilities of the City buying or leasing the unused CP rail corridor north of the proposed layover facility. This proposal — quite independent of what happens to the proposed layover facility — would add a new ravine trail linking Governors Bridge, Leaside, Crothers Woods, and Thorncliffe Park to the Don Valley Trail and the Brickworks.

If the layover facility can be moved elsewhere, the entire unused CP Rail link could be added to the Don Valley parkland trail network.

6. **Pollinator Garden proposals**

Moore Park RA has donated money and members’ time to create a pollinator garden in Moorevale Park. We have been trying to get a pollinator garden in the Park Drive Reservation ravine, but have run into a brick wall of Parks Dept disapproval. HydroOne has promised \$5K toward one or more pollinator gardens in our area if we can designate appropriate sites. With RA contributions and support, we can make this happen.

7. **Seeds and saplings**

Joan York reports considerable progress in spite of setbacks due to Covid.

8. **Stewardship programs**

Considerable progress here too, thanks to heroic efforts by Cathy Berka and others, but more volunteers are needed. *See attached Toronto Nature Stewards newsletter.* Stewardship site in our area is the nature preserve at the NE corner of Mt Pleasant and Roxborough.