



March 19, 2023

RE: IE2.5 Regarding the Gardiner East Project

To Councillors McKelvie, Colle, Burnside, Peruzza, Saxe, and Morley,

ClimateFast has worked since 2012 to urge action on the climate - fast. We have supported the development and funding of the Transform TO Climate Action Plan, since before its adoption in 2017.

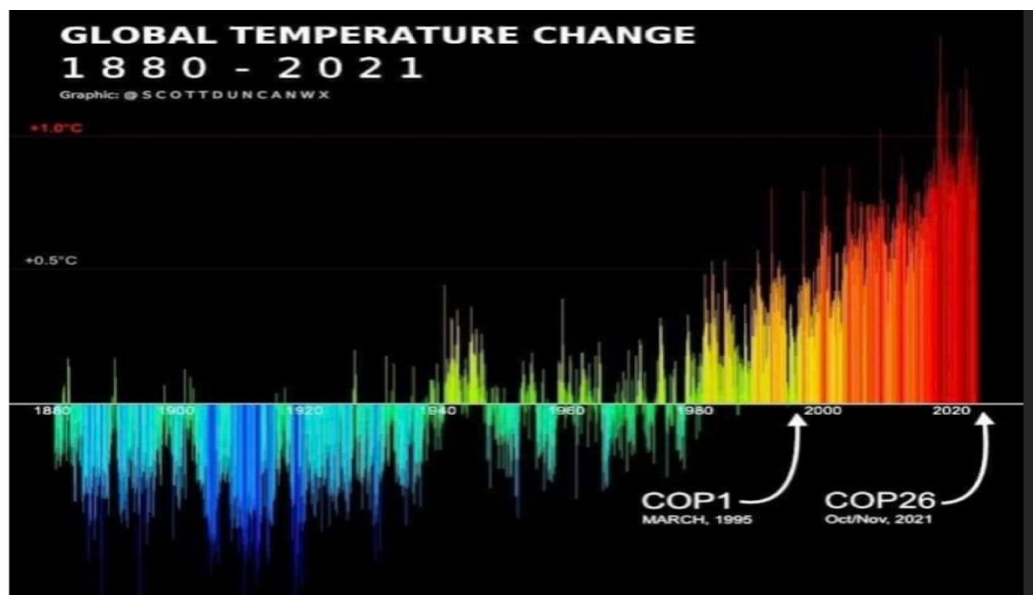
In 2015 The Gardiner rebuild plan was adopted by a 24 to 21 vote. A change in just 2 votes would have supported the simpler version.

In 2015 the city did not have a climate lens on its decisions. It had not declared a climate emergency. It had not yet adopted our NetZero by 2040 plan which requires a climate lens on all decisions. This requirement is being implemented this budget year.

We are asking you to apply the climate lens now to a review of this decision.

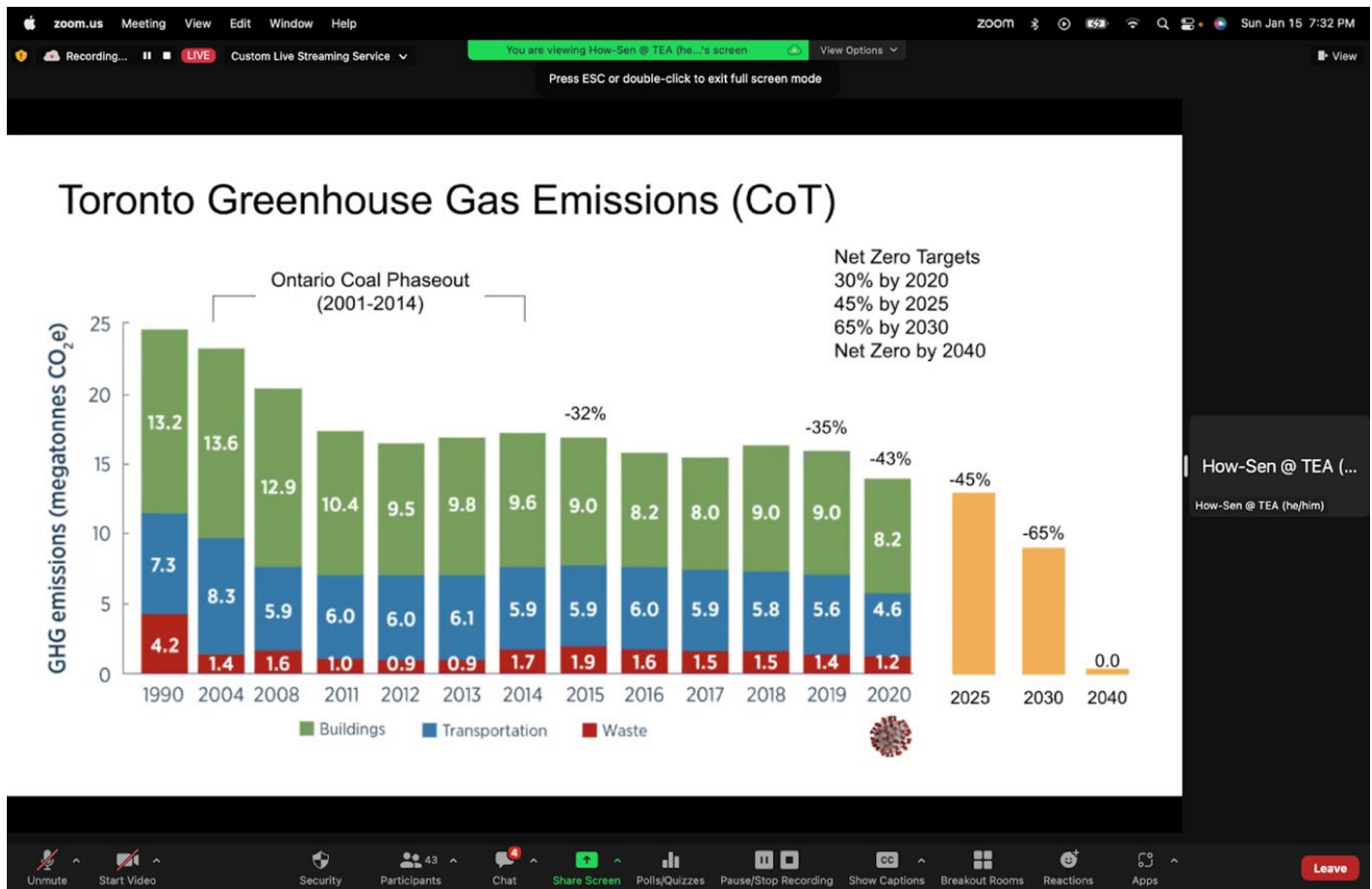
Why is this important?

Here's how temperatures on the planet are increasing:



We are in a climate emergency. A new IPCC report is coming out today. Big cities must do everything we can to cut emissions. 70% of emissions come from cities and Toronto is Canada's largest city. What we do matters. The message we send about our priorities matters.

Here's how we are doing on cutting emissions so far:



We've basically stalled since 2011 with a little dip for COVID.

TransformTO set a goal of a 45% cut by 2025, and a 65% cut by 2030.

We might make the 45% cut by 2025 but I don't see what is in place that can possibly get us to a 65% reduction by 2030 unless we get people out of cars and onto transit. That would help us cut the 36% of emissions from transportation that are 75% from private cars.

We need to change transportation patterns in a big way which won't happen while we are cutting service and increasing fares.

When I look through the budgets I see that transit looks like a poor cousin to the transportation budget. I note that the Gardiner accounts for nearly 50% of all transportation capital spending planned for this 10 year period, 2023 - 2032, nearly \$2B of a \$4B transportation capital budget

Please have a look at this slide:

Toronto Transportation Division: State of Good Repair Spending, 2023-2023

Maintenance spending in proposed 2023 capital budget and the 2023-2032 capital plan (\$4B in total spending)

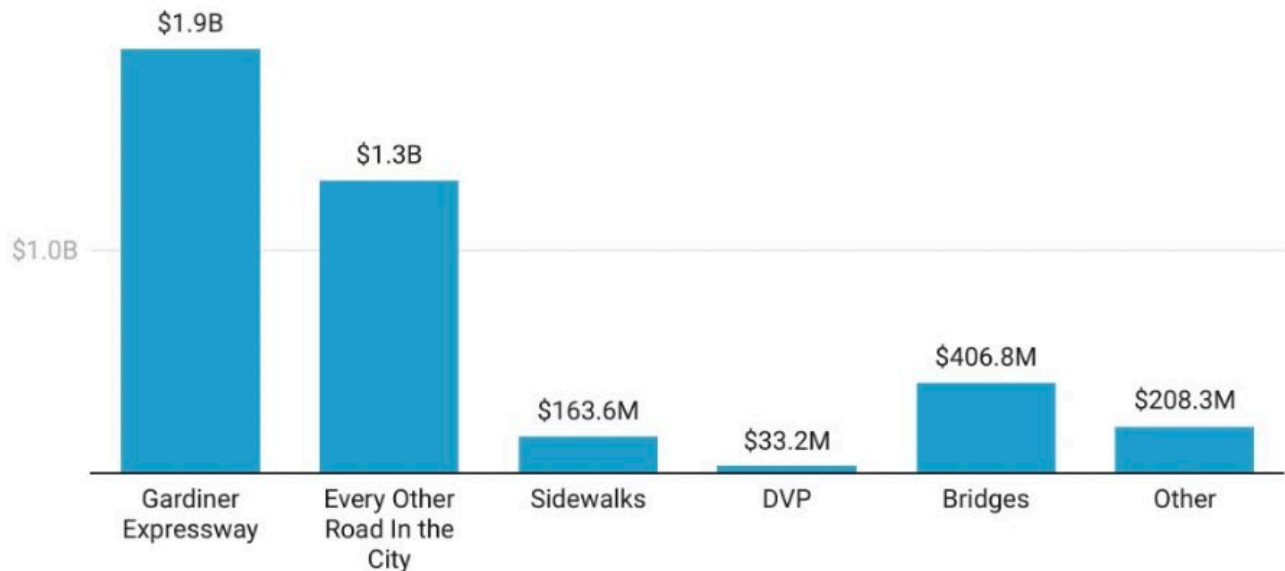


Chart: Matt Elliott for City Hall Watcher • Source: Toronto Transportation Budget 2023 (page 29) • Created with Datawrapper

Other road projects are being starved of funds in order to build this more expensive version of the link between the DVP and the Gardiner.

There are no funds available for planning and implementing changes to deadly streets (and stretches of streets) for example Parkside Dr and Avenue Rd. Road design suggests travel speeds so it is hard to make meaningful changes in driver behaviour without the redesign.

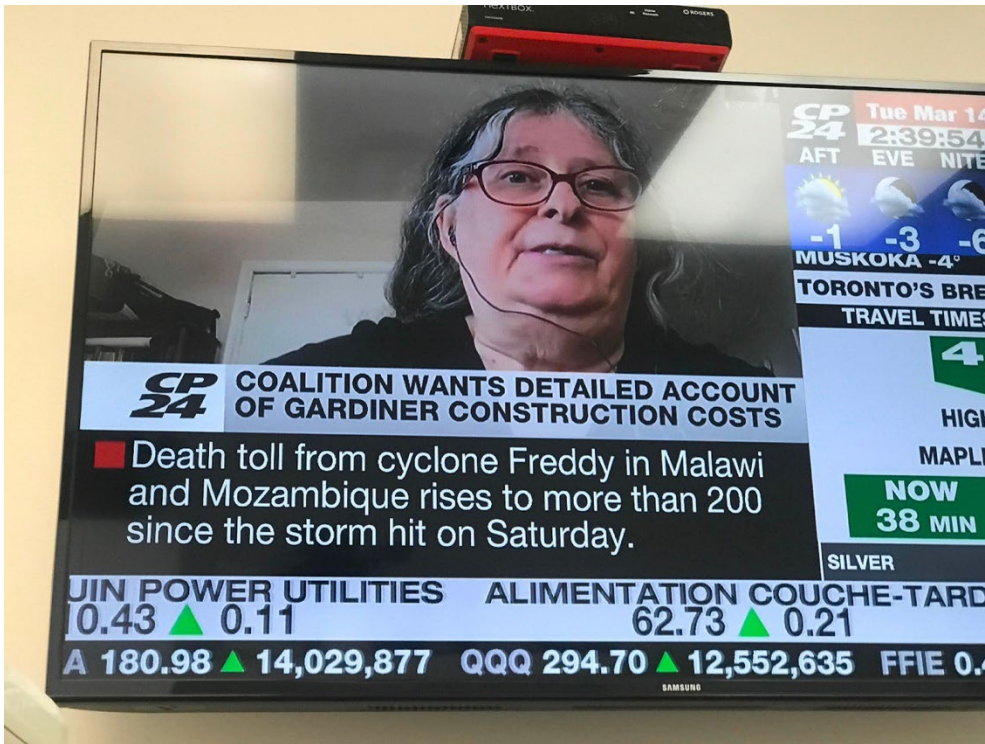
The transit budget has a guaranteed budget of \$12M but that is just a tiny part of what is needed. There is an unfunded budget of billions including \$1.67 B for electric buses that were to have been purchased last year. But the buses are unfunded while the rebuild of the Gardiner goes forward.

I live on Vaughan Rd. just south of Eglinton and Oakwood. I ride my bike through the beautiful Cedarvale Ravine and Nordheimer Ravine. They would have been destroyed if no one had sat in on the areas north of Eglinton as they were being bulldozed for the Spadina Expressway.

Our city is too precious to miss to an opportunity to make it better.

There are 5.4 acres that sit under the section of the Gardiner that we are talking about that could be a place for housing and for much-needed greenspace. It could be a place that makes a statement about Toronto's vision for the future.

In closing I want to share this photo:



In this [interview on CP24](#) I make the point about where funds are most needed: “We actually want people to get out of cars and to take transit and that’s what we need or we are going to have an unlivable city and an unlivable planet.”

And at the very same time as I was speaking the death toll from Cyclone Freddy in Malawi flashed on the screen. 200 dead in a storm that is caused by emissions from the global north. That’s us. And our own residents are suffering too from storms, rising food costs due to drought, and the wild weather that is going to leave hundreds of thousands of residents vulnerable to heat domes.

We know that action on the expressway is needed due to its age, but we want to see it built in a way that is consistent with city policies. We are asking you to take the opportunity, at this midpoint in the process, to send a message that priorities have changed. A full staff report could give you the chance to shift some money to fund higher priorities.

We are not asking the IEC to change anything that has already been done. We are simply asking the IEC to ask staff for a full review and to not commit to any further contracts being signed until that review is complete. We have signed Gardiner East Transparency’s letter and support GET’s asks.

The decisions you are making today on this Gardiner rebuild need to reflect our priorities today and what we want to see in the future. If we just do things the way we’ve always done them, we will not be doing everything we can to give our children a living future.

Lyn Adamson

Co-Chair, ClimateFast
lyn@climatefast.ca www.climatefast.ca