

GARDINER EXPRESSWAY AND LAKE SHORE BOULEVARD EAST RECONFIGURATION

Environmental Assessment and Urban Design Study

Final - Chapter 7: Summary of Consultation

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WATERFRONToronto



Contents

7.0	Summary of Consultation	7-1
7.1	Consultation Program Overview	7-1
7.2	Summary of Major Consultation Events	7-5
7.2.1	Round 1 – Key Ideas for the Future of the Gardiner East.....	7-5
7.2.2	Round 2 – Alternative Solutions.....	7-6
7.2.3	Round 3 – Alternative Solutions Evaluation	7-7
7.2.4	Round 4 – Updated Evaluation of Alternative Solutions	7-8
7.2.5	Round 5 – Evaluation of Alternative Designs for the Hybrid Option.....	7-10
7.2.6	Aboriginal Community Consultation.....	7-11
7.3	Influence of Consultation on the EA Study	7-13

List of Tables

Table 7-1:	Key Consultation Activities as Part of the Gardiner East EA	7-3
Table 7-2:	Voluntary Review Participation Results by Submission Method	7-13

7.0 Summary of Consultation

7.1 Consultation Program Overview

A significant amount of consultation was undertaken during the course of this EA. Nearly 30,000 connections about the project were made with people in a variety of in person and online engagement opportunities between 2009 and 2016. The EA process and design decisions regarding the future of the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard East have interested many residents and businesses across Toronto. As such, the consultation process involved reaching out to citizens at various key points in the EA study to gather input, help inform alternative solutions and designs, and to understand the interests, concerns and preferences of the community. The result was that the preferred design alternative reflects the input received during the study.

To fulfill the principles and objectives of the consultation program defined during the Terms of Reference (ToR) phase of the study, as well as regulatory consultation requirements mandated under the *Environmental Assessment Act*, a wide range of communication and consultation activities was undertaken as part of this EA study. Communication and information materials, including public notices, notices to Aboriginal communities, e-notices, project website updates and social media posts were released to inform people of the study progress and provide information for review and comment. Interactive consultation activities were also undertaken, including stakeholder meetings, public meetings and online consultation forums to encourage awareness of the project and facilitate broad participation.

During the development of the ToR in 2009, public and stakeholder consultation played a key role in defining the consultation process to be undertaken during this EA study. Consultation activities during the ToR phase included stakeholder workshops, public forums, online engagement opportunities and outreach to Aboriginal communities.

During the subsequent EA phase of the study, five rounds of public consultation, based on the technical work completed for each phase of the study, were held between May 2013 and January 2016. Nearly 30,000 points of contact were achieved with citizens (including website visits). Consultation with government agencies and ministries, Aboriginal communities, a Stakeholder Advisory Committee and the project's Technical Advisory Committee were also convened throughout the study.

This chapter is intended to be a high level summary of the consultation that was undertaken during the EA. The **Record of Consultation**, contained in **Appendix B**, provides a detailed outline of the consultation activities that were undertaken, the feedback that was received, and responses to questions.

Table 7-1 below outlines the key consultation activities that were conducted during the development of the ToR and Gardiner East EA.

Table 7-1: Key Consultation Activities as Part of the Gardiner East EA

Component	Description
Public Forums	Public forums were held during the ToR phase and each round of consultation to obtain public feedback on technical work completed during each phase of the EA. Two rounds of public forums were convened during the ToR phase and five rounds were held during the EA phase of the Gardiner East EA. After each of the rounds of consultation, a consultation summary report was prepared and made available to the public through the Project Web site.
Public Notices	Formal notices regarding the ToR and the EA were published at various times throughout the study in local newspapers and online to launch each round of consultation and promote and encourage participation. Notices were generally released about 2 weeks in advance of the formal events.
Aboriginal Communities	In accordance with the City's First Nation Consultation Protocol for Environmental Assessments, formal study notices were circulated to Aboriginal communities that had been identified as having a potential interest in the study. This correspondence invited Aboriginal communities to participate during the ToR phase of the study and each round of EA consultation, and to invite the opportunity for direct engagement with the Aboriginal communities. Discussions are ongoing with Aboriginal communities including the Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation.
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meetings	The SAC was formed at the outset of the EA phase in 2013 and included members from approximately 40 key interest groups and community associations. The mandate of the SAC was to provide an ongoing forum for advice and guidance to the project team at key points during the Gardiner East EA. A total of 11 SAC meetings were convened during the study.

Component	Description
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings	The TAC was formed during the ToR phase to provide input at key milestones during the study process, and included representation from various City Divisions, Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), GO Transit/Metrolinx and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). The TAC as a whole met a total of four times during the study. Numerous meetings were also held with key member agencies throughout the EA process, including, for example, Metrolinx and TRCA.
Stakeholder Workshops and Working Groups	Two stakeholder workshops were convened to engage a wide range of stakeholders during the ToR phase. Further, topic specific Working Groups were formed in Fall 2014 as directed by the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee (PWIC) of Toronto City Council and met two times each to discuss the role of the Gardiner East in relation to economic competitiveness and the movement of goods in the immediate Study Area and Downtown Toronto.
Individual Stakeholder Meetings	Face-to-face meetings with specific organizations or groups (e.g., property owners, land developers, third-party proposal proponents, Business Improvement Areas, the Canadian Automobile Association) were held as needed throughout the study.
Committee and Council Meetings	PWIC and Toronto City Council met at key decision points during the study to review progress and provide direction for the study. These meetings were publicly advertised, open to the public and in some cases deputations were made by various stakeholders and this information was also considered by the project team.
Waterfront Toronto Board Meetings	The project team provided regular updates about the Gardiner East EA to the Waterfront Toronto Board throughout the study.

Component	Description
Online Engagement	The project website (www.gardinereast.ca) served as a portal for all information and engagement activities during the consultation process. In parallel with the face-to-face consultation activities, online options were also available during each round of consultation via the project website to further encourage participation. E-blasts, email invitations, social media and media advisories were also used to promote stakeholder and public awareness of consultation activities at the outset of each round of consultation.
Facilitator's Office – “One-Window” Point of Contact	The Facilitator's Office provided a “one-window” point of contact for the project, with dedicated phone, fax and email connections to facilitate communication with stakeholders and the public during each round of consultation. The “one-window” customer service centre provided basic information about the project in response to inquiries and served as a focal point for receiving questions and comments and providing responses throughout the study.

7.2 Summary of Major Consultation Events

Summaries of the input received during each round of the consultation are provided below and reflect the feedback received through the face-to-face and online consultation activities.

Appendix B, Record of Consultation, provides full documentation of the consultation input received.

7.2.1 Round 1 – Key Ideas for the Future of the Gardiner East

The purpose of this round of consultation was to introduce and obtain feedback on 14 “key ideas” informed by case study research and design concepts submitted by six international design teams in 2010. Round 1 of the EA public consultation process was held between May 28 and June 28, 2013, and engaged over 1,000 individuals (4,596 individuals with website visits) and 20 stakeholder groups. This round of consultation included the holding of a formal public meeting on June 13, 2013.

The top five most important ideas identified by participants corresponded to the Replace or Remove alternatives, and indicated strong public support to:

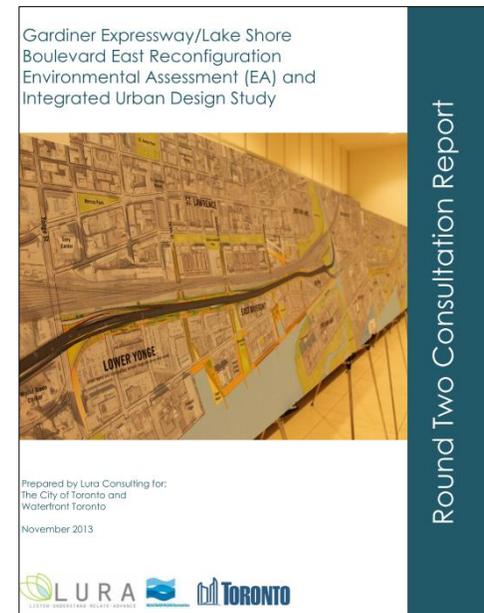
1. Balance transportation modes;
2. Enhance waterfront connectivity;
3. Incorporate alternative transportation; or,
4. Develop new transportation infrastructure and enhance the public realm.

The five least important ideas identified by participants corresponded to the Maintain, Replace and Improve alternatives and suggested limited public support to rehabilitate the existing expressway, rehabilitate the existing public realm, build a signature crossing over the Don River or improve the appearance of the existing expressway infrastructure.

7.2.2 Round 2 – Alternative Solutions

The purpose of Round 2 of the consultation process was to present and obtain feedback on the draft alternative solutions and evaluation criteria proposed. This second round of public consultation took place between October 1 and October 31, 2013, and engaged over 1,500 individuals (5,803 individuals with website visits). This round of consultation included the holding of a formal public meeting on Wednesday, October 16, 2013.

Participant feedback revealed strong support for the Remove alternative based on the opportunities it presented to revitalize and redevelop the Study Area, particularly the public realm. Participant support for the Maintain alternative was limited and associated with this alternative’s ability to preserve existing road capacity and disrupt traffic the least. Varying support for the Improve and Replace alternatives was also expressed by participants in relation to the costs and benefits they attributed to each one.



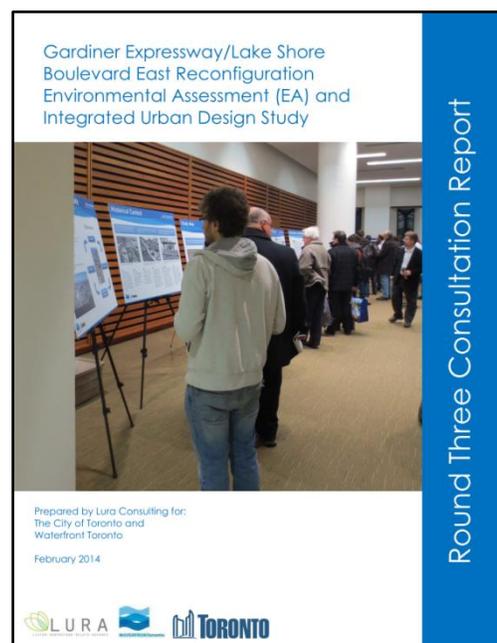
Feedback received regarding the evaluation criteria was generally supportive of the criteria presented by the project team. Input from participants focused on the need to provide a balanced evaluation for each study lens to achieve the study goals.

7.2.3 Round 3 – Alternative Solutions Evaluation

The purpose of this round of consultation was to present and obtain input on the draft assessment results of the four alternative solutions (Remove, Replace, Improve, and Maintain). Round 3 of the consultation process engaged more than 1,300 individuals (4,131 individuals with website visits) between February 4 and 20, 2014. This round of consultation included the holding of a formal public meeting on February 6, 2014.

Based on the feedback received, the majority of consultation participants (approximately 60 percent) supported the Remove option, followed by support for the Maintain (12 percent), Improve (4 percent) and Replace (4 percent) alternatives. Approximately 20 percent of participants provided general feedback on the evaluation results and/or advice to the project team and did not express clear support for any of the alternatives. Advice to the project team included general suggestions to clarify the trade-offs of each alternative as well as recommendations specific to the following theme areas: transportation and infrastructure, urban design, environment, and economics.

Following the formal consultation on the draft alternative solutions assessment results, an *Alternative Solutions Evaluation: Interim Report (February 2014)* and February 21, 2014 City Staff report was prepared and publicly released. The results and recommendations in these reports were considered by PWIC at a March 4, 2014 meeting. At this meeting several deputations were made from a variety of stakeholders including members of the public, local resident association representatives, Downtown BIA, major land developers, and Port Lands area businesses. Opinions for and against the Remove alternative were presented. Considering the input received, including concerns about the additional modeled traffic travel times under a Remove scenario, PWIC directed the study team to further optimize the Remove alternative to reduce traffic congestion and to develop a Hybrid alternative. PWIC also directed that studies be undertaken to assess the impacts of both alternatives on goods movement and economic



competitiveness (Further details regarding the PWIC directions related to alternative solutions are provided in **Chapter 4**).

7.2.4 Round 4 – Updated Evaluation of Alternative Solutions

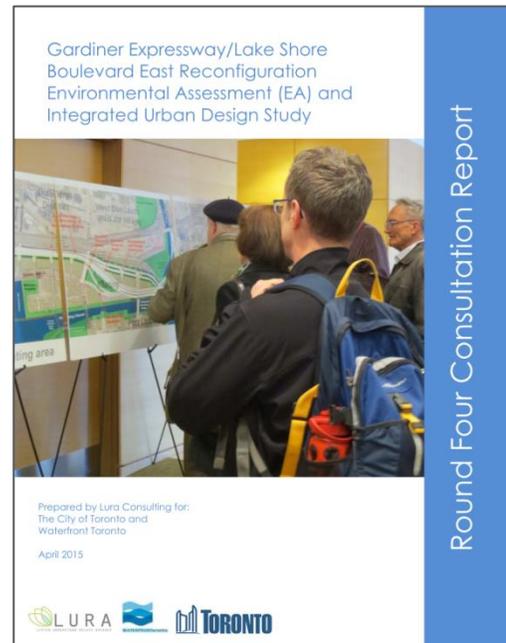
The focus of this round of the consultation process was to present and obtain input on the results of the additional alternative solutions work directed by the PWIC (optimization of auto travel times for the Remove alternative and development of a Hybrid alternative). More than 1,400 individuals (8,746 individuals with website visits) participated in the fourth round of consultation which took place between April 13 and 24, 2015. This round of consultation included the holding of two formal public meetings on April 15 and April 20, 2015.

Several recurring themes emerged in the feedback and advice provided by participants about key considerations to guide decision-making and balance diverse priorities:

- Road Capacity and Travel Time
- Cost
- Public Realm
- Safety and Accessibility
- Public Transit
- Active Transportation
- Construction
- Economic Development
- Future Development

Feedback from participants also raised the following additional key considerations:

- prioritize people over cars;



- learn from the experiences of other cities that have removed highway infrastructure; and,
- focus on the alternative that integrates flexibility to adapt to long-term needs.

Feedback on the Alternatives included:

Remove – Participants who indicated support for the Remove alternative typically provided the following reasons:

- Contributes to broader city building goals.
- Improves the public realm for a variety of users.
- Presents the most cost-effective solution.
- Improves urban design in the Study Area.
- Reconnects the City to the waterfront.
- Frees land for future development.
- Integrates transit and active forms of transportation.
- Replaces out-dated infrastructure.
- Increases traffic time marginally.

Hybrid – Participants who indicated support for the Hybrid alternative generally provided the following reasons:

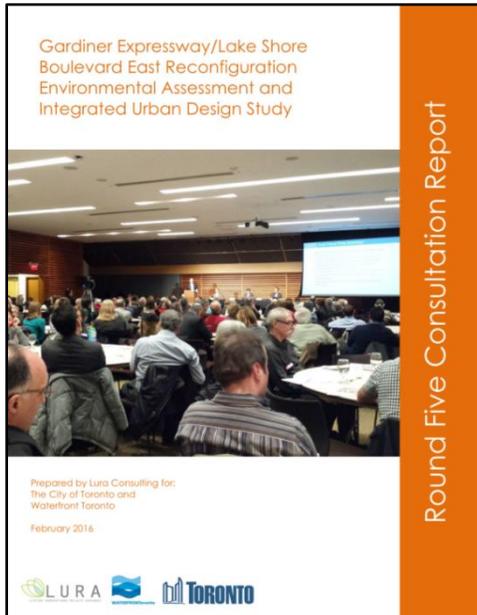
- Does not decrease road capacity.
- Does not significantly increase travel time or add to congestion.
- Maintains a continuous expressway connection between the east and west ends of the City and into the downtown core.
- Supports the movement of goods and transportation needs of local businesses.
- Enhances safety better than the Remove alternative.

Concerns about projected increases in travel times, safety, impacts from construction, assumptions about public transit and the potential for future development were expressed by participants about both alternatives.

Following the formal consultation on the assessment results of the Remove (Optimized) and Hybrid Alternative Solutions, an *Alternative Solutions Evaluation Interim Report – Addendum (May 2015)* was prepared and publicly released along with a May 6, 2015 City Staff Report. The results and recommendations in these reports were considered by PWIC at the May 13, 2015 meeting. At this meeting several deputations were made from a variety of stakeholders including members of the public, local resident association representatives, Downtown BIA, major land developers, and Port Lands area businesses. Various opinions on the Remove (Optimized) and Hybrid alternatives were presented. On June 10, 2015, the Remove (optimized)

and Hybrid alternative solutions assessment results were debated in City Council where the Hybrid Alternative was selected as the preferred EA solution.

7.2.5 Round 5 – Evaluation of Alternative Designs for the Hybrid Option



The purpose of this fifth round of consultation was to obtain feedback on the evaluation of alternative designs for the Hybrid alternative (which had been endorsed by Toronto City Council as the preferred alternative solution), as well as planning and urban design concepts for the Study Area. Consultation round 5 occurred between January 5 and 29, 2016 and engaged more than 1,550 individuals (3,682 individuals with website visits). This round of consultation included the holding of a formal public meeting on January 19, 2016.

Recurring comments were received that applied broadly to all three alternative designs for the Hybrid option, as well as proposed urban design concepts for the Study Area. In comparing the three design alternatives and associated public realm plans, most participants expressed support for either Hybrid 2 or 3, which realigns the expressway link away from the Keating Channel, with Hybrid 3 receiving the most positive feedback. Very little support was expressed for Hybrid 1 due to its impact on future development as per the Keating Channel Precinct Plan.

Following the formal consultation on the assessment results of the Hybrid Alternatives, an *Alternative Designs Evaluation Interim Report (February 2016)* was prepared and publically released along with a February 17, 2016 City Staff Report. The results and recommendations in these reports were considered by PWIC at a March 1, 2016 meeting. At this PWIC meeting, several delegations were made from a variety of stakeholders including local resident association representatives and third party proposal team representatives. The delegates largely expressed support for Hybrid 3. PWIC endorsed the recommendation for Hybrid 3 and referred and decision to City Council. On March 31, 2016, Hybrid 3 was selected as the preferred alternative design by a vote of 35–5 by City Council.

7.2.6 Aboriginal Community Consultation

In accordance with the City's First Nation Consultation Protocol for Environmental Assessments, which was developed in consultation with the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC), the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (MAA) and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the following communities were identified as having a potential interest in the EA:

- Alderville First Nation
- Beausoleil First Nation
- Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation
- Chippewas of Rama
- Curve Lake First Nation
- Hiawatha First Nation
- Mississaugas of Scugog Island
- Moose Deer Point First Nation
- Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation

Unless requested otherwise, letters and emails were sent to each of the communities advising of the five PICs.

The Hiawatha First Nation corresponded with the project team and advised of an interest in the project. Project materials were provided and an offer to meet was made, however, a meeting was never requested.

Curve Lake First Nation sent a letter on July 11, 2013 acknowledging receipt of the notice of PIC 1 and broadly outlining what the Curve Lake First Nation's interest may be in the project (limited to archaeological at this point). Further communication by phone and email confirmed that Curve Lake First Nation wants to be sent a copy of the draft EA when available for review and comment. They have further asked that they not be sent any further meeting notices.

Alderville First Nation sent an October 7, 2013 letter advising that the Gardiner East EA is deemed as having minimal potential to First Nations' rights. Accordingly, they have requested to be kept apprised of any archaeological findings, burial sites or any environmental impacts should they occur.

The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation provided a letter in early 2016 stating an interest in the project. A meeting was held on May 5, 2016 at the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation reserve. Members of the project team provided a presentation about the Gardiner East EA and answered questions about the project. A number of project related materials (e.g. maps and presentation handouts) were provided and a commitment was made to provide the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation with a copy of the draft EA for their review. The draft EA was sent to the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation on July 29, 2016. Despite numerous follow-up attempts to confirm an interest in submitting comments about the draft EA, comments were not provided.

On October 5, 2016, the MOECC provided additional direction about the Aboriginal communities that may have an interest in the EA. The project co-proponents reviewed the correspondence and determined that all communities identified had already been contacted about the EA with the exception of the Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation.

Following receipt of the October 5, 2016 letter from the MOECC, the project co-proponents sent correspondence to the Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation to determine whether they had an interest in the EA. Despite numerous follow-up phone calls, a response to the correspondence was not received. The project co-proponents remain committed to Aboriginal community consultation and will continue their efforts to confirm an interest in the EA with the Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation.

A more detailed description of Aboriginal community consultation materials, meeting agendas and summaries is provided in **Appendix B, Record of Consultation**. A copy of the City's First Nation Consultation Protocol for Environmental Assessments is also included.

7.2.7 Draft EA Report Release – Voluntary Review

Stakeholders and the public were invited to review the Draft EA Report during the 45-day voluntary review period, between July 21, 2016 and September 6, 2016, and provide comments to the project team via the Facilitator's Office. Forty-five individuals and stakeholders submitted feedback as part of the Voluntary Review of the Draft EA Report. Stakeholder organizations that provided comments included the West Don Lands Committee, First Gulf, Lafarge Canada Inc., Castlepoint Numa, and the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. **Table 7-2** below summarizes the number of comments received by each submission method.

Table 7-2: Voluntary Review Participation Results by Submission Method

Submission Method	# of Submissions
Online Submission Form	29
Email	15
Mail/Hard Copy Submission Form	0
Voicemail	1
Total	45

Overall, the Draft EA Report was well received by stakeholders and the public. Several comments indicated that the report was well written, thorough in its analysis and professionally presented, and endorsed the Draft EA Report. Several themes also emerged from the comments submitted by stakeholders and the public pertaining to the EA process and outcomes including: the Remove alternative, preferred alternative (Hybrid 3), importance of public realm improvements, balancing transportation modes, public consultation, project cost and use of public funds, role of the Gardiner East in the GTA transportation network, and construction phasing and impacts.

Stakeholders and members of the public indicated support for Hybrid 3 as the preferred alternative, recognizing that it provides the most opportunity of the three Hybrid design alternatives to improve the public realm and revitalize the waterfront in the Study Area. Several comments from members of the public also reiterated support for the Remove alternative. A strong and recurring theme that emerged in the feedback received is the need to ensure that public realm improvements in the study area proposed to revitalize and improve connections to the waterfront are completed in tandem with the implementation of the preferred alternative. Participants also requested the continuation of public and stakeholder consultations into the detailed design and construction stages of the project, as well as more detailed information about construction staging and timelines.

A more detailed description of the feedback received and responses to the specific questions and comments is provided in *Voluntary Review of the Draft EA Report – Summary of Participant Feedback* report that is contained in **Appendix B, Record of Consultation**.

7.3 Influence of Consultation on the EA Study

The following provides a summary of how the input received throughout the consultation program influenced the EA study and outcome:

- Changes were made to both the draft alternative solutions and draft alternative designs evaluation criteria, following public input reflecting important community attributes.
- Identification of key problem areas in the corridor including key intersections that require improvement to better facilitate pedestrian and cyclist crossings.
- Identification of types of public realm improvements in the corridor that are desired by the community.
- The SAC was an important sounding board regarding the draft public information and communication materials. Throughout the public forums, significant changes were made to the presentation materials following SAC review to ensure that the messages and information were clear and understandable.
- Economic and business stakeholders (including the Canadian Automobile Association) expressed concerns regarding increased vehicle travel times under a Remove scenario – this was a key reason for PWIC to recommend the optimization of the Remove alternative and the development of the Hybrid alternative. Furthermore, direct consultation was held with many of the business interests to obtain information of their travel needs and concerns.
- Major landowners/developers provided comments on the alternatives including expressing the benefits of removing the Logan ramps and the need to adjust the design of the proposed east of Cherry Street access ramps for the Hybrid alternative.
- The West Don Lands Committee expressed concerns regarding the impact of the Hybrid design east of the Cherry Street ramps on the Keating Channel Precinct public realm opportunities and provided rationale to explore alternative alignments for the Hybrid to reduce the ramps. Improvements have also been proposed to the Cherry Street intersection reflecting the West Don Lands Committee vision of this area being a gateway to the Port Lands.
- Two alternative solutions were proposed by two third-party teams (Green Gardiner and Viaduct) which were further refined and evaluated by the Gardiner East project team.
- Several stakeholders, including for example, West Don Lands Committee, First Gulf, and the Third-Party teams, expressed the desire to align the expressway closer to the rail tracks through the Keating Channel Precinct which assisted in the development of Hybrid Design Alternatives 2 and 3.

- TRCA provided input to the design of the Hybrid design alternatives to minimize effects on the future Don Mouth Sediment Control facility and to ensure that Don River floodwaters are not impeded.
- Metrolinx provided input regarding their expectations for mitigation during the construction of the rail bridge underpass widening and provided important information regarding the long term plans for the Union Rail Corridor. Metrolinx also provided input on the process to be followed for reviews of detailed designs and staging plans that are related to or may affect the rail corridor and railway infrastructure.

Consultation input received throughout the EA study greatly informed the process and results of the EA. The public, stakeholders, and agencies who participated in the process were able to see how the designs evolved over the course of the study and understand the decision-making process followed. The engagement of interested agencies, stakeholders, Aboriginal communities and residents will continue through detailed design and construction by the implementation team as is customary in City transportation initiatives.