



From: Jan De Silva

PW4.1.40

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto Region Board of Trade supports "hybrid" and recommends additional transit linkages

Toronto, ON, May 13, 2015 – The following is a copy of a deputation from Jan De Silva, President & CEO, Toronto Region Board of Trade, to the City of Toronto Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.

"Hello, I'm Jan De Silva, the President and CEO of Toronto Region Board of Trade.

Since its inception 170 years ago, the Board has represented the business community's infrastructure and transit needs to enable the efficient movement of goods and talent within and outside of Toronto.

Our region is experiencing unprecedented growth. This is best exemplified by the impressive revitalization along Toronto's waterfront. After many years of consultations, environmental assessments and construction, the payoff is taking shape. In just a few weeks we will welcome hundreds of thousands of guests to the 2015 PanAm Games and showcase this asset.

As our population and economy continue to grow, we need to plan for and invest in infrastructure and such is our topic discussion today – what the City should do with the eastern portion of the Gardiner. We reviewed the WaterfrontToronto and the UofT reports and consulted our members to inform our position. The Board supports the "hybrid" option.

The WaterfrontToronto report assumes a best-case-scenario, but at present we are not there. To achieve a travel time increase of only 3-5 minutes the report outlines significant transit investments that must be in place by 2031. Unfortunately many of the assumed transit initiatives have yet to receive approval and committed funding, including the Downtown Relief Line and Waterfront East LRT. As a result, pre-planning work has not begun and with Toronto's historical backtracking on committed and funded plans, the business community cannot assume that these projects will materialize by 2031. As well, replacing the Gardiner East with an 8-lane roadway similar in size to the 401, where families are supposed to cross raises significant safety concerns.

The UofT report makes a strong business case against the "remove" option. The report uses the latest technology to forecast travel demand today as opposed to 2031. Importantly, the report does not assume transit projects yet to receive approval and committed funding will proceed. Most alarming is that rush hour commute times would increase by up to 10 minutes causing a ripple effect for the rest of the region and forcing commuters onto already congested routes. The economic impact of this delay is anticipated at an additional \$37 million per year on top of our current \$6-billion loss.

Therefore, the Board does not support the "remove" option, but we do support the "hybrid" for the following reasons.



The exciting economic development opportunities it offers will help meet the growing demand for downtown office space. Over the next 30 years, the GTA may need 100 million square feet of additional office space.

The proposed development of the Unilever site represents the single largest commercial construction project planned for the City and one of Canada's largest. This site, and adjacent private and public lands, could house a new employment precinct. Moreover, the redevelopment of the Port Lands area also represents a significant economic benefit to the City and Province. The "hybrid" option facilitates these opportunities which "maintain" does not.

Our support of the "hybrid" option includes two specific recommendations:

First, committed development of transit linkages throughout the Precinct and Portlands.

We are applying lessons learned from the rapid development of Liberty Village without coinciding transit development.

Second, the City considers international best practices in funding specific transit routes.

Since the hybrid opens economic development opportunities the City should consider transit development contributions on the basis of fair allocation amongst all area developers who will benefit from the transit infrastructure.

In fact a member of our Board of Directors recently returned from a business trip to London where she toured a new development funded similarly. Having spent the past 14 years in Asia, this is a model that is also very familiar to me.

The Board looks forward to working with you to move the agenda forward on this important matter. I'm happy to discuss these recommendations."

-30-

About the Toronto Region Board of Trade (www.bot.com)

Founded in 1845, Toronto Region Board of Trade is the chamber of commerce for Canada's largest urban centre, connecting more than 12,000 members and 250,000 business professionals and influencers throughout the Toronto region. The Board fuels the economic, social and cultural vitality of the entire Toronto region by fostering powerful collaborations among business, government, thought leaders, and community builders. Toronto Region Board of Trade plays a vital role in elevating the quality of life and global competitiveness of Canada's largest urban centre.

Learn more at www.bot.com and follow us at [@TorontoRBOT](https://twitter.com/TorontoRBOT).

For More Information:

Matthew Kofsky
Toronto Region Board of Trade
416-862-4558
mkofsky@bot.com