

Gardiner Environmental Assessment and Integrated Urban Design Study Fact Sheet

- On June 12, 2008, Waterfront Toronto's Board of Directors approved a resolution recommending to the City of Toronto that an environmental assessment (EA) and urban design study be undertaken on the removal of the Gardiner Expressway east of Jarvis Street.
- On July 15, 2008, City Council voted to undertake the Gardiner EA and urban design study as a co-proponent with Waterfront Toronto in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act.

The Environmental Assessment Process

- The EA process is a planning tool used to identify potential environmental effects and benefits over the long term when undertaking capital works projects.
- The Ontario Ministry of the Environment says that the EA process serves several important purposes by:
 - Allowing projects to receive input from a wide variety of sources, including the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government, stakeholders and the public
 - Engaging the public, stakeholders and First Nations in consultation at key decision points in the environmental assessment
 - Incorporating environmental considerations in the project planning process
 - Subjecting the project proposal to comprehensive analysis including environmental, social, cultural, economic, and technical analysis such as noise, traffic and air quality
 - Identifying potential problems prior to construction
 - Promoting good environmental planning practices
 - Improving community acceptance
 - Better protecting the environment

Terms of Reference

- Large complex projects like the Gardiner are subject to an "individual" EA process which means that the scope of the study itself must be defined by "Terms of Reference".
- The Terms of Reference set the work plan for the EA study itself. They describe the project and the study area for the project, the alternatives that will be studied, technical studies that will be performed and outline the plan for consulting stakeholders.

- Waterfront Toronto will consult with the public and stakeholders during the development of the Terms of Reference. Two rounds of public meetings and online consultations will inform the development of the Terms of Reference.
- The Terms of Reference for the Gardiner environmental assessment and integrated urban design study require approval by Toronto City Council and the Ontario Minister of the Environment.
- Draft Terms of Reference are expected to be submitted for approval to City Council in July and to the Minister of the Environment in September.

Integrated Urban Design Study

- Waterfront Toronto has included an integrated urban design study in the Gardiner EA process to ensure that the review process places an emphasis on quality of place.
- While the EA will include a comprehensive study of both regional and local traffic impacts, the overall approach of the study will assess the future of the Gardiner in the overall context of creating a better a city.
- The Gardiner EA and integrated urban design study process will examine several options for the future of the Gardiner:
 - Do nothing - maintain the existing road infrastructure
 - Improve - maintain the existing elevated expressway, but modify the ramps and Lake Shore Boulevard to create a better urban environment
 - Replace - remove the existing elevated expressway and replace its express function with a different type of grade separated facility
 - Remove - remove the elevated expressway without replacing the grade separated express function and replace instead with a waterfront boulevard

Technical Studies

- Although the Terms of Reference will outline what the EA will consider, the technical studies that we expect will be required include:
 - Regional transportation impact study
 - Local transportation impact study
 - Conceptual design of the road and structures

- Utility impacts study
 - Noise study
 - Air quality study
 - Natural environment impact study
 - Socio-economic impact study
 - Stormwater management study
 - Cultural Heritage study
 - Urban Design Master Plan for the Street
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- The EA is expected to take 3 years to complete and cost approximately \$8 million.
 - Upon approval of the terms of reference by the Ontario Minister of the Environment, the EA will commence in earnest with the development and evaluation of alternatives. Working ultimately towards the identification of a preferred alternative, this second phase of the EA process is expected to be completed by November 2010.
 - The final phase of the EA is anticipated to extend throughout 2011, and will include detailed engineering and urban design studies to thoroughly address the feasibility and costs of the preferred alternative. Once complete the final EA and Urban Design Report will be submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Environment for approval.
 - A Federal EA (CEAA) may be undertaken later in the process should federal funding be provided for the project. Other federal approvals would be required under the Navigable Waters and Fisheries Act and other legislation, for any new bridges over the Don River.

For more information:

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