

# Gardiner Expressway construction to begin ahead of schedule

By Adam Freill November 8, 2024

**Provincial investment in Phase II construction on Toronto's Gardiner Expressway will see highway project finish one year earlier than planned.**

The start of the second phase of construction on Toronto's Gardiner Expressway is happening four months ahead of schedule. The early milestone is the result of the Ontario government providing \$73 million to project on the condition that construction work may be allowed to proceed 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week.

"We're making real progress on our government's plan to fight gridlock and keep drivers moving," said Prabmeet Sarkaria, the province's minister of transportation. "We're not only getting it done on the Gardiner Expressway, we're also bringing common sense changes to bike lanes through new legislation and speeding up construction of priority highway projects like Highway 413, Bradford Bypass and the Garden City Skyway bridge, to help get drivers across the province out of gridlock."

With two eastbound lanes on the Gardiner Expressway now rehabilitated and reopened, crews will begin the demolition and reconstruction of two centre lanes, before completing work on the remaining two westbound lanes. The full project, which includes revitalizing 700 metres of elevated roadway from Dufferin Street to Strachan Avenue, reinforcing support structures, installing new streetlights and upgrading the traffic management system, is expected to be finished one year ahead of schedule.

A recent study by Geotab ITS found that travel times on the Gardiner Expressway have increased up to 250 per cent in the morning rush hour and 230 per cent in the afternoon rush hour. Toronto commuters face the longest travel times in North America, spending an average of 98 hours each year in rush-hour traffic, according to the Toronto Region Board of Trade.

Once complete, the province estimates the 140,000 drivers who rely on the Gardiner every day will save up to 22 minutes per trip, translating into a savings of \$273 million in Ontario's economy by reducing traffic wait times for drivers and goods.

“RCCAO joins the provincial and municipal governments in celebrating this milestone. The success realized thanks to focused resources and evolving construction practices, demonstrates the opportunities and benefits of innovative practices like 24/7 construction on major critical infrastructure projects,” stated Nadia Todorova, executive director with the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario. “Improved collaboration and structured incentives between governments and industry can make a tangible improvement in accelerating infrastructure improvements and reducing gridlock across the region.”

“The Ontario Road Builders Association commends the Ontario government for its commitment to infrastructure renewal and we are proud to see this project moving forward ahead of schedule,” added Steven Crombie, senior director of public affairs with the Ontario Road Builders Association. “The government’s willingness to invest \$73 million and allow 24/7 work has been crucial to this success, showcasing the power of streamlined processes and innovative approaches in enhancing Ontario’s transportation network.”