

‘BLUEPRINT’ UNVEILED FOR DECIDING THE FUTURE OF THE EASTERN GARDINER

Toronto, June 1, 2009 – The draft Terms of Reference for the environmental assessment and integrated urban design study for the Gardiner Expressway east of Jarvis Street co-sponsored by Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto have been completed and will be tabled for Toronto City Council review.

Developed using input collected over months of public consultation, the proposed Terms of Reference define critical elements of the study, including its goals, alternatives for consideration, evaluation process and consultation plan.

“These Terms of Reference are a blueprint for an inclusive and transparent process that will consider key options and hear all viewpoints on the future of the eastern Gardiner,” said Waterfront Toronto President and CEO John Campbell. “We are confident that this study will lead to an informed decision that supports the sustainable renewal of our lakefront and creates lasting value for Torontonians.”

The Gardiner environmental assessment process meets and exceeds the requirements of the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act* by incorporating an urban design study that will consider the form and function of existing and planned public spaces that neighbour the expressway.

Four potential outcomes will be carefully examined, including removal, replacement, improvement, and maintaining the status quo. Each option will be weighed against criteria related to five overarching project goals: revitalizing the waterfront, reconnecting the city with the lake, balancing modes of travel, achieving sustainability and creating economic value.

As with the development of the Terms of Reference, the Gardiner Environmental Assessment and Integrated Urban Design Study will feature a strong public consultation component, with opportunities for the public to be actively engaged and to provide input at every stage of the process. Public meetings will be held across the City and a dedicated website (www.gardinerconsultation.ca) will feature e-consultations that mirror face-to-face consultations.

“We are pleased that the environmental assessment is moving forward according to schedule and on budget,” said Campbell.

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The draft Terms of Reference will be tabled with City Council's Executive Committee on June 2 and City Council on July 6/7. Pending authorization from Council, the Terms of Reference will be submitted to the Ontario Minister of the Environment (MOE) for final approval in September. If the Terms of Reference are approved following the 12-week MOE approval process, the environmental assessment is expected to commence as early as January 2010 and be completed by the end of 2011.

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