



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The Gardiner Expressway (the Gardiner) was constructed in the 1960s. As in many waterfront cities, urban highways along river or lakes are being removed and replaced with pedestrian friendly roads/boulevards. These transformations have often proved to be a catalyst for economic renewal.

Waterfront Toronto and its government partners share a vision for the waterfront that is clean, green, sustainable and beautiful. It includes vibrant residential communities, spectacular parks and leading-edge creative enterprises, all linked by public transit.

Waterfront Toronto is advancing planning and implementation of new communities around the Gardiner. The challenge is to find realistic options that address revitalization objectives and sustainable city-building principles.

The proposed approach is consistent with Waterfront Toronto principles of sustainable, intelligent city building and the recognition that future urban growth will be accommodated by transit.

It is an approach focused on the future and the vision of what kind of city and waterfront we want to build.

The approach will leverage larger regional transit investments and initiatives now occurring in Toronto and should be viewed as part of an overall transportation movement that lessens automobile dependence and places greater emphasis on public transit.

Removal at Jarvis Street to the Don Valley Parkway advances waterfront revitalization objectives. It will reconnect the city to the Lake by removing barriers and improving north-south routes. It will dramatically improve the quality of place in the new communities being developed in East Bayfront and West Don Lands and the Port Lands eventually.

Waterfront Toronto is recommending an incremental approach that removes the road from east of Jarvis Street to the Don Valley Parkway, where traffic utilization volumes are lowest and where new waterfront communities are being developed.

Waterfront Toronto's recommended approach is do-able, fiscally manageable and offers early city building benefits.

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The approach leverages broader transit initiatives and investments occurring in Toronto. These include:

- GO/VIA Transit expansion plans
- TTC and Metrolinx Regional Transit Initiatives and on the waterfront,
- Waterfront Toronto expansion plans including:
 - The Union Station Platform Expansion
 - Queens Quay LRT Expansion and
 - The new West Don Lands LRT service.

Impact

The east end of the Gardiner, from Jarvis Street to the Don Valley Parkway, has the smallest volume of traffic. This section can be removed without constructing the Front Street Extension.

Waterfront Toronto has done initial traffic analysis in the Gardiner corridor and surrounding road network to assess potential impacts of removing the road east of Jarvis. Removal of this section maintains the capacity of traffic entering and leaving downtown as most major ramps are retained. Lake Shore Boulevard East continues to function as an arterial road connecting the Gardiner and the Don Valley Parkway.

The benefits of new transit initiatives will help mitigate traffic disruptions and will offer transportation options.

Next Steps

A decision will be made by City Council.

An Individual Environmental Assessment will be the opportunity to go beyond examining road alternatives and to define a broader transportation strategy for the area and an achievable plan for distributing demand among all available modes. It will provide the opportunity for robust public consultations. It will also confirm costs.

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