

September 29, 2020



Mayor John Tory and Toronto City Councillors
City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE: MM24.18 The Bentway Under Gardiner Corridor Framework Plan Proposal
Support for plan, including safety, accessibility and aesthetic improvements to
north-south connections to the water

Mayor Tory and Members of City Council,

The Waterfront Business Improvement Area (BIA) is strongly in support of the motions by Councillors Joe Cressy and Mike Layton for support in the development of The Bentway Conservancy's Under Gardiner Corridor Framework Plan proposal. The Bentway's leadership to date has both inspired and supported our own goals and vision, "Waterfront ReConnect," to improve the north-south pedestrian connections under the Gardiner Expressway to our city's destination waterfront.

We ask that City Council and staff support and collaborate on this important project, including as a component of ongoing Gardiner Expressway Rehabilitation where key pedestrian infrastructure projects could be made new standards.

When the Waterfront BIA completed its [2017 Strategic Framework](#), a key goal identified was to "Improve North-South Connections" under the Gardiner Expressway across Lake Shore Blvd. to the water. The experience of using these intersections as a pedestrian has been described as "running the gauntlet" due to the perceived car dominance of this space.

In 2019, Ken Greenberg and PUBLIC WORK developed our '[Waterfront ReConnect](#)' vision for how the crucial north-south underpass connections to our waterfront could be made safer and more accessible and have improved elements of wayfinding and aesthetics. This vision was built upon the principles of The Bentway and other underpass improvements done by Waterfront Toronto toward the eastern Gardiner realignment.

An initial pilot of "Waterfront ReConnect" was implemented at the Rees Street underpass in late 2019 funded by the Waterfront BIA and City's BIA Office with Waterfront Toronto acting as constructor ([Globe and Mail](#)). Further pilots with unique designs are being planned for 2020-2021 at York, Simcoe and Spadina with additional support from the Entertainment District BIA. The principals for "Waterfront ReConnect" have been attached to the following pages of this letter.

Our key goal with these pilot projects has been to learn what will be most effective and work with others to develop new standards for safe, more accessible, aesthetically pleasing and attractive underpass connections. We trust that The Bentway's leadership along with other key stakeholders will continue to advance this goal.

Thank you for your support and please contact us at tkocur@waterfrontbia.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tim Kocur,
Executive Director
The Waterfront BIA

Oliver Hierlihy
Manager, Operations & Special Projects
The Waterfront BIA

Cc:	Councillor Joe Cressy	Ward 10 Spadina-Fort York
	Councillor Mike Layton	Ward 11 University-Rosedale
	Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam	Ward 13 Toronto Centre
	Gregg Lintern	Chief Planner, City Planning
	Barbara Grey	General Manager, Transportation Services
	Janie Romoff	General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation
	Mike Williams	General Manager, Economic Development and Culture
	Manjit Jheeta	Director, Toronto Office of Partnerships, City of Toronto
	Michael D'Andrea,	Chief Engineer, Engineering and Construction Services
	Janice Solomon	Executive Director, Entertainment District BIA
	Ilana Altman	Co-Executive Director, The Bentway Conservancy
	Dave Carey	Co-Executive Director, The Bentway Conservancy

Waterfront ReConnect - Overview



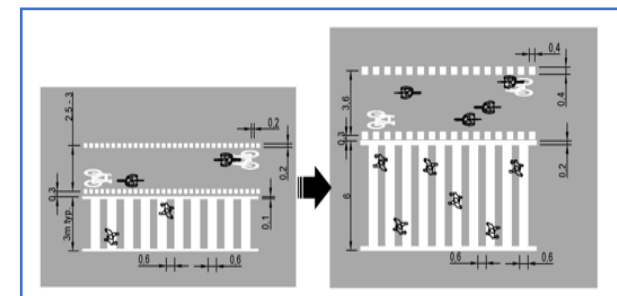
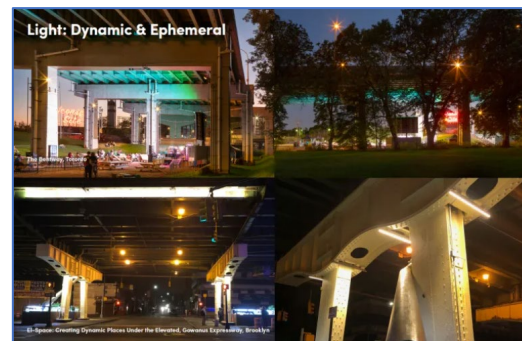
The Waterfront ReConnect vision set out by Ken Greenberg and PUBLIC WORK provides a set of design goals to improve the pedestrian experience through the Gardiner Expressway Underpasses. The Waterfront BIA in partnership with the City of Toronto BIA Office, implemented a first phase pilot at the Rees Street Underpass in late 2019 with Waterfront Toronto acting as constructor, and has plans for further pilots featuring a variety of designs at York, Simcoe and Spadina for 2020/ 2021 in partnership with the Entertainment District BIA.

Waterfront ReConnect Improvements:

Safety and Accessibility

Wayfinding and Improved Aesthetics

Lighting Enhancements



Pilot at Rees in 2020
demonstrating the impact of simple enhancements and “whispers”.

Lighting Examples
as highlighted in the Waterfront ReConnect vision document.

Enhanced pedestrian markings
currently being explored by Waterfront Toronto for their Gardiner East Rehabilitation public realm planning.