

Park People ([www.parkpeople.ca](http://www.parkpeople.ca))

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**UNDER GARDINER WALKSHOP  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION NOTES  
APRIL 10, 2016**

**1. Stop #1 - Fort York Visitor's Centre**

- **Walkshops** This is the first of three Under Gardiner Walkshops with one over the Jane's Walk weekend.
- **Comments** The project design team will receive your comments from the walk.
- **Leads** Jake Tobin Garrett of Park People is our walk leader, Anna Hill of Park People is our note- taker, Lauren Abrahams is attending on behalf of Public Work and Christopher McKinnon is here on behalf of Waterfront Toronto.
- **Further information** For updates and further information, please register at [www.undergardiner.com](http://www.undergardiner.com) and tweet opinions and feedback at @undergardiner.
- **Project Funding** includes \$25 million from the Matthews Foundation for project hard and soft costs.
- **Fast Facts** The 1.75 km linear park will stretch from Strachan to Bathurst. Total acreage is 10 acres, just a bit smaller than Dufferin Grove Park. The Under Gardiner will connect 70,000 people living in the surrounding communities.
- **Programming** will include performance, sports & recreation, and public art.
- **Trail** A trail will extend the length of the Under Gardiner while “pulse points” will create activity hubs at designated locations.
- **Pulse Points** will include 1) Strachan Creative Action Hub, 2) Fort York-Liquid Landscape, 3) Fort York Boulevard Crossing, 4) Bathurst Community Hub
- **Feedback** A key goal of today's walk is to receive your feedback, particularly in regards to the design/programming of the four pulse points.
- **Participant Questions (Q) and Comments (C)**
  - **Participant Demographics** Walkshop participants are from surrounding communities as well as North York, Bloor & Sherbourne, Annex, Riverdale and City Place.
  - **Audience Reasons for Participation** include an interest in public art, cycling connectivity, project development, program development, construction progress, and safety.

- **Q-** Are Gardiner highway repairs currently in progress on site? **A-** Yes, Gardiner repairs are in progress.
- **Q-** What is “Metropolitan Rigging”? **A -** To maximize the flexibility of the space, we want to be able to suspend from above or support from below. “Metropolitan Rigging” is our name for a scaffolding system to allow us to suspend art or other installations from above. Flexibility is a core design objective as some installations may be seasonal.
- **Q-** What happened to the colored lights [public art project *Water Table* by Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak] that used to shine on the Gardiner? **A-** Lights have been removed as part of construction process but they will return, bolder and better.
- **Q-**It seems that the City build projects, tears them down and then rebuilds them. Why? **A-** Construction of the Under Gardiner won’t happen until the deck rehabilitation is complete. This rehabilitation is the first major renovation of the Gardiner in 50 years. The Metropolitan Rigging will offer support for future maintenance.

## 2. Stop #2 - Strachan-Creative Action Hub

- **Location** The Creative Action Hub is for higher intensity programming because it is further away from residential units than other “Pulse Points”.
- **Performance** Creative Action Hub will host various types of performances
- **Boardwalk / Seating** A boardwalk along Strachan will fold down into a stepped seating area that descends from Strachan Avenue down to the ground under the Gardiner.
- **Gateway** This stair-stepped seating area will also double as an iconic gateway entrance into the Under Gardiner trail.
- **Grand Trunk Railway** Notice how the Under Gardiner columns were placed alongside the Grand Trunk Railway, creating a triangular view cone into the performance space.
- **Children & Youth Playgrounds** – The project is proposing to install a playground and skate park just west of Strachan Avenue, adjacent to the Gardiner.
- **Participant Questions (Q) and Comments (C):**
  - **Q- Fort York Partnership** -How will this installation infringe on land owned by Fort York? **A –** The Under Gardiner will require a strong partnership with Fort York. Fort York owns the parking lot next to the Armory. A portion of this parking will remain while a portion will be converted to public green space.

- **Q- Impact on trees** Will the big trees remain? **A-** At present, all of the big trees will remain.
- **Q- Strachan Underpass** How will it be possible to pass from the playground, on one side of Strachan, to the performance space, on the other side of Strachan? **A-** The existing underpass beneath Strachan will remain.
- **Q- Sound Mitigation** The sound of the cars is very loud. What are strategies to mitigate noise, otherwise the concerts will need to be twice as loud to compete with the cars. **A -** There are various strategies to mitigate sound of auto traffic and trains, including sound barriers, sound muffling and landscaping solutions.
- **Q- Width of Sidewalk** – What is the anticipated width of the sidewalk or boardwalk on Strachan? Will the width accommodate large numbers of people descending into the performance space? **A-** Yes, the sidewalk will be widened and there will be protection from cars on Strachan.
- **Q- Accessibility** Will the performance space be accessible? **A-** Yes, there will be a barrier free ramp leading from Strachan into the performance space.
- **Q- Washrooms** Will new washrooms be created near the performance space and playgrounds? **A-** We are still trying to figure out where the washrooms should go. One idea is that people could use the washrooms in the Fort York Visitor Centre.
- **C- Mistake not to include washrooms** It could be a mistake not to include additional washrooms since the Fort York Visitor Centre may be closed during evening events. If the City is building the playgrounds, maybe they could install washrooms too.
- **Q- Bird excrement** – Do you have a plan to keep the park free of bird excrement? **A-** We have been considering pigeon hotels to attract the birds to isolated areas of the trail.
- **Q- Air Quality** If there is a playground in this area, will steps be taken to monitor air quality? **A-** Yes. There will be an EA report to assess air quality and on-going monitoring of air quality.
- **C- Trees to Improve Air Quality** Please consider planting more trees near the Creative Action Hub and playground to improve air quality.
- **C- Indigenous History** Please include indigenous history as part of the design of the Under Gardiner. Consider including indigenous programs or gardens with native herbs, medicines and foods.
- **C- Community Garden** – It is important to provide more community garden space with any new public space

construction project in Toronto. Given the population density of this neighbourhood, a community garden would be well used by residents or in partnership with a local school.

- **C- Separate pedestrian and cyclist traffic** Please separate pedestrian and cycling traffic. This is especially important for seniors and young children.
- **C-Structural Integrity of Decking** It is going to be very important to continually monitor the structural integrity of the decking. One falling piece of concrete could seriously injure someone.
- **Connectivity to Waterfront** It is very important to have a plan in place to connect the Under Gardiner to the newly planned park at Strachan and Lakeshore.
- **C- Connectivity to Liberty Village Bike Path** It is very important to connect the Under Gardiner to the new bike path in Liberty Village.
- **C- Rain Curtain** Please consider some kind of rain curtain to prevent water from blowing into the performance space.
- **C- Low Residential Density Allows for Youth Focused Recreation** A skate park, basketball court or BMX Park would be an appropriate use for this area given the distance to residential units.
- **C- Water run-off** Please consider creative design solutions to handle water-run-off from the Gardiner.
- **C- Graffiti Strategy** Please develop a graffiti strategy which could include coated surfaces to deter graffiti and designated graffiti zones to encourage graffiti.
- **C- Homeless Strategy** Please develop a homeless strategy that includes or discourages homeless participation in the Under Gardiner.
- **C- Smoking** Please have signs in place to deter smoking at the children's playground, youth playground and throughout the trail.
- **C-Security** There needs to be a security plan in place to deter vandalism, particularly vandalism of the art installations. Recently, some of the Winter Stations were quite damaged by the end of the exhibition.
- **Outdoor Movie Night** – The performance space could be a great location for an outdoor movie night.

### 3. Stop #3- Fort York-Liquid Landscape

- **High Point of Gardiner** Please notice that this is the highest elevation of the Gardiner decking. According to urban planner,

Ken Greenburg, it is possible to fit a 5-storey building under the decking at this point.

- **Softer Landscape** There is a proposal to provide softer landscaping and native plants at this point. Landscaping could reference Lake Ontario shoreline.
- **Acoustics Under Gardiner** are better here. Easier to hear.
- **Proximity of Residences** Notice that residential units are adjacent to the trail.
- **Participant Questions (Q) or Comments (C)**
  - **C-Waterfall** It would be cool to see a waterfall to call attention to the height of the roof above.
  - **C-Mud Management** There is a lot of mud here because of water run-off from above. Please develop a smart landscaping plan to mitigate mud and manage salt water run-off. Swales, native vegetation or vegetable gardens could help mitigate mud.
  - **C-Celebrating Height of Roof**– A climbing wall, zip-line, or Tree-Top Trekking are all examples of activities that could celebrate the height of the roof and respond to people’s yearning to climb. Drop-in programs are great for people who are not able to plan ahead. How about a trapeze, slacklines, or a high wire? For safety, maybe use a net to create a second level halfway up the columns.
  - **C-Cirque du Soleil or Circus Camp** – About 8 years ago, Cirque du Soleil had a public performance in Quebec City beneath an underpass. It was hugely popular. What about inviting Cirque du Soleil or a Circus Camp to set up shop here in the summer months?
  - **C- Colors of Columns** – The Yellow columns are fantastic. How about using color to further accentuate the columns and define “rooms.”
  - **C- Community Feedback** –Since there are adjacent residences, how about some uses that are per the request of people living in the apartments? Maybe a separate consultation?
  - **C-Benches** Some seating in this area would be nice.
  - **C-Farmers’ Market / Food Festivals** This might be a nice location for a neighbourhood Farmers’ Market or Foodie Festival, especially because the linear quality of the Under Gardiner is very similar to a street. Perhaps the market could continue in winter due to roof protection.
  - **C-City Project Display** What about large displays that relate to the history of the city and transportation? How about an old street car, new Eglinton Crosstown street car or historic navy ship?

- **C- First Nations-** Fort York does a lot of programming that relates to First Nations History and this programming could be part of this Pulse Point.
- **C-Diversity**–In Chicago’s Millennium Park, there is a wonderful fountain that includes diverse images of city residents. Art installations in this space should also reflect Toronto’s diversity.
- **Ceiling Surface for Projection** – How about a ceiling surface for projection? What about a planetarium projection of stars or movies on the ceiling?

#### 4. Stop #4-Fort York Boulevard Crossing

- **Location** An east/west Boulevard Crossing occurs at the halfway point of the length of the Under Gardiner.
- **3 Options** An Environmental Assessment is looking at three options for the trail to cross Fort York Boulevard; 1) At Grade Crossing, 2) Pedestrian Bridge, 3) Tunnel
- **Preferred Option** The preferred option is the pedestrian bridge to create an iconic moment, to allow a continuous flow of pedestrian and cycling traffic, and to allow existing car traffic and a possible future LRT line to continue unimpeded.
- **Design for Pedestrian Bridge on Website** The design includes seating and will be posted at [www.undergardener.com](http://www.undergardener.com) later this week.
- **Pedestrian Bridge Location** The pedestrian bridge will be parallel with the roof of the Gardiner. The bridge will provide east-west connection, not north-south.
- **Proximity of Residences to Under Gardiner** – Notice that high-rise units are very close to the Gardiner at this point. There is new zoning in effect which now requires 25 meters of separation but these units were likely built before this regulation was in effect.
- **Participant Questions (Q) or Comments (C)**
  - **Q-Cost** What is the estimated cost of the pedestrian bridge?  
**A-** About \$4-6 million or 20%-25% of the project budget.
  - **C- Benefits of At-Grade Crossing** Please consider the benefits of an at-grade crossing. For example, an at-grade crossing will slow down the cars on Lakeshore. Also, an at-grade crossing could allow north-south as well as east-west movement of pedestrians.
  - **C-Danger of Curving Road** One of the problems of the at-grade crossing is that the curve in the road makes it difficult to see pedestrians.
  - **C-Curve Means We Need a Stoplight** Yes, the curve in the road is why it is important to have a stoplight.

- **C-Stoplight or Stop Sign Could Impede Future LRT** A stoplight could complicate a future LRT line.
- **C-Iconic Bridge Could Slow Traffic** Maybe the bridge could be designed in such a way to slow traffic.
- **C-Pedestrian Bridge Sightlines Into Residential Units** The pedestrian bridge will require design provisions to deter sightlines into residences.
- **C-Pedestrian Bridge Framing of CN Tower** Perhaps the pedestrian bridge can frame views of the CN Tower.
- **C- Grade level commercial zoning** – Perhaps the first floor residential units could be zoned commercial. It would be really helpful to have cafes and restaurants at this Pulse Point. If not, how about kiosks or carts to offer refreshments on the pedestrian bridge? This is especially important in very cold or very hot weather.
- **C-What about a four-way pedestrian bridge?** You actually need north south connectivity in addition to east west connectivity. What about a 4-way pedestrian bridge?
- **C-Length of pedestrian bridge** What about extending the pedestrian bridge further down the trail? Given the height of the Gardiner, maybe two levels are better than one.

## 5. Stop #4 - Bathurst Community Hub

- **East of the Boulevard Crossing, Land Is Not In the Public Domain** – East of the boulevard crossing, we are on privately owned publicly accessible land.
- **Proximity of Residences** – There are a number of residential units very close to the trail at this point.
- **Sound Quality More Representative** Listen closely as there is no rehabilitation work presently occurring on this portion of the Gardiner. Therefore, the traffic sounds are more representative of the future project sound quality.
- **Community Hub** How can we design this section of the Under Gardiner to act like a community space?
- **Participant Questions (Q) or Comments (C)**
  - **C-Fire pits** What about fire pits? Everyone likes to gather around a fire in winter.
  - **C-Shelter** This feels like the coldest part of the trail. Important to provide shelter at this point. Would it be possible to hollow out the rock sculpture as a form of shelter? A tent could provide shelter and avoid site lines into residential units. Also, maybe there could be a roller skating rink or arts and crafts in the tent...some kind of programming to draw people into it.

- **C- Chess, Ping Pong or Community Garden** Chess tables, ping pong tables, or a community garden might make this more of a community hub.
- **Q- Existing Improvements** How will the new trail respond to the existing paving and public art? **A-** The new design will not disrupt existing paving, public art or loading zones. Rather, the new trail will weave into the existing design.
- **C-Concessions as revenue tool for maintenance** It's freezing and we all need something hot to drink. What about concession kiosks as a revenue tool to help with the long term sustainability of the project?
- **C-Local vendors** - Let's not have franchise concessions but rather, local vendors
- **C-Farmers' Market** Maybe this is the right location for a farmer's market, though there will soon be a new new Loblaws on Bathurst Street.
- **C- Connectivity** Important to connect the trail to the path, community centre, off-leash dog area and school across Bathurst. There is a study under way to look at an at-grade crossing to connect to City Place.
- **C-Security for Art Installations** This might be the best spot for art exhibitions due to "eyes on the street" that could help keep art installations more secure.
- **C-Historic References** – This might be another appropriate location for historic references. What about a canon?
- **Q- Management and Governance Models** –What kind of management and governance models are being considered for the Under Gardiner? **A-**Park People is currently working with HR&A to study various models of management and governance to develop appropriate models for the Under Gardiner.
- **Q- Anticipated Timeline for Completion** What is the anticipated timeline for completion? **A** – The design will be completed by end of summer, 2016. The Gardiner Rehabilitation will be completed by October 2016. The Under Gardiner will be completed by Summer 2017.
- **Q-Property Taxes** – Will the construction of the Under Gardiner raise my property taxes? **A-** Perhaps but as your property taxes increase, so too will the value of your home.
- **C-Upcoming Community Consultations and Walkshops** There will be another public consultation in May and there will be two more Walkshops with dates to be announced shortly. Please sign up to receive updates at [www.undergardener.com](http://www.undergardener.com).



- **C-Further Comments** Please contact [hello@undergardiner.com](mailto:hello@undergardiner.com) if you have further comments about Project: Under Gardiner.