

**Gardiner Expressway & Lake Shore Boulevard East Reconfiguration
Environmental Assessment & Integrated Urban Design Study**

Voluntary Review of the Draft EA Report – Summary of Participant Feedback



**Prepared by Lura Consulting for:
The City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto
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This summary was prepared by Lura Consulting, the independent facilitator and consultation specialist for the Gardiner Expressway/Lake Shore Boulevard East Reconfiguration Environmental Assessment & Integrated Urban Design Study. If you have any questions or comments regarding this report, please contact:

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1. Introduction

Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto are jointly carrying out the Gardiner Expressway / Lake Shore Boulevard East Reconfiguration Environmental Assessment (EA) and Integrated Urban Design Study. The EA will determine the future of the Gardiner Expressway East and Lake Shore Boulevard East, from approximately west of Jarvis Street to approximately Leslie Street. Four alternative solutions were considered as part of the EA: Maintain, Improve, Replace or Remove.

Following direction from the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee of Toronto City Council, an additional Hybrid option that combined the Maintain and Replace alternatives was prepared. The Hybrid option was endorsed by Toronto City Council as the preferred alternative for the Gardiner Expressway East on June 11, 2015. In March 2016, Council endorsed Hybrid 3 as the preferred alternative design in the EA study.

The Gardiner East EA project team has prepared a comprehensive Draft EA Report. The Draft EA Report summarizes the Gardiner East EA study process since it was initiated in 2009 to the present and outlines the findings and results of the study. The EA co-proponents intend to submit the EA report, once finalized, to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) for approval in the near future.

A 45-day voluntary review of the Draft EA Report was held between July 21, 2016 and September 6, 2016 to provide stakeholders and members of the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EA Report before its submission to the MOECC.

This report provides an overview of the Voluntary Review process, and summarizes the stakeholder and public input received during the review period. Section 2 outlines the mechanisms used to engage stakeholders and members of the public, followed by a summary of the feedback received in Section 3. The report concludes with a brief description of the next steps in the project in Section 4.

2. Voluntary Review Consultation Process

Stakeholders and the public were invited to review the Draft EA Report during the 45-day voluntary review period, between July 21, 2016 and September 6, 2016, and provide comments to the project team via the Facilitator's Office. Stakeholders and the public were notified of the opportunity to provide feedback through e-blasts and social media channels established earlier in the EA study process. Members of the project's Stakeholder Advisory Committee and subscribers to the project website's mailing list received direct notification of the opportunity to comment.

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An electronic copy of the Draft EA Report was made available on the [project website](#). A hard copy of the full Draft EA Report was also available for viewing at [Toronto City Hall Library](#) (100 Queen Street West, main floor), [Waterfront Toronto](#) (20 Bay Street, Suite 1310), and the [Facilitator’s Office](#) (505 Consumers Road, Suite 1005).

Stakeholders and the public were provided with three options to submit comments:

- 1) An online feedback form;
- 2) Email to info@gardinereast.ca; or
- 3) Mail to the Facilitator’s Office.

Forty-five individuals and stakeholders submitted feedback as part of the Voluntary Review of the Draft EA Report. Stakeholder organizations that provided comments included the West Don Lands Committee, First Gulf, Lafarge Canada Inc., Castlepoint Numa, and the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. The table below summarizes the number of comments received by each submission method.

Submission Method	# of Submissions
Online Submission Form	29
Email	15
Mail/Hard Copy Submission Form	0
Voicemail	1
Total	45

3. Summary of Participant Feedback

The purpose of the Voluntary Review was to provide stakeholders and the public with the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EA Report before its submission to the MOECC. The summary below provides a high-level synopsis of key recurring comments, concerns and/or advice submitted by stakeholders and the public.

What We Heard

Overall, the Draft EA Report was well received by stakeholders and the public. Several comments indicated that the report was well written, thorough in its analysis and professionally presented. Specific comments on the report, as well as concerns raised by stakeholders and the public about the EA process and outcomes are organized according to the themes below.

Importance of Public Realm Improvements

A strong and recurring theme that emerged in the feedback from stakeholders and individual members of the public is the need to ensure that public realm improvements proposed to revitalize and improve connections to the waterfront are completed in tandem with the implementation of the preferred

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alternative. Many participants in the Voluntary Review highlighted this project as an important opportunity to improve the public realm, revitalize the eastern waterfront and support the development of new neighbourhoods (e.g., Keating Channel Precinct, East Harbour, and the Port Lands).

Remove Alternative

Several comments received from members of the public reiterated support for the Remove alternative, noting that it had been previously recommended by staff based on technical merit as detailed in the EA Report, and fulfilled more of the study goals and objectives corresponding to the four evaluation lenses. These participants expressed disappointment with Toronto City Council’s decision to approve Hybrid 3 as the preferred alternative, and raised concerns about decision-making in the EA process.

Preferred Alternative (Hybrid 3)

Feedback from several stakeholders and members of the public indicated support for Council’s decision on Hybrid 3 as the preferred alternative, noting that it maintains traffic capacity, separates high-speed vehicular traffic from pedestrians, and frees more land for redevelopment. Feedback from a few stakeholders who supported the Remove alternative throughout the EA process also acknowledged that the preferred alternative provides the most opportunity of the three Hybrid design alternatives to improve the public realm and revitalize the waterfront in the study area.

Balancing Transportation Modes

Several comments from members of the public expressed concern that too much emphasis was placed on maintaining road capacity for cars and short-term strategies to address congestion (i.e., undue emphasis on the Transportation and Infrastructure study lens). They highlighted the need for planners and decision-makers to adopt long-term and innovative solutions that recognize the need to balance and invest in different modes of transportation (i.e., public transit, walking, cycling, and autonomous vehicles), keep pace with changing technology (e.g., driverless vehicles), and support city building and the creation of dynamic public spaces.

Public Consultation

Several stakeholders and members of the public indicated in their feedback that they have participated in the EA process since the outset of the project and are generally pleased with the consultation process and ongoing opportunities to provide input. A few comments received from members of the public expressed concerns about the Voluntary Review process, suggesting that it was designed to discourage public comment and that the online methods used to obtain feedback were outdated and disengaging.

Project Cost and Use of Public Funds

Several submissions from stakeholders and the public raised concern about the cost of completing the EA and implementing the preferred alternative. While a few participants felt that the cost to implement Hybrid 3 is justified and will be offset by the long-term benefits of a revitalized and attractive waterfront (i.e., higher property taxes, tourism, etc.), many members of the public felt that it is an inappropriate use of public funds. They would prefer that funds allocated for the EA and for the future implementation

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of Hybrid 3 be spent to accelerate improvements to local and regional public transit infrastructure and services in the City, or other priority issues (e.g., affordable housing).

A few comments suggested road tolls or public-private partnerships as options to finance the construction of Hybrid 3.

Role of the Gardiner East in the GTA Transportation Network

Stakeholders and the public brought forward a range of concerns and observations regarding the relationship between the Gardiner Expressway East and the existing transportation network in the Greater Toronto Area. One participant noted that the Gardiner Expressway East provides little benefit to residents living in Scarborough, and is used primarily by residents travelling south on the Don Valley Parkway (DVP) from York Region, and conveyed support for the Remove alternative. Another suggested that the Gardiner Expressway East should be extended to the east to complete the “missing link” in Toronto’s transportation network. Two others noted that many residents in the Beach and Leslieville neighbourhoods use the Gardiner Expressway East to travel to destinations in Peel Region, highlighting the importance of this segment of the expressway to these neighbourhoods.

Need for More Information about Construction Phasing and Impacts

A few stakeholders and public respondents requested more detailed information about the Construction Staging Report included as Appendix D to the Draft EA Report. Stakeholders are particularly interested in ensuring construction staging to implement Hybrid 3 provides sufficient capacity and redundancy in the road network to avoid congestion and mitigate impacts to businesses operating in the Port Lands. Members of the public raised the need for more information about timelines and strategies to mitigate congestion, noise and air pollution impacts associated with construction activities.

Comment Log and Project Team Responses

The specific issues and concerns raised by participants during the Voluntary Review are listed in the table below along with the corresponding response from the Gardiner East EA project team.

Comment	Response
Importance of Public Realm Improvements	
Ensure that land “unlocked” along the waterfront by the preferred alternative is revitalized for public use. There is a concern that pressure from developers motivated the initiation of the Gardiner East EA.	The Gardiner East EA was initiated in 2009 by the City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto to examine options to reconfigure the elevated expressway east of Jarvis Street. The EA builds on nearly a decade of City and/or Waterfront Toronto-led studies to address current problems and opportunities in the study area. Key problems, identified by the co-proponents, include a deteriorated Gardiner Expressway that needs major repairs and a disconnected waterfront, while key opportunities comprise revitalizing the

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Comment	Response
	waterfront through city building, and creating new public space. It is important to note that reconfiguring the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard may also result in unlocking privately owned land in the study area.
Ensure public realm improvements to the study area are completed in coordination with the implementation of the preferred alternative to showcase the public benefits of this option.	The project co-proponents are committed to improving the public realm in the study area. A key next step for this project, as directed by Toronto City Council, is the completion of a Public Realm Phasing and Implementation Strategy. The Strategy will identify the scope, phasing, funding options, project partners as well as opportunities for stakeholder involvement to implement the proposed public realm improvements for the Gardiner East corridor. The intent is to synchronize public realm and intersection improvements with the implementation of the Gardiner East reconfiguration to the extent possible.
Develop a plan to improve the design and public realm where Jarvis and Cherry Streets intersect under the Gardiner Expressway. This should include a phasing and costing plan, as well as plan to engage stakeholders.	
Ensure the same level of public realm improvements are proposed for the corridor east and west of Cherry Street.	A key next step for this project, as directed by Toronto City Council, is the completion of a Public Realm Phasing and Implementation Strategy. The Strategy will identify the scope, phasing, funding options and project partners. City staff are currently working to identify which elements of the proposed public realm improvements may be delivered within the scope of the Gardiner Strategic Plan, versus those public realm elements which will be coordinated through established planning tools and processes, as well as through other waterfront and city-building initiatives.
Preferred Alternative (Hybrid 3)	
Concern that the preferred Hybrid 3 alternative approved by Toronto City Council is not substantiated by evidence brought forward during the EA process. The EA project team should encourage Council to reconsider the Remove alternative.	<p>The Gardiner East EA was completed in accordance with Ontario’s <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i>, specifically the Individual EA process identified in Part II of the Act.</p> <p>Results of the technical analysis and stakeholder and public consultations completed during each phase of the study process were reported to the City of Toronto’s Public Works and Infrastructure Committee (PWIC) and Toronto City Council for further direction or approval.</p> <p>Four alternative solutions were originally developed and evaluated as part of the EA: Maintain, Improve, Replace and Remove. The</p>

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Comment	Response
	<p>evaluation of alternatives was based on an extensive set of evaluation criteria organized according to the four study lenses. The initial evaluation of alternative solutions identified the Remove alternative as the preferred alternative based on technical merit.</p> <p>After careful consideration, PWIC directed the project team to prepare an additional Hybrid option that combined the Maintain and Replace alternatives, and to optimize the Remove alternative. A similar evaluation process was used to evaluate the Hybrid alternative against the optimized Remove alternative. Both the Hybrid and optimized Remove alternative solutions were found to be technically viable, but result in different advantages and disadvantages in terms of City priorities.</p> <p>Following considerable discussion regarding the trade-offs and stakeholder and public input, the Hybrid option was endorsed by Toronto City Council as the preferred alternative for the Gardiner Expressway East in June, 2015. Alternative designs for the Hybrid option were subsequently developed and evaluated. Toronto City Council endorsed Hybrid 3 as the preferred alternative in March 2016.</p> <p>The Draft EA Report, once finalized, will be submitted to the MOECC for an approval decision in the near future, and there will be a further opportunity for public comment at that time.</p>
Balancing Transportation Modes	
<p>Consider the need to think about long-term and innovative solutions to balance transportation modes and address congestion in the City’s downtown core (e.g., encourage active transportation, discourage driving downtown, invest in public transit infrastructure, utilize light rail to transport goods, leverage the potential of driverless vehicles).</p>	<p>Numerous rapid transit and regional transit projects have been identified by the TTC, GO Transit and Metrolinx as part of their respective long-term service plans. While many of these projects may not specifically traverse the study area, they will influence travel patterns at a regional level and may encourage an increase in transit ridership for trips bound to and from the downtown area. Assumptions regarding future transit use and the need to enhance cycling and pedestrian facilities in the study area were key considerations for the project team during the EA</p>

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Comment	Response
	and evaluation of alternatives.
Concern that the EA report does not include a bold vision to enhance cycling infrastructure within the study area.	The City’s Ten Year Cycling Network Plan was developed through a separate planning process between 2014 and 2016, and identifies approximately 525 km of new infrastructure to enhance the City’s existing network of cycling routes. Conceptual versions of the plan were referenced during the Gardiner East EA and informed recommendations for cycling infrastructure in the study area. The preferred alternative (and all three Hybrid design alternatives) includes a separated multi-use path for cyclists that would be unobstructed by the Gardiner Expressway.
Public Consultation	
Concern that the Voluntary Review public consultation process and online feedback mechanism was designed to discourage public comment.	The Voluntary Review process was designed to be inclusive and facilitate participation utilizing complementary communication and promotional methods, as well as multiple options to submit feedback. Communication channels established earlier in the EA study process were utilized to notify stakeholders and the public of the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft EA Report. An electronic copy of the Draft EA Report was made available on the project website, while hard copies were also available for viewing at three different locations across the City. Stakeholders and the public were also given three options by which to submit feedback (i.e., online feedback form, email or letter mail) during the 45-day review period.
Concern that public input to the Voluntary Review will not be considered as part of the EA process.	The issues and concerns raised by stakeholders and the public during the Voluntary Review process have been carefully considered and are understood by the project team. This summary report highlights the main issues raised and the project team’s responses to those concerns. The Draft EA Report will be revised to address comments received during the Voluntary Review period, and subsequently submitted to the MOECC for approval.
Continue stakeholder and public consultations into the detailed design and construction stages of the project.	As is customary on EA projects, stakeholder outreach and engagement will be undertaken during the detailed design, construction plan development and construction activities.

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Comment	Response
Project Cost and Use of Public Funds	
Consider implementing tolls on the Gardiner Expressway as a means to address the additional costs associated with the preferred alternative.	The City is assessing its overall approach to both revenue and expenditure within the context of updating its long-term financial direction. City staff reported on the City of Toronto’s Immediate and Longer-Term Revenue Strategy Direction to Executive Committee on December 1, 2016. The report recommended endorsing changes and requesting the Province to move ahead with legislative and/or regulatory reforms to enable tolling of roads under the jurisdictional ownership of the City (such as the Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway). The recommendation was endorsed by City Council on December 13, 2016.
Concern that public funds should be spent on enhancing the regional and local public transit network in the City of Toronto instead of an EA to determine the future of the Gardiner East, or constructing the preferred alternative.	While there is a clear need to invest in public transit, a decision on the Gardiner East EA is required on an urgent basis. The elevated expressway was constructed between 1955 and 1966. The deck and concrete barriers are in poor condition and considered to be at the end of their service life. A phased approach was planned for the replacement of the deck and parapet (concrete barrier) walls from Jarvis Street to the Don Roadway for the period 2013 to 2018. However, recognizing that work to implement a preferred EA option would not likely commence until 2020, Council authorized a series of interim repairs to make the structure safe and extend its service life to 2020.
Clarify the rationale for using a 100-year lifecycle cost analysis for each alternative. Given that the EA is exploring options to reconfigure a 50-year old expressway perhaps a 50-year lifecycle analysis would have been more appropriate.	The timeframe specified for the lifecycle cost analysis was based on assumptions that the new Gardiner Expressway infrastructure will have a life span of 100 years. It is anticipated that the current structure will be replaced with more durable reinforcing materials inert to chlorides such as stainless steel and/or Glass Fibre Reinforced Polymer (GFRP) in conjunction with high performance concrete, waterproofing membranes and asphalt protection layers. The life-cycle cost estimates were prepared using comprehensive procedures suitable for a complex, urban infrastructure project. The methodology was also peer reviewed by Delcan and adjusted based on detailed comments.
Consider funding the construction of the preferred alternative through a public-private partnership	At its meeting on September 30 and October 1-2, 2015, City Council approved the inclusion of the

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Comment	Response
(P3).	<p>preferred alternative from the Gardiner East EA into the scope of work for the overall rehabilitation of the Gardiner Expressway. At the same time, City Council also authorised staff to study a number of design and construction procurement options, including public-private partnerships such as the Province of Ontario's Alternative Finance and Procurement (AFP) model.</p> <p>Since then a number of developments have taken place (e.g., higher project costs, lack of federal funding confirmation and lack of provincial funding, and other projects affecting the construction of the eastern portion of the Gardiner Expressway). At the December 1, 2016 Executive Committee meeting staff recommended a new approach that would enable the City to proceed as quickly as possible with the urgent rehabilitation needs. This new approach is based on segregating work on the Gardiner Expressway east and west of Cherry Street, and will phase rehabilitation according to the priority of needed repairs. The new approach was endorsed by Council on December 13, 2016. The full staff report is available here.</p>
Role of the Gardiner East in the GTA Transportation Network	
Consider extending the Gardiner Expressway east to complete the “missing link”.	The purpose of the Gardiner East EA established during the Terms of Reference (ToR) stage of the study is to determine the future of the eastern segment of the elevated expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard from approximately Jarvis Street to approximately Leslie Street. Extending the Gardiner Expressway is beyond the scope of the current study.
Need for More Information about Construction Phasing and Impacts	
Concern that reconfiguring and reconstructing the Gardiner East will impact local traffic, increasing congestion in the downtown core and adjacent neighbourhoods.	A key next step for this project is developing a detailed design and construction staging plan for the preferred Hybrid 3 alternative. The concerns raised by stakeholders and the public, and the need to coordinate construction plans with the implementation of other approved planning initiatives in the study area have been heard and are understood by the project team. The team will ensure that these concerns are addressed in the detailed construction staging plan that will be developed in the next phase of the project.
Develop strategies to help mitigate the impacts of constructing the preferred alternative (i.e., enhance public transit service within the corridor, improve bike paths, offer free transit passes to residents in the Beach and Leslieville neighbourhoods, recommend telecommuting, etc.).	

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Comment	Response
Update Appendix D – Construction Staging Report to ensure consistency between images and text, and provide more detail regarding the construction timelines and cost projections for each Hybrid alternative.	
Ensure the construction staging for the reconfiguration of the Gardiner East provides sufficient capacity and redundancy in the road network to avoid congestion and mitigate impacts to businesses operating in the Port Lands.	
Consider designing an appropriate intersection for Cherry Street south of the Keating Channel where it is planned to intersect with the proposed with the EB/WB detour.	
Develop a noise and nuisance mitigation strategy to minimize the impact of construction and operation of the reconfigured expressway on the West Don Lands and North Keating precincts.	
Other	
The four study lenses used to guide the EA process should have been weighted or prioritized at the outset of the project.	For the purposes of this evaluation, a relative weighting was not applied to the criteria groups, criteria or measures considered. The decision to not weight the criteria reflects the need to balance priorities among the study goals as presented in the EA ToR. The public was asked to provide input on the relative importance of the criteria groups at the October 2013 public meeting; however, there was no consistent feedback on the relative importance of the criteria groups.
More consideration should be given to the potential environmental issues and impacts of reconfiguring the Gardiner East.	The evaluation used a broad definition of environment, as stipulated in the <i>Ontario Environmental Assessment Act</i> , which includes natural, social, economic and cultural components. Each alternative solution and alternative design was assessed against criteria corresponding to the four study lenses, one of which was the Environment. The Draft EA Report includes an impact assessment that describes the potential effects on the environment from the proposed undertaking as well as the measures that would be implemented to reduce or possibly avoid those effects.
Maintain the light industrial land uses in the Port Lands (i.e., film studios).	The Gardiner East EA does not recommend changes to the land use designations in the Port Lands.
Concern that the structural columns of the	The northern alignment of the preferred

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Comment	Response
Gardiner East that sit in the Don River act as barriers to debris floating downstream.	alternative (Hybrid 3) will change the Gardiner-DVP ramp connections over the Don River, allowing for the mouth of the Don River to be opened up and pulled away from the Keating Channel. This will benefit planned efforts to re-naturalize the Don River Mouth. Hybrid 3 also presents a design that has the least potential to impact sediment management operations with minor changes to the flood mitigation works.
Update the text in Section 9.1.1 of the report dealing with the detailed design considerations associated with the Don Roadway, to highlight the importance of a reconfigured Don Roadway to the East Harbour project.	The importance of a reconfigured Don Roadway to the East Harbour project are noted in Section 9.1.1 and will be discussed during the detailed design and construction plan phases of the study.
Ensure the EA is informed by the most up to date policy documents pertaining to the study area (i.e., zoning bylaws, secondary plans, precinct plans, etc.).	The information and analysis contained in the Draft EA Report reflects the most up to date policies and land-use decisions that were publicly available during the EA study process. An Errors and Omissions section will be added to the Draft EA Report to provide further clarification on the information used during the EA and any associated limitations. The current policy framework will be used to inform the Gardiner East project as it moves into detailed design.
Ensure the boundary areas for the Keating Channel Precinct are depicted consistently throughout the EA Report.	Maps depicting the Keating Channel Precinct boundaries were developed based on the policies in effect and information available at the time, and were included in the Draft EA report to depict various planning scenarios.
Reconsider the road width assumptions (especially on Lake Shore Boulevard) and speed regulation outlined in the EA Report given the beneficial speed calming effects of narrower lanes and that modern vehicles include more collision avoidance features.	The road width assumptions and posted speed limits described in the Draft EA Report were designed to accommodate expected volumes to meet provincial safety standards.

4. Next Steps

The Draft EA Report will be revised as needed to address comments received during the Voluntary Review period. The final Draft EA Report will then be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) for approval. A second, mandatory public and government review of the Final EA document will then be coordinated through the MOECC. The Final EA Report is anticipated to be submitted to the MOECC in early 2017 and will be made available through the [project website](#).