



QUEENS QUAY REVITALIZATION BACKGROUNDER

Queens Quay is Toronto's main waterfront street. Given its prime location, it should be a showpiece for the city that serves as a destination for locals and tourists alike. The revitalization of Queens Quay, which is now underway, will transform the street from an uninviting and often congested thoroughfare into a world-class boulevard that is both beautiful and functional.

The new Queens Quay will feature a wide, tree-lined granite pedestrian promenade alongside a new stretch of Martin Goodman Trail on the south side. Expanded TTC streetcar platforms in the centre and new traffic lanes on the north side with improved turning lanes and signal timing will keep people moving. New sidewalks and landscaping that extend to the edge of all storefronts will stimulate ground floor retail activity and urban vitality.

The first phase of construction will occur between Bay Street and Yo Yo Ma Lane. In addition, a much needed pedestrian and Martin Goodman Trail connection on the south side of Queens Quay from Bay Street east to Lower Jarvis Street will also be undertaken.

When complete, the revitalization of Queens Quay will improve traffic and transit operations, link major destinations along the water's edge, create pedestrian and cycling-friendly promenades and encourage an economically vibrant area.

Design Competition

In 2006, Waterfront Toronto looked to the design world for a plan to convert the central part of Toronto's lakeshore into a spectacular waterfront area that would provide the public with continuous access to the lake. Because Queens Quay runs the length of Toronto's waterfront, giving this boulevard a new life was not only an important part of the design competition but it was critical to Waterfront Toronto's overall revitalization goals as well.

The winning design from West 8 + DTAH proposed turning Queens Quay into a signature boulevard with a stunning linear park along the south side of the street. Running the length of Queens Quay, the park would be made possible by reducing the number of lanes of traffic and shifting them to the north side of the street. It would feature a generous new pedestrian promenade, rows of trees and would also allow the Martin Goodman Trail to be extended through the central waterfront filling in the current gap of the Lake Ontario Trail.

Environmental Assessment

While Waterfront Toronto was an advocate of the winning design, it fully supported the statutorily-required Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process which had to occur before any work on Queens Quay could begin.

Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto began the Queens Quay Revitalization EA in September 2007 to explore how to transform Queens Quay into an economically vibrant and

scenic waterfront drive providing transit priority and a completed Martin Goodman Trail through the central part of the waterfront.

The EA followed a formal process which included data collection and the identification and analysis of several different alternative planning solutions and design concepts. The assessment of design alternatives was undertaken jointly by the project proponents. Throughout the process, the potential environmental, social, cultural, and economic impacts and benefits of each alternative have been assessed.

In addition, the EA featured extensive public consultation with both stakeholders and the public at large. Dozens of meetings with individual businesses and landowners were held as well as six public meetings as part of the public consultation process for these EAs.

The EA resulted in the technically recommended alternative which is being built on Queens Quay today: two lanes of east-west traffic on the north side with transit in the centre and an extended Martin Goodman Trail and pedestrian promenade on the south side.

EA Approvals

On October 1, 2009, Toronto City Council overwhelmingly approved the recommendation to revitalize Queens Quay outlined in the Environmental Study Report (ESR) prepared by Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto.

A Notice of Completion for the Queens Quay Revitalization EA was issued on December 18, 2009. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment completed its review of the Queens Quay Revitalization EA on April 14, 2010. This cleared the way for the project to continue.

Detailed Design and Planning for Construction

In mid-2010, following the completion of the EA, the design team undertook two phases of work:

- Schematic design for the entire project area from Yo Yo Ma Lane to Parliament Street; and
- Detailed design for construction from Yo Yo Ma Lane to Bay Street

Planning for construction was undertaken alongside detailed design. These tasks resulted in a comprehensive layout of the street from end-to-end including traffic and bus management plans, intersection design, streetscape design, tree planting strategy and furnishings as well as construction phasing strategies. In November 2011, Waterfront Toronto hired Eastern Construction as the Construction Manager for the project.

The transformation of Queens Quay East will roll out in the future as development progresses and as funding is available