

# EX18.3.1

Submission to the Executive Committee, City of Toronto, October 26, 2016

Re: EX18.3 Port Lands Flood Protection - Due Diligence Review and Next Steps (Ward 28, 32)

Good Morning Mayor Tory, committee members and city staff. My name is Gerry Brown and I'm here representing CodeBlueTO a coalition of individuals, organizations and groups who share a vision for Toronto's revitalized waterfront. CodeBlueTO was formed in 2011 to support Waterfront Toronto's key role in developing the waterfront and implementing the plan to naturalize the mouth of the Don River and to develop the Port Lands as a sustainable, urban community on flood-protected lands.

We received over 6,000 signatories to our petition to support the approved vision for naturalizing and flood-protecting the mouth of the Don River and we participated in the Port Lands Acceleration Initiative (PLAI) Stakeholder Advisory Committee. As an organization, we've closely followed the process that has led here, and we've reviewed the *Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Due Diligence Report* prepared by Waterfront Toronto. We urge this committee to support the Staff Report recommendations to proceed with the Port Lands Flood Protection, and in particular, Recommendation #4:

" ... to identify funding for \$401 million, the City's one-third share of the balance of the Port Lands Flood Protection project, through the 2017 - 2026 capital budgeting and planning process, with implementation subject to securing the remaining two-thirds share through provincial and federal contributions."

Our reasons for this recommendation are:

### 1. Risk mitigation

We've seen just in the past few years several significant floods in the Don River valley. Thus far, the damage caused by these floods has been significant but limited in scope. However, based on the best information currently available, it is clear that it's only a matter of time before a Hazel-like flood occurs again in Toronto. Under current conditions, we are looking at hundreds of millions (if not billions) of dollars in damage; there is simply nowhere for a large volume of water to go without causing significant damage to both residential and commercial property, along with vital infrastructure. We are basically living on borrowed time, and as the Due Diligence Report notes, it is a seven-year undertaking to complete the Flood Protection, so the sooner we begin the better.

### 2. Vision for the Waterfront

Aside from protecting current development, this Flood Protection would open up unique new lands for development, where we can create an attractive new community minutes from downtown that will provide housing, jobs and active parkland for both old and new residents of Toronto. Recently, Professor David Pritchard spoke here about the Bays, Sydney's massive Waterfront renewal project, and of how other projects such as Barcelona's La Boqueria, London's Borough Market and Chicago's Millennium Park have established waterfront developments that have brought large economic benefits flowing from the establishment of an internationally competitive economy in those cities. We believe that a similar opportunity exists here in the Port Lands.

### 3. Toronto's Official Plan

As noted in our Official Plan, Toronto wants to build vibrant neighbourhoods that are part of complete communities. As the PLAI laid out, this Flood Protection will open up 290 hectares (715 acres) for development. These lands are prime development lands for a new, mixed use community that can be a blueprint for a sustainable, modern community for Toronto residents.

### 4. Economic Benefits

We have already seen the completion of challenging, complex environmental assessments and precinct plans that resulted in award-winning designs, and great new developments in the West Don Lands, which were unlocked by the prior Phase 1 flood protection developed further north along the Don River.

To name a few, we now have:

- Corktown Common Park
- Underpass Park
- Sherbourne Common Park
- Sugar Beach

These public realm enhancements have spurred:

- The Pan-Am Games Athletes' Village development, which has now been transformed into:
- Dundee Kilmer's Canary District development that includes Canary Park condos and significant retail;

- TCHC 3-building complex (243 units);
- Wigwamen Inc. (145-units); and
- Fred Victor (108 units)
- The George student residence
- The Cooper Koo YMCA
- Urban Capital's River City Condominiums (Phase 1 & 2)
- The George Brown College Waterfront Campus
- Corus Quay corporate headquarters
- Hines and Tridel's AQUALINA-Bayside development
- Great Gulf's Monde development

These developments have already generated significant economic impact for our city. It is therefore reasonable to assume the economic impacts noted in the Report provide ample support for the business case that this Flood Protection will have a significant, long-term, positive economic impact on our city. That impact is estimated to be over \$ 1 Billion for construction alone, as well as including \$5.5 Billion in future employment, labour income and revenues to all levels of government.

## 5. Due Diligence

Without rehashing the complex discussion of the Due Diligence Report, it is worth noting that Waterfront Toronto has undertaken a comprehensive due diligence process, with a final price that includes a 30% contingency. We submit that you, as committee members and as city councilors, can be assured that the estimated costs can be relied on with some certainty.

In sum, we strongly support the findings of the *Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Due Diligence Report* and the

recommendations of the Deputy City Managers and Chief Financial Officers to proceed with the Port Lands Flood Protection.

The flood protection will

- Save hundreds of millions in flood losses
- Demonstrate our first-class city credentials
- Support city planning policy; and
- Act as a powerful catalyst for economic growth.

Any one of these points indicates that this investment will generate a great return on investment; all four make it a slam dunk.

Thank you for considering our deputation on behalf of the 6,000 Toronto residents who support the plan to naturalize the mouth of the Don River and develop the Port Lands as a new, sustainable community. I'd be happy to answer any questions the committee members have.