Moses did it. But can Mammoliti?

Candidate announces $1.3 billion plan to open up expressway, and limit motorists to 8-lane Lake Shore

TESS KALINOWSKI
TRANSPORTATION REPORTER

A $1.3 billion plan to ban cars from the Gardiner and confine motorists to a wider, eight-lane Lake Shore Blvd could be paid off in four years with revenue from road tolls, parking and a floating casino near Ontario Place, says Toronto Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti.

The mayor candidate's vision — based on the work of University of Toronto architecture professors Ivan Salaff and Robert Wright — reimagines the Gardiner as a skyway, open down the middle to act as a six-kilometre skylight over Lake Shore.

"The Gardiner would open just like Moses opened up the sea," said Mammoliti.

Inspired in part by New York's High Line elevated park, it would have trains down one side, with lanes for cyclists, pedestrians and skaters on the other, running through a series of 12 sky parks — green spaces equivalent in acreage to 15 Yonge-Dundas Squares — at a cost of $34 million, including street connections.

Mammoliti is proposing to raise between $200 million and $600 million annually from a casino, $100 million from parking and $85 million from road tolls.

"We've got to stop with asking people to cover the costs of Toronto with property taxes," said Mammoliti, who drew only $3 per cent support in an April poll by the Toronto Star.

Mammoliti said he would negotiate a casino deal with the province even though Queen's Park put a moratorium on new commercial

Illustrations above and below show various aspects of the Gardiner Expressway, including a skytrain and series of elevated parks, as envisioned in Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti's $1.3 billion plan for Toronto's waterfront.

"The Gardiner would open just like Moses opened up the sea," said Mammoliti in unveiling his plan on Tuesday.

Although seven out of 10 people polled rejected the idea of $5 tolls on the Gardiner and Don Valley Parkway, Mammoliti said he's convinced drivers would celebrate his plan to collecting tolls on the Lake Shore and Yonge St. extension during rush hour. "None of them would mind paying $2 if it is going to something meaningful," he said.

Motorists would have the option of parking in two giant 10,000-spot lots at the CNE and the foot of the DVP for a $15 fee that would include a day pass for transit. Mammoliti put the cost of a skytrain at $300 million. But he was vague on the technology he is proposing, saying only that it would not be light rail transit.

"We need to get people to the airport quickly and an LRT just doesn't do that. It's a true new concept, a clean concept that talks about getting us quickly to where we need to go," he said.

It costs Toronto about $8 million a year on average to maintain the Gardiner. But this year's extensive work doubled that to about $15 million, according to the city.

It was estimated that a 2006 proposal to tear down the Gardiner east of Jarvis St and replace it with an eight-lane road would cost about $300 million.

In a second phase, something Mammoliti envisions in his second term as mayor, the Toronto Islands would become home to a convention centre and hotel and there would be a transit link to the island airport.

"The island belongs to the whole city," he said. "We need to drive tourists to the city of Toronto and you can't do it with a mediocre waterfront."

The skyway parks would be placed at each of the major intersections along the Gardiner, according to Wright, who said he and Salaff have been working on waterfall plans for years.

"In the debates about the Gardiner, the Lake Shore has actually been the largest barrier for pedestrians," Wright said.

He envisages the skyway parks — accessible from ground level via elevators — as stations that connect one side to the other, possibly linking the skyway to Union Station.

Asked if Lake Shore Blvd. could actually be widened by two lanes, Wright said it would be possible if on-ramps were removed.
Mammoliti sees revived waterfront

Rapid transit plays ‘major role,’ candidate says

By Megan O'Toole

Incumbent candidate Giorgio Mammoliti is set to unveil a
streamlined vision for the waterfront that would transform
the Gardiner Expressway into a public green space,
creating a key segment of waterfront boulevard from
near Lake Shore to an intersection.

The plan would also extend Front Street beyond Harbourfront
to include piers and add a new dock along Lake Shore
for cruises and river trips.

Mammoliti said his plan is
based on a detailed study he conducted,
and he believes the plan would
start realizing profits within a
single four-year term. From the casino, tolls
and parking revenue, he foresees
an annual income of $200 million
to $300 million more than the
plan’s cost.

The waterfront plan, developed
by a team of experts from
the University of Toronto,
includes revitalizing
a key plank in the platform.

The proposal also calls
for the implementation of a
rapid-transit link between
Union Station and Pearson
Airport.

For years, the city has
considered concepts such as
providing parkland at
the Gardiner and extending
Front Street, but Mr.
Mammoliti said his plan
“realistically brings everything together —
the cars, the bikes, the
pedestrians and more important
the love for green space.”

Robert Wright, one of the
plan’s architects at U of T, says
he has been looking at waterfront
issues for decades, and
believes the plan successfully
integrates the urban core with
the lake’s edge.

Although the plan advocates
creating a new transit corridor
between the Gardiner and
Pearson Airport, Robert Wright
said, “It consolidates the city with
the waterfront.”

The plan would also link up
with existing TTC lines, spurring an
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Mayoral candidate Georgio Mammoliti unveils his plan yesterday for Toronto's waterfront. It includes taking all cars off the Gardiner in favour of rapid transit and a series of 18 sky parks along the way.

A Gardiner without cars?
Mammoliti unveils waterfront plan

A $1.3-billion plan to ban cars from the Gardiner and confine motorists to a wider, eight-lane Lake Shore Boulevard could be paid off in four years with revenue from road tolls, parking and a floating casino near Ontario Place, says mayoral candidate Georgio Mammoliti.

His waterfront vision — based on the work of University of Toronto architecture professors Ivan Saleff and Robert Wright — reimagines the Gardiner as a Skyway, open down the middle to act as a six-kilometre skylight over Lake Shore.

"The Gardiner would open just like Moses opened up the sea," said Mammoliti.

Inspired in part by New York's High Line elevated park, it would have trains down one side, with lanes for cyclists, pedestrians and skaters on the other, running through a series of 12 sky parks — green spaces equivalent in acreage to 15 Yonge-Dundas Squares — at a cost of $84 million, including street connections.

He is proposing to raise between $200 million and $500 million annually from a casino, $100 million from parking and $75 million from road tolls.

"We've got to stop with asking people to cover the woes and the costs of Toronto with property taxes," said Mammoliti, who drew only three per cent of support in an April poll by the Toronto Star.

Mammoliti said he would negotiate a casino deal with the province even though Queen's Park put a moratorium on new commercial and charity casinos in 2005.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
8. Revenue generating 10,000 space vehicle parks anchors the Gardiner Skyway at either end. One at the CNE and the other built over the eastern railway tracks. Architecturally relevant aesthetic acts as a gateway to Gardiner Skyway.

9. Vehicle Parks provide commuters with daily transit pass for TTC and Sky Train included in cost of parking while reducing urban traffic by at least 10%.

10. Vehicle Parks provide electric small car and bicycle rentals along with other commercial opportunities to stimulate local economies and enhance Skyway experience.

11. Gardiner Skyway creates urban and waterfront synergy.

B) Union Station to Pearson International Airport transit link:

1. Rapid Transit connection constructed from Union Station to Pearson International Airport.

2. Strategic intermediate stations such as Emery Village with associated vehicle parks and public transit connections stimulate local economies and development while reducing vehicular traffic.

3. Access to both the airport and downtown core are dramatically increased.

C) Revenue Generation:
1. Revenue generating Casino Boat activates Ontario Place.

2. Public/private partnerships produce revenue generation sustainability.

3. Newly constructed Front Street Extension and widened Lake Shore Boulevard produce toll revenues to offset construction costs and support Gardiner Skyway agenda.

4. Revenue generating vehicle parks continue to fund municipal visions into the future while providing commuters with responsible alternatives and reducing downtown traffic.

Revenue Estimates:

Casino revenue 200M (OLGC - net 2 billion a year casino surcharges for 10 existing casinos..... 200M$/casino)

Parking revenue - 20,000 cars @ 15$ ea (transit day pass included) x 260 working days = 78M$ + weekends and events = +/- 100M$/year (add $ from short term parking)

Toll road revenues - (200,000 - 20,000) x 80% = 144,000 x 2$ = $288,000/day
288,000 x 260 working days = 75M$/year + weekends and events

Annual Subtotal..........................................................375 Million $

4yr subtotal...............................................................1.5 Billion $

D) Cost & Budget Estimates

1. Widening of Lake Shore Boulevard & Gardiner Skyway ..... 437 Million$

2. Construction of Front Street Extension ........................................... 240 Million$

3. Gardiner Sky Parks (12 parks & street connections) ............ 84 Million$

4. Sky Train .................................................................................. 300 Million$

5. Vehicle Parks ............................................................................. 300 Million$

Subtotal ..................................................................................... 1.3 Billion$

*Pearson Transit Link funded by private debt & equity (2003 cost @ 200Million$)