

Gardiner Expressway Fact Sheet

- The Gardiner Expressway was named after the first chair of the former Metro Council, Frederick G. Gardiner who was a strong advocate for the project.
- Construction on the Gardiner began in 1956. It was built in segments and completed in 1965 at a cost of approximately \$103 million.
- Designed to provide the city with goods and materials, it was built when Toronto's downtown waterfront was largely a heavy industrial area.
- The expressway route necessitated the complete reconfiguration of Lakeshore Boulevard through the central downtown to allow the elevated eight lanes to be built above it.
- The Gardiner runs for about 20 kilometres from the foot of Highway 427 and the Queen Elizabeth Way in the west to the Don Valley Parkway in the east.
- The east end of the Gardiner, from Jarvis Street to the Don Valley Parkway, is the least congested stretch of the expressway.
- The Gardiner carries approximately 200,000 vehicles per day west of the downtown core, and approximately 120,000 vehicles per day east of Jarvis Street.
- It costs the City \$6-10 million annually for repairs to the Gardiner.

Timeline of Key Events

- 1987 The City of Toronto completed a comprehensive study of potential modifications to the Gardiner Expressway ramps in the downtown area, titled the Central Bayfront Ramp Study. To date, only the removal of the southbound Yonge Street to eastbound Gardiner Expressway ramp has been implemented.
- 1990 The Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront also known as the Crombie Commission, suggested the removal of the entire elevated Gardiner Expressway and its replacement with a network of tunnels and surface roads.
- 1996 Planning and an environmental assessment process began for the removal of the 1.3 km section of the Gardiner Expressway east of the Don River, between Bouchette Street and Leslie Street.

- 1999 Toronto City Council voted to demolish the elevated section of the Gardiner Expressway East, and replace it with an improved and higher-capacity Lake Shore Boulevard East that would include bicycle lanes, landscaping, and a public art project.
- 2001 The removal of the 1.3 km section of the Gardiner Expressway East of the Don River, between Bouchette Street and Leslie Street was completed at the cost of \$38 million.
- The Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force also known as the Fung Task Force proposed that the rest of the elevated Gardiner Expressway be replaced. Waterfront Toronto (then called the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation) was established to lead the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront.
- 2003 The City of Toronto requested that Waterfront Toronto examine options for the reconfiguration of the Gardiner/Lake Shore corridor to stimulate waterfront revitalization.
- 2004 Waterfront Toronto commissioned two reports on the impact of taking down the elevated Gardiner Expressway. The first report Microsimulation of the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Plan report presented three possible options for the Gardiner - Replacement; Transformation; and Great Street. A second report Constructability, Structural Engineering Feasibility and Cost Study for the Gardiner Expressway/Lake Shore Boulevard Options included four options and cost estimates.
- 2006 Waterfront Toronto presented four options to the City for review. Waterfront Toronto recommended that the Great Street model from Spadina Avenue to the Don River be approved.
- 2007 The City conducted an internal due diligence process. As part of that process, the City began studying other scenarios that might be achieved at a lower cost, such as removing the least-used segment of the expressway from Jarvis Street to the Don Valley Parkway only. After a joint Waterfront Toronto and City analysis, the current "Partial Take-Down" proposal for the eastern section of the Gardiner Expressway was developed.
- 2008 On June 12, the Waterfront Toronto board passed a resolution to propose that Waterfront Toronto and the City jointly undertake an individual environmental assessment on removing part of the elevated Gardiner Expressway.

On July 15 - Toronto City Council approved Waterfront Toronto's proposal to undertake an individual environmental assessment on removing part of the elevated Gardiner Expressway.