

The TORONTO PARTY

LEADING THE WAY

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The Toronto Party

SAVE THE GARDINER!

More efficient use of railway lands in the heart of the city would see new elevated Expressway built above railway tracks.

In 2006, Mayor Miller opposed tearing down any part of the Gardiner Expressway. Less than two years later, the Mayor has flip-flopped on another major promise.

Despite a city budget that has seen the backlog of road repair steadily creep upward to the point where it will soon reach \$400 million, the Mayor wants to embark on a plan that would eventually see the building of an 8-lane boulevard to replace the eastern portion of the Gardiner Expressway. The projected cost of this plan is \$300 million.

The Gardiner Expressway has been the subject of discussion for many years. When it was first built under the leadership of Metro Chairman, Frederick Gardiner, it was viewed as bold and visionary. Today, it services approximately 200,000 vehicles a day and permits users to travel uninterrupted across the downtown core and to link with other major expressways seamlessly. The plan to tear down the eastern portion of the Gardiner would terminate the link between it and the Don Valley Parkway. Users would be forced onto arterial roadways where controlled traffic lights and other users would cause traffic congestion nightmares.

The Mayor touts a traffic study that says the plan would only add two minutes to a user's travel time. Has the Mayor driven a car in downtown Toronto at rush hour?

The Mayor also supports the plan because it would purportedly connect the city with the waterfront. Although the Gardiner is viewed as a barrier to the waterfront, Torontonians know

that poorly planned condominium development has created a new concrete and glass barrier to the waterfront. Even if the condominiums are not viewed this way, creating a new 8-lane roadway merely takes the elevated roadway to ground level. To suggest that the ground level roadway could become another University Avenue boulevard ignores the fact that most public lands in Toronto are poorly maintained. Grass is left to grow knee-high before it is cut, trees planted in boulevards receive little care and die, and weeds are allowed to grow everywhere.

The Toronto Party understands the need to utilize Toronto's waterfront lands better. But the Mayor's plan is not the answer. Maintaining a seamless vehicular transportation link through the downtown core is a necessity for a healthy and interactive economy. Toronto is still Ontario's economic engine. It employs people from many areas outside of the city and therefore the importance to maintain the current ability to move people and goods between the city and suburban regions quickly and efficiently should be undisturbed.

The traffic congestion that would be caused by the plan to tear down another portion of the Gardiner is also environmentally unfriendly.

For a Mayor who touts leadership on green issues, this plan is contrary to his environmental agenda. Cars that are left to move in slower traffic and to idle at stop lights burn more fossil fuels and emit more harmful gases into the atmosphere than those which are permitted to flow freely.

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However, it is not good enough to merely criticize the Mayor's position without offering an option.

The Toronto Party, through its expert transportation committee, has presented a viable option that would not only keep traffic moving, but would open up Toronto's waterfront to enormous redevelopment opportunities.

The Toronto Waterfront Viaduct is part of a multi-faceted transportation strategy that would result in the Gardiner Expressway being "moved" above the railway corridor that cuts through downtown Toronto. Using an engineering design that has been used to build awe-inspiring bridges worldwide, like the Milleau Viaduct in France, we would build a new multi-lane expressway over the railway lands and thereby maintain the existing expressway and highway connections.

But the viaduct would also present an opportunity to build a dedicated LRT line along the route and a pedestrian and bicycle bridge, which would be suspended underneath it.

Working with partners in the private sector, the cost of building the viaduct is not prohibitive.

Once built, the entire Gardiner Expressway could be removed and the lands underneath it reclaimed for waterfront redevelopment projects.

We also expect that the waterfront viaduct would become a major tourist attraction for our city. France's viaduct has attracted hundreds of thousand tourists annually.

We have the opportunity to take bold steps, but under Mayor Miller we are only getting political grandstanding and policies that are harming Toronto's, and Ontario's, economy.



COURT ACTION FOR DEMOCRACY READY TO BE LAUNCHED

Party co-founder, Stephen Thiele, is continuing to review undemocratic provisions found in the Municipal Elections Act for the purpose of commencing a Charter challenge to the legislation. The Act currently prohibits any individual from declaring their candidacy for municipal election in non-election years.

People can neither raise money for a potential run at public office nor spend money to promote their political views until they are a declared candidate. This can only occur during an election year.

Meanwhile, elected city representatives can spend \$53,000 of taxpayer money per year for self-promotion. Many sitting councillors nearly maximize their office budgets and use the money for quarterly or semi-annual promotional newsletters or fridge magnets. These items aren't designed to provide constituents with information about major issues being debated by city council. Instead, they are used to increase the name-recognition of the incumbent councillor and for re-election purposes.

Given the unfair spending advantage, it is no wonder that social studies have concluded that in non-partisan civic elections incumbents win 85% of the time.



MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PRIVILEGES

This month, the Toronto Party's steering will be finalizing the party's first Constitution and rules for the election of an Executive which is expected to take place this Fall.

In order to run for the Executive, a person will be required to be a member of The Toronto Party for at least 3 months prior to the election. Accordingly, please renew your membership today!