

Future of the Gardiner Expressway/Lake Shore Boulevard East Reconfiguration EA and Integrated Urban Design Study Stakeholder Advisory Committee - Meeting 16-10

Thursday, January 14, 2016 | 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Room 310

Meeting Summary

1. Agenda Review, Opening Remarks and Introduction

Ms. Liz Nield, CEO at Lura Consulting, welcomed Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) members and thanked them for attending the session. Ms. Nield introduced the facilitation team from Lura Consulting and led a round of introductions. She reviewed the meeting agenda and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to present and discuss the evaluation of the alternative designs for the hybrid option and urban design concepts for the study area that will be presented at the public forum on January 19, 2016.

Mr. John Livey, Deputy City Manager, City of Toronto, also welcomed committee members and thanked them for their ongoing interest and support throughout the study process. Mr. Livey briefly highlighted the common features of the three alternative designs for the hybrid option (e.g., maintain corridor capacity, removal of the Logan Avenue on-off ramps, create a multi-use pathway, etc.). He welcomed input from SAC members on the design alternatives and urban design concepts, noting that their previous feedback had helped the project team refine the alternatives. Mr. Livey also outlined the next steps in the study process which include reporting to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee (PWIC) in February and City Council in March. The EA will subsequently be completed and submitted to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) for approval.

Chris Glaisek, Vice President, Planning and Design at Waterfront Toronto, thanked committee members for their continued support and commended them for remaining focused and dedicated as the study evolved based on direction from City Council. He assured SAC members (noting that many members had supported the remove alternative) that much work has been done on the design alternatives for the hybrid option to facilitate the creation of a vibrant Keating Precinct.

The meeting agenda is attached as Appendix A, while a list of attending SAC members can be found in Appendix B.

2. SAC Member Briefing

Don McKinnon, Project Manager at Dillon Consulting, presented the work completed since the last SAC meeting. He covered the following topics:

- Gardiner East EA Background
- New work since June 2015 Council Meeting:
 - Third-Party Proposals
 - Hybrid Design Alternatives Development
 - Gardiner East Corridor Public Realm Plan
 - Hybrid Design Alternative Evaluation
- Next Steps

3. Facilitated Discussion

The following provides a summary of the recurring themes and ideas discussed by SAC members on the material presented. More detailed accounts of the discussion can be found in Appendix C.

Hybrid Design Alternatives

- Provide more details highlighting the trade-offs and benefits of each option (e.g., Option 1 impacts the new Cherry Street alignment, Option 3 is safer when traveling southbound on the Don Valley Parkway, the land value uplift of Options 2 and 3, reduced construction impacts of Options 2 and 3).
- Include rendering showing conceptual elevations of each option to provide visual examples of ramp locations and to identify potential impacts to adjacent land uses.

Gardiner East Corridor Public Realm Plan

- Continue to examine ways to improve the Jarvis Street and Lake Shore Blvd. intersection, particularly near the east bound ramp to the Gardiner Expressway to increase driver awareness of pedestrians and pedestrian safety and comfort (e.g., a pedestrian scramble, changing the elevation of the roadway, changing signalization).
- Provide visual examples of public realm improvements for the stacked portion of the corridor (i.e., under the Gardiner Expressway), not just intersections.
- Consider the need for further discussion regarding the location of cycling lanes in the study area.
- Include information about improvements (and related benefits) to the Don Roadway.
- Include cross-sections and concepts for public realm improvements east of the Don Roadway.

Hybrid Design Alternatives Evaluation

- Explain the short-term and long-term differences in construction costs for each option to clarify the evaluation results for the Global Regional Economics category.
- Consider including development charges and future property taxes in the estimates for land value creation.
- Combine the estimated lifecycle infrastructure costs and land value creation benefits to provide net results for each option.
- Integrate the land value creation benefits and public realm costs to provide net results for each option.

- Ensure the difference in land value of waterfront and land locked parcels is accurately reflected in the land value creation benefits.

Presentation

- Clarify which land parcels are publicly and privately owned (e.g., areas freed for development, Keating Channel and Villiers Island).
- Provide land use details on conceptual diagrams to indicate which areas or buildings are commercial, residential, etc.
- Improve the legibility of text and visuals in the slide deck and ensure accessibility requirements are met (e.g., provide better colour contrasts on multiple slides; enhance red/green/yellow colour contrast on evaluation summary slide for those who cannot distinguish between colours).
- Add metres to Green Gardiner cross section slide.

4. Closing Remarks

Ms. Nield thanked SAC members for contributing their feedback and adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm.



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6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Room 310

AGENDA

Meeting Purpose

- Present and discuss the evaluation of the alternative designs for the hybrid option and urban design concepts for the study area.

6:30 pm Agenda Review, Opening Remarks and Introductions

- Liz Nield, Lura Consulting, Facilitator
- John Livey, City of Toronto
- Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto

6:40 pm Presentation

- Don McKinnon, Dillon Consulting

7:30 pm Facilitated Discussion

1. Thinking about the results of the evaluation of the alternative designs for the hybrid option...
 - What do you like? What concerns do you have?
 - What advice do you have for the project team?
2. Thinking about the urban design concepts presented for the study area...
 - What do you like? What concerns do you have?
 - What advice do you have for the project team?
3. Thinking about the material presented, what feedback or advice do you have to improve the clarity of the presentation in preparation for the upcoming public forum?

8:25 pm Summary/Closing

8:30 pm Adjourn

Appendix B – List of Attendees

SAC Meeting #9 List of Attendees

Beach Triangle Residents' Association
Castlepoint Numa
CivicAction
CodeBlueTO
Corktown Residents and Business Association
Cycle Toronto
Evergreen
Federation of North Toronto Residents Association
First Gulf
Gooderham and Worts Neighbourhood Association
Heritage Toronto
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association
Toronto Financial District BIA
Toronto Industry Network / Redpath Sugar
Toronto Urban Renewal Network
Transport Action Ontario
Unionville Ratepayers Association
Urban Land Institute
Walk Toronto
West Don Lands Committee

Mayor's Office
Councillor Pam McConnell's Office
Councillor Jaye Robinson's Office

Appendix C – Detailed Summary of Q&A and Discussion

A summary of the discussion is provided below. Questions are noted with **Q**, responses are noted by **A**, and comments are noted by **C**. Please note this is not a verbatim summary.

Q. When will the project team be reporting to City Council?

A. We will be reporting first to PWIC in February, followed by City Council in March.

Q. It is very difficult to cross Lake Shore Boulevard at Jarvis Street on the east side of the intersection because of traffic turning to access the east bound ramp to the Gardiner Expressway. Drivers do not look for pedestrians. There will be a huge new residential development south of the intersection, increasing the number of people who cross through the intersection. Is there a way to encourage drivers to be more considerate of pedestrians (e.g., pedestrian scramble, adjusting signal timing, or more signs)?

A. The City is aware of the challenges at this intersection. This is something that the City can take away for further consideration.

C. The level of the roadway could be modified as another mechanism to make drivers more aware of the pedestrian crossing.

Q. When presenting the results of the Public Land Value Creation, it is important to remind people that the Keating Channel Precinct and Villiers Island are all publicly owned land. Also, is the reason that Hybrid Options 2 and 3 are not the same in terms of Global Regional Economics because of construction costs?

A. Yes.

C. It could be worth breaking down those costs further to show the impacts of each option over the longer-term, otherwise it is misleading.

A. The result is based on the indicator used to assess construction impacts.

C. My concern is too much emphasis will be placed on the costs. As a further comment, concepts of potential public realm improvements should highlight examples for both stacked and unstacked portions of the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard.

A. We did not create renderings for the underside of the whole length of the study area. Intersections are the highest priority areas.

C. It would be helpful if there were ideas to improve the conditions in the longer stretches of the corridor, not just at intersections.

Q. The concern raised earlier about the Lake Shore Boulevard and Jarvis Street intersection is primarily about southbound traffic on Jarvis Street turning left to access the on-ramp to the Gardiner Expressway. This could be addressed if left turns were permitted only through an advanced green arrow and timed so pedestrians can cross safely. Is it necessary to add a dedicated left turn lane to enable this?

A. Through this conversation, three issues have been identified about this intersection. The City is aware of about half a dozen issues. This intersection is a good candidate for further review beyond this study.

C. There used to be a similar issue at Yonge Street at Lake Shore Boulevard that has since been addressed.

A. The Lake Shore Boulevard intersections at Yonge and Sherbourne Streets have been improved. The Lake Shore Boulevard and Jarvis Street intersection will have to be addressed further beyond this study.

Q. Should future benefits from development charges, s. 37 funding or property taxes be included in the Public Land Value Creation results, which is currently based only on the sale of public land?

A. The argument could be made that land freed for development will lead to additional benefits, considering the prime location. It is a fair point that could be included in the report.

Q. I am concerned that the conceptual pedestrian and bicycle network presented will be finalized without further discussion through this study process. More discussion is needed to identify the location of the bike lanes (e.g., street level or grade-separated). I would prefer if the bike lanes were on the street as part of a pedestrian oriented street. This plan appears to have come from nowhere and was not adequately discussed.

A. This plan has been included in every presentation throughout the study process. The cycle lanes have always been depicted on the north side of Lake Shore Boulevard which enables continuous connections to other existing trails and is much safer than an on-street configuration.

C. Statistics indicate that on-street bike lanes are safer than those located near streets due to issues created by traffic turning through signalized bike lanes.

A. This plan was developed by the City in conjunction with cycling stakeholders.

C. The conceptual bicycle network is based on the original Martin Goodman Trail from the 1970s, which was not fully implemented. In the last few years momentum has shifted to segregated cycle routes.

Q. Firstly, could it be argued that Hybrid Option 3 is safer when traveling south on the Don Valley Parkway beginning north of the rail bridge, making it easier to direct drivers where they need to go compared to the option that would do this south of the rail bridge?

A. There was a slight positive attribute to this in Hybrid Option 3. The advantage of the southbound movement is that the lanes narrow to adjust to various conditions in the corridor prompting drivers to slow down. Hybrid Option 3 widens the east side of the underpass of the rail bridge which allows the curve to start sooner.

A. If it is safer, it is worth mentioning. Secondly, I did not hear any information about improvements associated with widening Don Roadway. That is another point worth making as this impacts the Port Lands. I also want to reiterate that the Public Land Value Creation results should emphasize the land value uptick of Hybrid Options 2 and 3. You should reinforce these are real dollars and suggest that there could be an offset to these numbers.

C. If Hybrid Options 2 or 3 will be recommended, combine the costs and public land value created to present them more favourably. Separating the costs and value created is a disservice to both options.

Q. [Referring to Slide 13 – The Green Gardiner Plan] What unit of measure are the numbers in the schematics? It would be helpful if the units were marked. It would also be helpful to identify the land uses surrounding the parcels freed for future development throughout the presentation – are they residential, commercial, or industrial? The distinction is important.

A. We can certainly clarify that.

Q. You spoke about West of Cherry and the Keating Precinct areas, but I didn't hear anything about the area east of Don Roadway.

A. We will emphasize and speak to that at the PIC on Tuesday. The intent is to open up the corridor and improve the public realm (e.g., landscaping, etc.).

Q. Have any cross-sections been prepared for that area?

A. I think we have cross sections that are not shown. I can look into that.

C. The pale gray font used in the presentation will be illegible at the public forum venue, particularly at the back of the room.

C. Regarding the conceptual bicycle plan, the proposal is in fact compatible with latest thinking about bicycle trail planning. Eglinton Connects is a good example where the bike trail is beside the sidewalk but elevated from the road. The situation on Richmond and Adelaide Streets is still problematic, but the best option in an intensely urban situation. Lake Shore Boulevard is still a high speed road that is not suitable for that kind of approach. The City's 10-year bicycle plan is being presented to PWIC in February, so please ensure that plan is consistent with the one included here. Secondly, I happen to be colour blind and could not decipher the results depicted on the evaluation slide – please consider different colour combinations to depict them.

C. [Referring to Slide 77 – Public Land Value Creation] Two of the land parcels depicted in the Public Land Value Creation slide, immediately east of the New Cherry Street alignment, are in fact privately owned. Secondly, Hybrid Option 1 carves through the north portion of parcel A. Lastly, the Public Land Value Creation results appear to be based on an apples-to-apples comparison of waterfront and land locked land, which is not necessarily accurate. The land parcel information needs to be corrected before the PIC.

Q. At the last SAC meeting, different alignments for Lake Shore Boulevard were presented. One of the alignments included the possibility of creating a new public park near the mouth of the Don River. Are those alignments still on the table?

A. That particular alignment of Lake Shore Boulevard was taking land away from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) sediment control area. The TRCA was not in a position to confirm if that would be acceptable and preferred to maintain flexibility within the area. It also created other challenges at nearby intersections. This configuration of Lake Shore Boulevard is probably the best. The other alignments explored can be included in the EA report.

Q. Will you be presenting the table of evaluation results at the public meeting? Does this infer you will ultimately be recommending Hybrid Option 3?

A. The evaluation results will be presented at the public meeting.

Q. Are the total cost numbers inclusive of public realm improvements?

A. No, they are separated.

C. I would like to reiterate the comment made earlier that separating them is misleading.

A. At this stage of the EA, we are trying to reduce or eliminate the common elements and focus on differences between the options. The conditions between Cherry Street and the Don Roadway are the same across the three hybrid options.

C. There is a \$10 million difference between Hybrid Option 1 and Hybrid Options 2 and 3. Why is that not considered? I also did not realize that the same value per acre was used across all three options in the Public Land Value Creation results. Prime waterfront land is not the same value as land located between a highway and a rail corridor.

A. We will take this into consideration.

Q. Could you clarify why 2013 dollars are still being used in the costing? How long will you be using these units?

A. It is for comparison purposes; we don't usually change numbers that were previously publicly presented. There won't be any future comparison after a decision has been made. Any further costing would be presented in current dollars.

C. Do the evaluation results focus only on the horizontal elements of the alternative or do they also consider the vertical elements? The reason I ask is that at the last SAC meeting we talked about possibly changing the elevation of the expressway. Was any analysis completed to assess the feasibility of doing so?

A. We have not changed the configuration of the expressway.

Q. Is the vertical a detailed design issue then?

A. Fundamentally the concept would not change but there may be some tweaking during the detailed design stage.

Q. Was it feasible to lower the elevated expressway above the river, while raising Lake Shore Boulevard?

A. I am having difficulty understanding your concept; perhaps we can continue this conversation after the meeting.

Q. Can Hybrid Options 2 and 3 be built before tearing down the current elevated expressway?

A. You can build more of Hybrid Option 3 than Hybrid Option 2 before tearing down the existing expressway. There is some advantage of 3 over 2.

Q. Is the eastbound off ramp past Cherry Street a single lane?

A. It's a double lane.

C. Not much space on the elevated portion of the expressway will be allocated to those lanes. It is going to be similar to the Spadina Avenue exit which is backed up for kilometres.

A. It is not different from what currently exists at the Logan Avenue exit.

C. Yes and that is also backed up. In this situation, the backup is going to start earlier because of the signalized stop at the Munition Street intersection.

A. We can look further into this matter.

C. Most of us intuitively like Hybrid Options 2 and 3. I am worried that Council will pick Hybrid Option 1 based on the lower costs. Is there anything else that has not been quantified that would add value to Hybrid Options 2 and 3?

A. There are other benefits that were not included, but the differences were insignificant.

Q. I am concerned about what the corridor will look like at the detailed design stage. I would appreciate being able to see an elevation of where the on-off ramps start and end to visualize the potential impact on land freed for development.

A. The City will do that.