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September 26, 2025

Cathrine Regan
Committee Council Administrator
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of the Executive:

Re: EX26.8 – Western Beaches Breakwaters Action Plan Progress Update

We are the West End Beaches Stakeholder Association (WEBSA), a coalition formed in 2005 by the Argonaut Rowing Club, the Boulevard Club, Sunnyside Paddling Club and the Toronto Sailing & Canoe Club, in response to the development of the Western Beaches Watercourse. In fact, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment suggested our establishment to coordinate a response to the last significant breakwall repair and repurposing project Environmental Assessment. Toronto Adventures (Humber River Paddling Centre) has also joined WEBSA.

WEBSA's objective are to work with the public, government agencies and non-governmental organizations to address the interests of persons who regularly use Toronto's Western Beaches area, and in particular the water that sits behind the breakwall.

We represent a broad range of organized local waterfront users and stewards including paddlers, rowers and sailors. WEBSA's members have a long history of developing and delivering amateur and recreational water-based sport along Toronto's western beaches waterfront. WEBSA has unique expertise and perspective on water-based recreation uses and the safety issues at this location.

Addressing the deteriorating breakwater infrastructure is essential to maintaining/creating a western waterfront that can support water-based recreation, create a healthy shoreline ecology, and improve the lake water quality. It is **essential to support the proposed updated vision** for Toronto's Western Beaches, in the Western Beaches Public Realm Plan (an update of the 2009 Western Waterfront Master Plan).

If the breakwall fails, it will be the City's assets (parks, playgrounds, trails, etc.) that are at risk, not those of the provincial or federal governments, regardless of intergovernmental discussions of ownership and responsibility.

WEBSA's waterfront users align perfectly with those recently identified by the City's Western Beaches Public Life study (prepared by 8-80 Cities). That study identified that "children, teens and older adults are underrepresented" and men dominate evening use. We can confirm that users of the water within the breakwall are skewed towards youth (with more females than males) and adult athletes (21 to 85 years old with more females than males). We also use the water within the breakwall from 5:00 AM to past dark from March through November.

The **purpose of our submission is to indicate our support for the Recommendation** in the Progress Update:

- " 1. Executive Committee request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, the Acting General Manager, Parks and Recreation, and the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management to work with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to develop recommendations related to a repair/rehabilitation program for the high-risk Western Beaches breakwater locations, including funding requirements; and a state of good repair management program for the Western Beaches breakwaters and report back in second quarter of 2026."

We take exception, however, to one statement made in the **Progress Update**, in the third paragraph of the Summary of the report.

"...32 linear metres of breakwater that is owned by the City is in high-risk condition (closer to Ontario Place); however, it may be feasible to remove this small segment (rather than repair or rehabilitate it) as it is a stand-alone remnant structure **that currently has minimal functional value**. Further investigation is required before a recommendation for this City-owned segment can be made." [emphasis added]

The subject 32 metres are identified in Figure 1. It is the gap in the breakwater close to Ontario Place.

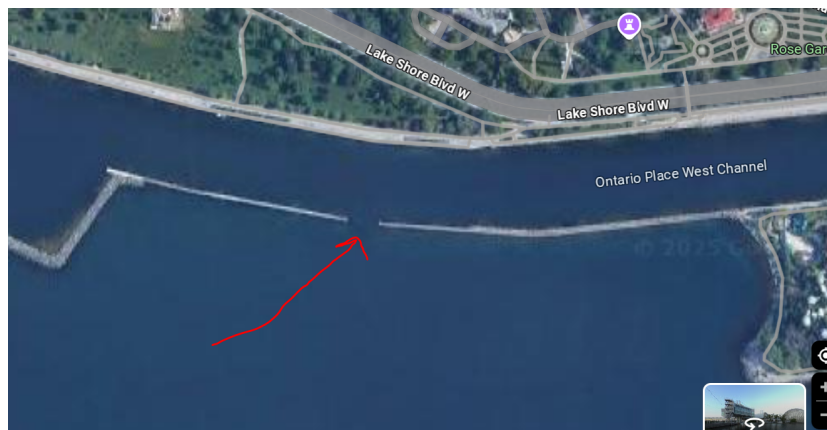


Figure 1. Breakwater Failure (the Gap)

While we agree with the statement that it "presently has minimal functional value" the fact is that its **relatively recent failure has had an almost catastrophic impact on the useability of the Western Channel**. As shown in Figure 2, the submerged remnant structure that sits in the water today played a critical role in:

- a) protecting the City's physical assets on the shoreline, and
- b) improving the usability by all within the breakwall by providing safe, effective flat waters by "deflecting the prominent wave pattern from entering the Western Channel".

We respectfully submit that it should be a **priority to address this gap as it has a very significant impact on the useability of the waters inside the breakwall** to the east and west because of wave deflection around the opening.

The gap is small in the big picture of needed repairs. The remnant structure can even be used in its repair as it already sits below the surface. WEBSA's position is not set in terms of whether the gap should be entirely closed or if the angled deflector arm should be re-installed. While "closed" would be best, if the City desires an access point for boats this is a logical area for it to be constructed. Ironically this existing access point is formally closed to boats today by Ports Toronto because of the submerged deflector arm remnants.

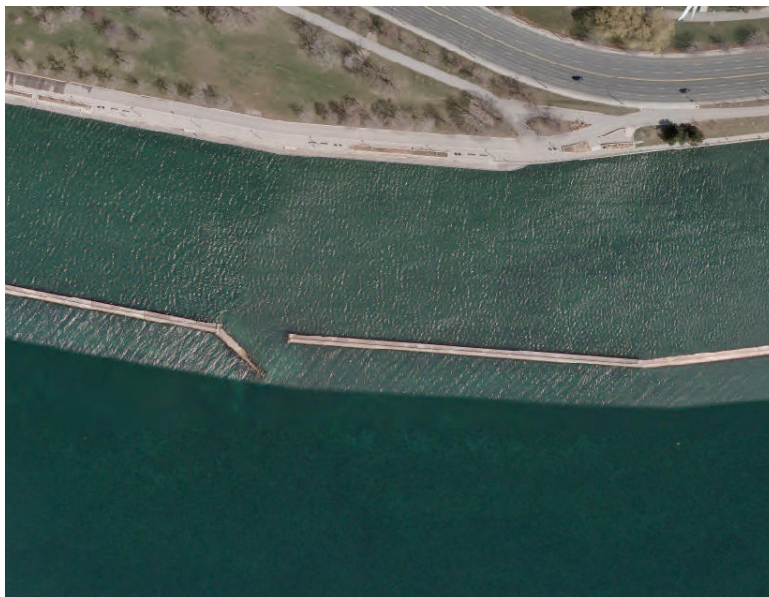


Figure 2. The Deflector Arm and the Gap

It is worth noting that WEBSA has made this same request to Infrastructure Ontario with its Ontario Place redevelopment plans. Leaving the gap unprotected serves no one's purpose and jeopardizes what is there today.

The gap's negative impact is so significant that during the Pan/ParaPan Am Games, a temporary safety barrier was installed at a reported cost of \$1,000,000 to ensure the Pan Am waterski participants were protected from the wave action of the lake. That temporary barrier eventually was destroyed by wave action and neglect and proved only partially effective when in use. It isn't an option anymore.

Thank you for bringing forward the Progress Report EX26.8 – Western Beaches Breakwaters Action Plan. We hope that it receives the full support of the Executive Committee and City Council. We offer our assistance to the City and TRCA with this endeavor.

Yours truly,



On behalf of Western Beaches Stakeholders Association

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