

TORONTO FINANCIAL DISTRICT BIA
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November 14, 2016

Councillor Mike Layton
Chair of Toronto and East York Community Council
2nd floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor Layton:

**RE: TE20.18 TOCORE: PLANNING TORONTO'S DOWNTOWN – PROPOSALS REPORT –
SECONDARY PLAN DIRECTIONS AND UPDATE**

The Toronto Financial District BIA supports advancing TOcore and commends City Staff for a highly collaborative process. We have had opportunities for consultation and recognize the efforts made to incorporate our feedback in this draft report.

TOcore is critical to ensuring that there is a strong vision supported by policy to guide growth and investment in Downtown Toronto. The draft report recognizes the importance of the Financial District for the ongoing economic health of the City and Region, and establishes policy directives that ensure a strong commercial core. This includes expanding the Financial District boundaries to protect lands for commercial development around Union Station.

The continued success of the central business district is dependent on our ability to efficiently bring a growing residential population to jobs in the downtown core. Our 2015 Workday Population Survey showed that about a quarter of Financial District workers come from the three downtown wards, with a concentration along the King Street corridor. The proposal to optimize surface transit on King Street is an important feature of TOcore. At our recent information session with City Staff, King Street properties and major tenants we identified areas for consideration as planning of the proposed pilot project advances.

Further, as outlined in our letter to staff on July 19, 2016, current policy directives in TOcore still place too much pressure on concentrating development around the Line 1 Yonge-University Subway and King Street. There is a strong disconnect in designating "mixed use area 3", modest intensification, along the Line 2 Bloor-Danforth Subway and proposed Relief Line Subway and broader conversations on growth related financing and intensification around transit. Policies should support a more robust intensification in these neighbourhoods over the next 25 years to maximize existing and planned investments in higher-order transit.

Downtown parks and public spaces are unique among Toronto based on their higher profile and use. We support a strategy that would allow for a greater variety of models, including public-private partnerships, that can deliver enhanced maintenance and funding to parks.

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Infrastructure capacity and resiliency must be elevated to a top priority in advancing TOcore.

Opportunities to harden infrastructure incrementally and overall are highly important for continued commercial competitiveness. Through this report the City begins to outline a course of action that will help address water and energy issues as our City continues to intensify. **Prior to advancing public consultations, it is critical that staff complete all assessments of water and energy infrastructure so that the public can engage in an informed conversation around capacity and potential limitations to future growth.**

The Financial District BIA looks forward to continuing to work with the City to advance TOcore. Should you have any further questions, please contact Evan Weinberg, Policy and Advocacy Manager, at eweinberg@torontofinancialdistrict.com.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Humes".

Grant Humes, Executive Director
Toronto Financial District BIA

cc: Jennifer Keesmaat, Chief Planner and Executive Director
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