

VIA EMAIL: clerk@toronto.ca

June 5, 2015

Mayor Tory and Members of Council
City of Toronto, City Clerk
Toronto City Hall, 13th Floor, West Tower
10 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON, M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of Council:

Re: PW4.1- Gardiner Expressway and Lakeshore Boulevard East Reconfiguration Environmental Assessment (EA) and Integrated Urban Design Study – Update Evaluation of Alternatives

We are writing to express our support for the ‘boulevard’ option that will remove the barrier between the city and a new and vibrant, revitalized Waterfront, which will benefit Torontonians for generations to come.

Among the signatories to this letter are corporations that own or control approximately 51 hectares in the Central Waterfront, East Bayfront, Keating Channel, Villiers Island, West Don Lands and Film Studio Precincts across Toronto’s waterfront. In total, these lands represent 20 million square feet of mixed-use development.

Collectively, these areas will provide thousands of new ownership and rental residential units, extensive affordable housing, new cultural landmarks, parks, schools and a substantial number of jobs. Your decision on the future of the east end of the Gardiner Expressway will have a dramatic and permanent effect on the assets collectively represented by several of the signatories. In addition, substantial parcels of land owned by both the City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto will be impacted by Council’s decision.

After careful review, it is clear that the ‘hybrid’ proposal is NOT supportable from either a cost or city building perspective.

As you know, the capital cost estimates for the ‘hybrid’ proposal are more than double those for the ‘boulevard’ option, requiring an additional 500 million dollars and assumes that a new elevated highway deck would NOT require replacement for 100 years. This additional amount could be spent on other critically important City-wide initiatives, including the delivery of SmartTrack.

It is also important to note that the ‘hybrid’ cost estimate fails to include a number of important factors, including the value created in new opportunities by the ‘boulevard’ option on current and future development sites. As noted in the May 6, 2015 Staff Report, the ‘boulevard’ option would create 17.5 acres (4.6 acres west of Bonnycastle Street and 12.9 acres east of Cherry Street) of new development lands while the ‘hybrid’ proposal only creates 5.5 acres. If we focus solely on the land area difference between the ‘boulevard’ and ‘hybrid’ options, based on recent approved densities for the area, the 12 acres resulting from the ‘boulevard’ option would suggest a land value of 150 million dollars and potential investment approaching 2 billion dollars.

None of the enhanced value or subsequent increased tax base of the 'boulevard' option for projects and buildings immediately moved out from the shadow of the Gardiner Expressway is included in the estimates. As was the case for many other major cities, such as New York and San Francisco, which tore down their elevated expressways, values and tax base in the immediate vicinity rose significantly. The City of Toronto through its agencies remains the largest landowner in the area and the taxpayer will benefit most from these enhanced values.

In addition, the 'hybrid' proposal estimates fail to include the cost of expropriating private lands and the potential costs payable by the City for claims of injurious affection as a result of impacts from the 'hybrid' option.

Further, in the 'hybrid' proposal, there has been no regard or consideration to the significant expenses already incurred in respect to the planning of the impacted areas, the delay and cost of re-planning and reprocessing otherwise approved plans, or the direct impact on City tax revenues through the reduction of assessed values.

All Torontonians will ultimately be paying for these oversights through an increased tax burden.

From a city building perspective, the 'hybrid' option represents a significant departure from Toronto's Official Plan policies, the relevant Secondary Plan for this area of the waterfront, as well as principles of good planning and urban design. Maintaining elevated infrastructure, which acts as an unsightly and costly barrier to integration, is completely contrary to the City's approved planning regime for the waterfront. It also undermines an important and long standing vision to create a series of vibrant mixed-use communities connected by the Waterfront LRT, as well as a waterfront that can easily and safely be enjoyed by all users, including pedestrians and cyclists. We also agree with Toronto's Medical Officer of Health's report that determines the 'boulevard' option provides a safer and healthier environment.

The Secondary Plan for this area of the waterfront refers to this outdated infrastructure as the "major physical barrier that cuts off the city from the waterfront." The potential to save a few minutes of travel time for only 3% of all downtown commuters does not come close to justifying the significant additional investment required by the 'hybrid' option and the immense benefits of the 'boulevard' option.


We urge you to support the 'boulevard' option, which complies with the existing policy framework of the Province and the City of Toronto. As such, it is most likely to lead to speedy approval by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC). This was the recommendation of your professional advisors one year ago. Approval of the 'hybrid' option runs contrary to many of the criteria required for final approval of the Environmental Assessment. We are concerned that further pursuit of the 'hybrid' option will lead to numerous appeals before the environmental review tribunal. This would result in a further and unacceptable delay in unlocking both the value and amenities of a redeveloped waterfront for everyone.

We have made significant investments in the future of the waterfront and across the City. We have been working hand in hand with the City of Toronto and its partners to realize the vision incorporated in the City's planning policies.


As Community Builders on Toronto's waterfront and across the City, we know that this vision can be readily accomplished through approval of the 'boulevard' option.

We urge Council to immediately approve the 'boulevard' option, and commence implementation of the long promised improvements to the waterfront, which will otherwise be delayed, if not destroyed, by approval of the 'hybrid' proposal.


Yours very truly,



Leo DelZotto, President, Tridel Group of Corporations




Mitchell Cohen, President, The Daniels Corporation



Peter Politis, Partner, Greybrook Capital, and President & CEO, Greybrook Realty Partners



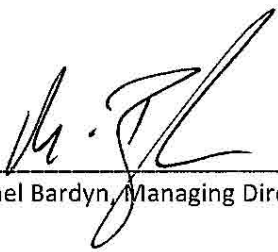
Sam Crignano, President, Cityzen Development Group



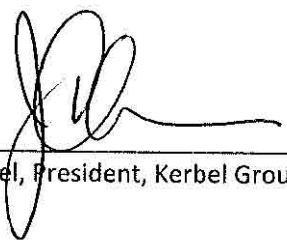
Jason Lester, Senior Vice President, Urban Development, Dream Unlimited Corp.



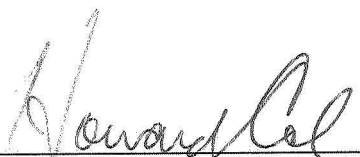
Jane Gol, President, Continental Ventures



Michael Bardyn, Managing Director, ~~Great Toronto Real Estate, Manulife Financial Corporation~~
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Michael Bardyn
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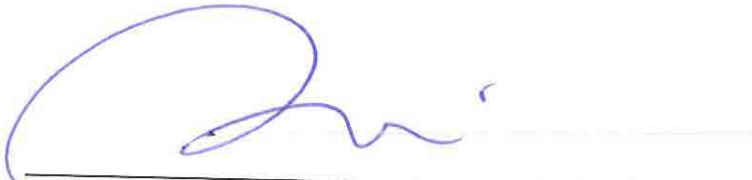
Jeff Kerbel, President, Kerbel Group Inc.



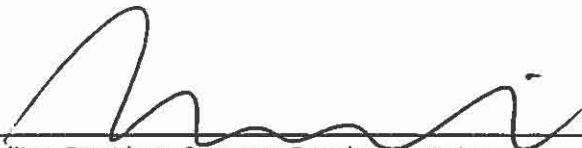
Howard Cohen, President, Context Development




David Jackson, Partner, The Distillery Historic District



Peter Takis, President, QQE 162 Inc.



Les Mallins, President, Streetcar Developments Inc.



Mazyar Mortazavi, President and CEO, TAS



Alfredo Romano, President, Castlepoint Numa Inc.