

June 7, 2022

Transmitted via email to: exc@toronto.ca

His Worship, Mayor John Tory
Councillor Ainslie
Councillor Bailão
Councillor Crawford
Councillor McKelvie
Councillor Minnan-Wong
Councillor Pasternak
Councillor Thompson
City Hall, Toronto

Dear Mayor Tory and Executive Committee Members,

Re: EX33.2 Advancing City Priority Transit Expansion Projects

I am writing today to strongly support the advancement of the Waterfront East Light Rail Transit (LRT) as a priority project for the City of Toronto.

At the George Brown College Waterfront campus, there are approximately 9000 students, faculty and staff who participate in teaching and learning activities on campus and contribute to the vitality of the businesses and communities in the area. Reliable and accessible transportation is fundamental to facilitating the College's ability to maintain and expand our engagement and contribution to the growth of the Waterfront and the City.

The growth, interconnectedness, and vibrancy of communities across Toronto has been fostered and defined by our transportation network. Accessible public transit connects the places we live, learn, work and play, providing affordable and sustainable transportation for all. Currently, an effective transportation network is the missing essential infrastructure asset needed by Toronto's eastern waterfront communities. The establishment of a Waterfront East LRT line would address this gap, improving quality of life for residents and all who wish to experience the beauty of our waterfront.

A decade ago, when George Brown opened its Waterfront Campus, this part of the city was just beginning its transformation. Now, the Waterfront campus is surrounded by new homes, businesses, and public spaces, with more development underway – including our own mass-timber building, Limberlost Place, which will achieve net-zero carbon emission and transform Toronto's skyline. We endeavour to foster a learning and a vibrant Waterfront East community and transportation is fundamental to the attainment of this goal.

Well-connected transit is not simply a matter of convenience. It is a building block of vibrant, inclusive communities, offering mobility and accessibility for all. As we co-create the future of our waterfront, we have a unique opportunity to put transit first, which ultimately means putting people first and making it easier for Torontonians to connect, engage and build stronger communities. The absence of an LRT means many individuals must walk a substantial distance to effectively access on a timely basis the Toronto transit system which substantially disadvantages individuals with mobility considerations.

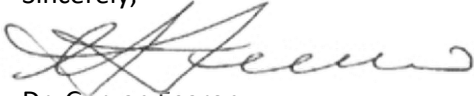
The Waterfront East LRT line would establish a route from Union Station to Coxwell Avenue, connecting downtown Toronto, the Port Lands and the Beach. Not only would it ensure that East Bayfront has the infrastructure it needs to flourish, but it would also enhance the vitality and economic growth of our city as a whole.

A 2019 study by Hatch showed that accelerating the creation of the Waterfront East LRT to a 2025 launch date would create a \$22.8 billion uplift in federal, provincial, and municipal tax revenue. It would allow 25,000 new housing units to be built along the LRT route – providing urgently needed housing for 67,000 residents. We would also see environmental benefits, with a 44 per cent decrease in automobile use and 100 million fewer commuting hours, resulting in productivity savings of \$1.8 billion.

Building the Waterfront East LRT in tandem with other transit priorities, such as the Ontario Line, will create a more reliable and accessible network for all Ontarians. This community and economic multiplier effect will help to accelerate and magnify our shared effort to build vibrant, inclusive, and connected communities that all of us can enjoy. Additionally, it would also facilitate the linkage of our other campuses into a coherent grid and support the attraction of more students and employees to George Brown College and Toronto.

The Waterfront East LRT is a vital part of the future of George Brown. We sincerely believe it is also a vital part of the city's future. The development and vibrancy of Toronto has been defined by its transportation network. We believe this will also be true for the Waterfront East community as well. Supporting the Waterfront East LRT is supporting the future of Toronto.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gervan Fearon
President
George Brown College

Cc: Councillor Joe Mihevc, Ward 10
George Zegarac, CEO, Waterfront Toronto