



December 16, 2024

Toronto City Council c/o City Clerk's Office
100 Queen Street West Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Sent via email.

Subject: Letter of Support for the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Toronto City Council,

On behalf of the Toronto Region Board of Trade, I am writing to express our support for the next phase of Toronto's Waterfront Revitalization. As one of North America's most ambitious urban renewal projects, the revitalization of our waterfront represents not just an enhancement of our city's physical and cultural landscape but a strategic investment in Toronto's future economic growth, connectivity, and global competitiveness.

Toronto's waterfront is the city's crown jewel and frontier for growth, a resource that reflects our history and holds immense potential for shaping our future. In recent months, we've established a business coalition of leaders on the waterfront to support the continued development of a world-class waterfront in Toronto. The commitments outlined in the proposed revitalization plan are investments in this future—investments that promise long-term returns by enhancing vibrancy, improving connectivity, and attracting visitors and businesses to our city.

We urge City Council to adopt this plan and fully endorse continued tri-government collaboration and funding agreements to enable these projects.

Key Priorities and Opportunities

Landside Transportation and Connectivity

The success of our waterfront revitalization depends on tackling critical challenges in transportation and connectivity. We applaud the inclusion of projects addressing these priorities, particularly the Waterfront East LRT. This project is pivotal for unlocking the potential of the eastern waterfront, including new jobs and homes in the Port Lands, and is essential for providing employers and post-secondary institutions with the reliable transit connections they need to attract workers and students. The Board reiterates its full support for the Waterfront East LRT and calls on all levels of government to commit to its funding.

In the interim, we strongly advocate for priority bus lane implementation to alleviate immediate transportation challenges along the eastern waterfront. Addressing congestion is a pressing issue, and these measures must be part of a broader, evidence-based, system-wide approach to improving travel times across the city.

The importance of connectivity to the waterfront cannot be overstated. Expanding accessibility to this vibrant and growing area of the city presents significant opportunities to enhance economic activity and support thriving communities. For instance, accelerating access to the waterfront through the PATH network would bolster business operations and ensure seamless movement for workers and visitors.

Expanding Water Transportation

Compared to other world-class cities, Toronto has yet to fully leverage the potential of its waterfront for water-based transportation. Expanding water transportation options for both people and goods is critical for enhancing connectivity, creating a memorable visitor experience, supporting the movement of goods in our region and enabling industrial uses on our waterfront to continue to thrive. We strongly support the establishment of a dedicated funding envelope to implement the 2020 Marine Use Strategy. Additionally, we advocate for bold, innovative initiatives to optimize the use of our water as a transportation, recreational and economic resource.

Continued Support for Waterfront Toronto

Waterfront Toronto has consistently delivered on its mandate—a remarkable achievement for one of North America’s largest revitalization initiatives. The organization’s proven track record underscores the need to extend its mandate to ensure continuity and success in this next critical phase of development. The Toronto Region Board of Trade supports this extension.

A Vision for a World-Class Waterfront

Toronto’s revitalized waterfront will not only be a source of civic pride but also a key driver of economic growth and a beacon for global talent, visitors, and investment. By implementing the proposed projects and supporting initiatives like the Waterfront East LRT and Marine Use Strategy, we can ensure that our waterfront achieves its full potential as a vibrant, connected, and sustainable urban space.

The Toronto Region Board of Trade is proud to support this vision and urges City Council to adopt the proposed plan for the next phase of waterfront revitalization. We look forward to continuing our advocacy efforts and working with all levels of government and stakeholders to bring this vision to life.



Thank you for your leadership and commitment to this transformative initiative.

Sincerely,



Roselle Martino
Executive Vice President, Policy, Advocacy, and Stakeholder Engagement
Toronto Region Board of Trade