



Councilors,

The city is facing an important decision on the future of the waterfront from Jarvis St. to the Don River and into the Port Lands. The conclusion reached by the Gardiner East EA last year was to connect the Gardiner to the Don Valley Parkway via a boulevard at grade. At that time Council asked for more information on transportation issues and to review a “Hybrid” proposal that was not included in the original EA.

Modified Maintain?

The review of the original Hybrid notion demonstrated that it would not work. Instead, the Hybrid plan that is currently under consideration is essentially the originally rejected Maintain option. The only change from “Maintain” is the relocation of off-ramps from Logan Ave. to Cherry St. These new ramps have not been studied in any detail or vetted by stakeholders through the EA process. Their location makes development between Parliament St. and the river all but impossible and hinders the use of Cherry St. as the gateway to the future development of the Port Lands. The location of the proposed ramps will necessitate the expropriation of privately held land and invites protracted and expensive lawsuits from the owners of those and adjacent development properties. **The Hybrid scheme is less desirable than the Maintain option** for this reason.

The Fiscally Responsible Choice

The Remove/Boulevard option is the fiscally responsible choice and opens up the waterfront to the city. It is the choice that will connect all of the work that has already been done on the waterfront to the west with the East Bayfront through the Keating Channel, First Gulf site, and Port Lands. It also creates 12.9 acres of developable land that will add to the tax base and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in direct revenues to pay for the project. **In fact, the Boulevard option saves \$225 million in up front costs and tens of millions every year in maintenance costs.**

Preliminary Evaluation Results

| | Study Lens/ Criteria Group Summary | MAINTAIN/HYBRID | REMOVE/BOULEVARD |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE | Automobiles | Green | Red |
| | Transit | Green | Green |
| | Pedestrians | Red | Green |
| | Cycling | Red | Green |
| | Movement of Goods | Green | Red |
| | Safety | Red | Green |
| | Constructability | Green | Yellow |
| URBAN DESIGN | Planning | Red | Green |
| | Public Realm | Red | Green |
| | Built Form | Red | Green |
| ENVIRONMENT | Social & Health | Red | Green |
| | Natural Environment | Red | Green |
| | Cultural Resources | Green | Yellow |
| ECONOMICS | Regional Economics | Yellow | Yellow |
| | Local Economics | Red | Green |
| | Direct Cost and Benefit | Yellow | Green |

| | | |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Preferred | Moderately Preferred | Least Preferred |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------|

Gridlock?

The choice comes down to very real benefits for the city versus a few hypothetical minutes of travel time during the morning rush for a very small group of commuters. There is concern that removal of this section of elevated road will lead to widespread gridlock, however traffic camera evidence confirms that **the Gardiner East is underutilized**.



Morning Rush Hour - Tuesday May 26, 8:12 AM to 9:07 AM

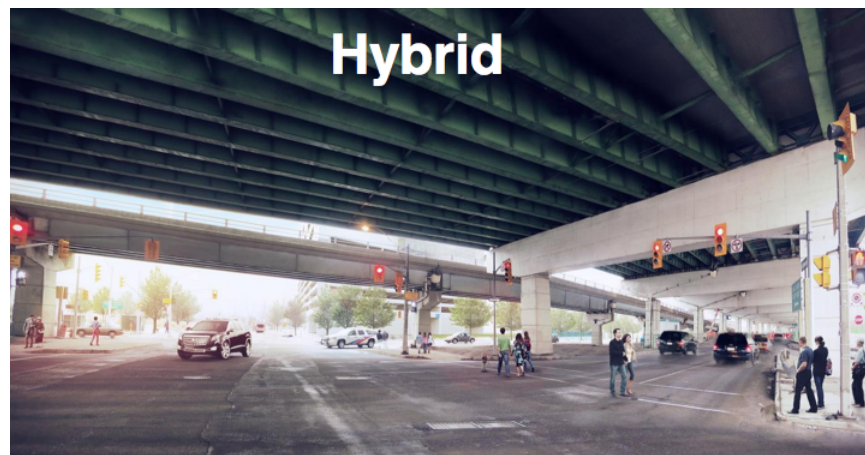
| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| DVP/Gardiner Ramp WB | | | | |
| Gardiner/Cherry EB/WB | | | | |
| Gardiner/DVP EB/WB | | | | |

The Boulevard option actually has the same vehicle capacity as the Hybrid and offers more options to connect with downtown and the waterfront for both commuters and local traffic.

Fairness And Effectiveness

Currently 68% of commuters use transit to get downtown compared to 3% for the Gardiner East corridor. The \$595 million that is saved by removing the elevated portion of the roadway can go a long way towards making the core more accessible and connected to the rest of the city and that is good for business.

If the extra ½ billion-dollar price of the Hybrid is a worthwhile investment for 3% of commuters then, to be fair, we should be willing to spend \$13.5 billion for the benefit of the 68% that use transit to get downtown. Money spent keeping the Gardiner East from falling apart will not improve travel times, in fact automobile travel times will continue to increase due to congestion elsewhere in the road system. An investment in transit would have real and immediate benefits.



- Numerous turn restrictions/ conflict points on Lake Shore
- 6 years of construction
- \$919M Cost (2013\$)
- 5.5 acres developable land; \$39M revenue (2013\$)

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World Class?

Many major cities from Seoul, to San Francisco to New York have taken down significant stretches of elevated roadway and have seen the benefit in reduced operating costs, increased economic development, tourism, and higher property values. **This is not a transportation engineering exercise it is a referendum on the future of Toronto's waterfront.** Our status as a leading world city is at stake. Do we aspire to be a New York City or a Newark, a Barcelona or a Baltimore, a San Francisco or a St. Louis?

We are presented with a choice: Maintain the existing structure at great expense and continually deal with falling concrete, traffic snarls, and increased taxes or replace it at very little cost with a boulevard and reap the benefits of growth, increased economic activity, and international prestige.

But this is a big decision with many ramifications, including its effect on the transportation network. Many of the potential outcomes will not be known until later, after all the decisions have been made. What we do know now is that none of the options adequately addresses the problem of an increasingly gridlocked city. **Unless the city commits to improving transit we are doomed to become a second-class city.**



- New 8 lane boulevard
- Boulevard lined with 1,200 new trees, dedicated turning lanes, sidewalks, retail frontage and cycling trails
- 6 years of construction
- \$461M Cost (2013\$)
- 12.9 acres of developable land; revenue \$176M (2013\$)

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It's Our Money

Every year at budget time we are told that Toronto is facing a “structural deficit”, adding to this burden for no identifiable benefit is irresponsible. Downtown businesses need cost effective solutions for increasing the mobility of our employees and customers. **We need pragmatism to prevail over politics.**

It is the position of the St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA that city council **defer a decision on the Gardiner East until the Hybrid proposal has been fully and properly assessed and funded plans are made to improve downtown Toronto's transit infrastructure.**

Yours,
George Milbrandt
Chair, St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA