

## **F.G. Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway Closure - Bike for Brain Health 2026**

**Date:** May 28, 2025  
**To:** Infrastructure and Environment Committee  
**From:** General Manager, Transportation Services  
**Wards:** 4, 10, 13, 14, 16, 19

### **SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to request City Council approval to close the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway on Sunday May 31, 2026 for the purpose of the Bike for Brain Health event in support of the Baycrest Foundation.

Traditionally, the event begins and ends at Exhibition Place, but due to preparations for FIFA World Cup in June 2026, the start and finish will be relocated to the Aga Khan Museum.

In previous years, Transportation Services has recommended approval of these closures for this annual event for a three-year period. At this time, Transportation Services is recommending approval for a one-year period (2026), considering the ongoing provincially led due diligence review related to the upload of the F. G. Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway to the Province.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the closure of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway, from the Humber River to the Don Valley Parkway, including all ramps, and the Don Valley Parkway, from the F.G. Gardiner Expressway to York Mills Road, including all ramps, on Sunday May 31, 2026 from 2:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., for the Bike for Brain Health event;
2. City Council prohibit other road closures due to events or film permits on arterial roads bounded by Highway 401, Warden Avenue, Lake Ontario, Humber River, Queen Street/The Queensway, and Yonge Street, on Sunday May 31, 2026 as they will be required to accommodate overflow traffic from the expressway closures resulting from the Bike for Brain Health event;

3. City Council request the Toronto Transit Commission to not schedule any subway closures during the period the Bike for Brain Health event is held; and
4. City Council require the organizer to pay, within 90 days of the City issuing an invoice, any costs incurred to the City to secure the work zones along the F. G. Gardiner Expressway during the F. G. Gardiner Expressway rehabilitation work.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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The revenues related to permit issuance for the Bike for Brain Health 2026 are approximately \$45,000 and will be included as part of the 2026 Operating Budget submission for Transportation Services. The event organizers will be responsible for the full costs associated with the Bike for Brain Health event.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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City Council at its meeting of April 23 and 24, 2025, adopted CC29.1, to ensure the expectation that existing special events and festivals across Toronto continue to be permitted during the FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.CC29.1>

City Council, at its meeting of December 13, 14 and 15, 2023, adopted CC13.2 - Ontario-Toronto New Deal Agreement, approving in principle the terms of the Ontario-Toronto New Deal Working Group Term Sheet, including the upload of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway to the Province.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.CC13.2>

City Council at its meeting of February 7 and 8, 2023, by adoption of IE1.5, authorized the closure of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway for the Bike for Brain Health on the Sundays of June 4, 2023, June 2, 2024 and June 1, 2025 and prohibited road closures due to event or film permits on surrounding arterial roads in order to accommodate overflow traffic.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.IE1.5>

City Council at its meeting of February 2 and 3, 2022, by adoption of IE27.13, authorized the closure of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway for the Bike for Brain Health on June 5, 2022 and prohibited road closures due to event or film permits on surrounding arterial roads in order to accommodate overflow traffic.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.IE27.13>

City Council at its meeting of March 27, 2019, by adoption of IE2.2, authorized the closure of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway for the Ride for Heart 2019, 2020 and 2021 events and prohibited road closures due to event or film permits on surrounding arterial roads in order to accommodate overflow traffic.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.IE2.2>

## COMMENTS

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Municipal Code Chapter 937-4, Temporary Closing of Highways, requires the General Manager of Transportation Services to obtain Council authority to temporarily close the F. G. Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway.

Previously, portions of Lake Shore Boulevard, the F.G. Gardiner Expressway, and all of the Don Valley Parkway have been closed for similar events. The Bike for Brain Health in support of the Baycrest Foundation is proposing to host their annual event on May 31, 2026 consisting of 25 km, 50 km and 75 km distance rides. The event typically raises over \$6 million for their foundation.

Understanding the traffic congestion impacts this will have on the City, Transportation Services will work with the event organizers to expedite and exhaust all measures related to reopening roads in the most efficient and safest way possible.

The proposed route for the 2026 Bike for Brain Health event will remain consistent with previous years, with the exception of the start and finish locations that will be based out of the Aga Khan Museum, instead of Exhibition Place to accommodate for FIFA 2026.

The proposed route for the event is as follows:

1. F.G. Gardiner Expressway, both directions, from the Humber River to the Don Valley Parkway;
2. The Don Valley Parkway, both directions, from the F.G. Gardiner Expressway to York Mills Road; and
3. The westbound north curb lane of Lake Shore Boulevard West from Ontario Drive to Jameson Avenue.

Vehicles travelling eastbound on the F.G. Gardiner Expressway will be diverted to Lake Shore Boulevard West near the Humber River and continue eastbound unobstructed through the entire event area, once again, minimizing any potential traffic congestion.

The proposal has TTC's approval and will permit all bus and streetcar routes to operate normally.

The applicant has agreed to, and is responsible for, extensive public notification and bearing the costs associated with the installation and removal of advance and event-day

traffic signing, barricades, security, and policing services. Increased advance advisory signing has reduced the number of complaints for past events. Councillors that are impacted by these closures are also notified.

The construction of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway is currently undergoing rehabilitation as part of the multi-phase Gardiner Strategic Rehabilitation Plan. The work between Dufferin Street to Strachan Avenue is currently ongoing and is on track to be completed by Spring 2026.

A copy of the route map is shown on Attachment 1.

### ***Future Ownership of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway***

On December 13, 2023, City Council approved in principle the Ontario-Toronto New Deal, which includes a provincial commitment to upload the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway to the Government of Ontario, subject to a due diligence review that is still underway. The due diligence review is a provincially led process and includes an assessment of the highways, financial and legal reviews, and corridor management controls.

City staff have informed the Province of Transportation Services' recommendation to City Council to authorize the requested closures for this event. The event organizer has also been informed that if ownership of the F.G. Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway transfers to the Province before the event, authorization for the closures will need to be obtained directly from the Province.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Barbara Gray  
General Manager, Transportation Services

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: 2026 Bike for Brain Health

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