

1) I was wondering if you had any thoughts you wanted to share with me (and our readers) on the subject of the TWRC's recently revealed report. Do you believe the proposed plan of partially dismantling the Gardiner is a sound one?

- In general terms I am in favour of taking down the Gardiner. While I am sensitive to the needs of commuters and traffic flow in the city I feel the Gardiner, as it stands prevents optimal, creative and innovative use of our Waterfront land by the public. Use of our Waterfront for recreation by citizens, pedestrians and cyclists, not to mention tourists, is a higher priority for me than maintaining the status quo on traffic. In short, why would we use the jewel of the city, the Waterfront, as a traffic corridor?

2) I am curious to hear your opinions on this Waterfront Viaduct, which, though more expensive than the TWRC's, seems to address the issues of vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit traffic more completely. Do you think this more complete proposal is worth the higher cost?

- I don't have a definitive answer at this time on whether I would support the particulars of this proposal. What I can say is that that I am attracted to its creativity, its sensitivity to balancing the vibrancy of Toronto with its "transportation needs", and its innovation. We need to give serious consideration to truly transformative ideas like this. Great cities need great projects. On the cost issue, there is a cost to doing nothing both literally in terms of the ongoing upkeep of the Gardiner structure and lost revenue from tourism, commercial development etc. that could be happening on the Waterfront, and figuratively in terms of lost improvement of quality of life for Torontonians.

3) One of the financing options suggests (as a last resort) road tolls on downtown highways. Do you support downtown highway road tolls as a method of raising money for infrastructural improvements such as highways and transit?

- I would consider road tolls as a method for raising money for infrastructural improvements. I wish that higher levels of government would take the funding lead but given the extent to which roads are currently subsidized by the taxpayer, shifting some of that burden to the user could be considered. Transit riders are already paying most of the cost of service, which is regressive socially and harms the environment by discouraging transit use. Road users could do more, provided we took steps to protect the industrial sector and lower income people who must use cars.