



# Exhibition Place

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## Item No. 25

April 12, 2011

**ACTION REQUIRED**

To: The Board of Governors of Exhibition Place

From: Dianne Young, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: **2011 Capital Budget - War of 1812 Legacy and Heritage Trail**

### Summary:

At its meeting of July 23, 2010, the Board approved as part of the Capital Project entitled Parks, Parking Lots & Roads a subproject for the development of a War of 1812 Legacy and Heritage Trail at a cost of \$500,000 which budget was subsequently approved by City Council in March 2011. This report recommends approval by the Board of the revised plan for the War of 1812 Trail as described in this report with an estimated cost of approximately \$276,000.

### Recommendation:

**It is recommended that the Board approve the revised plan for the War of 1812 Heritage Trail as stated in this report at an estimated cost of \$276,000.**

### Financial Impact:

There are no negative financial implications of this report.

### Decision History:

At its meeting of July 23, 2010, the Board approved a 2011 Capital Budget which was subsequently approved by City Council. At its meeting of February 4, 2011, the Board requested that the CEO reconsider the plan for the War of 1812 Legacy and Heritage Trail as previously approved by the Board as one subproject of the 2011 Capital Budget.

### Issue Background:

Exhibition Place and Fort York are the key elements in the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the War of 1812 and originally the City of Toronto had planned to do an extensive Heritage Trail but due to budgetary constraints the newly formed 1812 Committee has decided to instead support a virtual trail concept.

### Comments:

The War of 1812 Legacy Trail & Heritage Trail was proposed by the City of Toronto and was to celebrate and remember the War of 1812 between Canada and the United States which was a pivotal event in the history of Toronto and Canada. A preliminary concept was developed through City of Toronto Heritage & Culture which envisioned a trail from the Humber River, across Exhibition Place, through the Old Fort York and across the City waterfront terminating in the east at the site of the historic parliament building that was burnt down during this War. The concept was to include trail markers and substantial trail nodes which provided seating areas

along the route with interpretative panels.

Recently, the City has formed a new War of 1812 committee led by Councillor Michael Thompson and community members representing heritage and aboriginal organizations along with City, Fort York and school board representatives, provincial and federal agencies and private sector businesses and local resident associations. The first meeting of this committee was on April 14, 2011. The committee is now reviewing and focusing on the proposed programming for the celebration year which is centered around signature events in April, June and August/September 2012. Events planned to date focus on the key sites of the War which were Exhibition Place and Fort York.

However, with respect to the proposed trail, the committee also decided that instead of building a trail with trail nodes, it would be better if the trail could be a virtual one whereby there could still be a physical pathway for visitors to walk but instead of investing in expensive trail nodes, visitors could download information on the history as they walked the pathway either on their own devices or ones that could be loaned from the Fort York Visitor Centre

Accordingly, to participate in the War of 1812 trail project, Exhibition Place would only have to do limited upgrades to install a sidewalk on Alberta Circle as there is no pedestrian sidewalk in this location and visitors are forced to walk on the roadway. We would also have to expand our WiFi network which would not only be a required for the 1812 pathway but would be of great benefit to all Exhibition Place service areas to allow for better communication to staff working at the limits of the grounds such as Marilyn Bell Park during the CNE period. Lastly, we would work with Fort York on a design for the trail markers which would be installed in the ground and lead visitors across the grounds towards Ford York and be located at stops of historic interest on the Exhibition Place grounds to coincide with the virtual tour.

However, as this trail crosses over the festival plaza project and should be part of that design, the intent would be to charge the Urban Strategies Ltd. consultant cost against this budget. Finally, the lion statuary in front of Liberty Grand (but not part of the leasehold interest for Liberty Grand) which is in an area of the 1812 Landing of the American troops has been deteriorating and staff are proposing that repair of these statutes also be part of this project.

- Trail markers starting at the entrance to Exhibition Place at British Columbia / Lakeshore and leading across the grounds to the corner of Strachan / Fleet Street - estimated \$6,000 to \$10,000
- WiFi Equipment and installation so that there is connectivity across the grounds and over to Marilyn Bell CNE Parking area and the Gore Parking area – estimated to be \$100,000
- Pedestrian Sidewalk along the east side of Alberta Circle to connect British Columbia to the pathway running along the south side of the grounds – estimated to be \$30,000.
- Consultant cost for the proposed festival plaza design- \$100,000
- Repair of Lion Statuary - \$40,000.00

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Submitted by

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