

**From:** [Ed Hore](#)  
**To:** [Executive Committee](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender] Deputation of Edward Hore, Waterfront for All, to Executive Committee, April 15, 2026 re Item EX30.2 - Toronto Personal Watercraft Safety Plan  
**Date:** April 13, 2026 6:32:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [260415 Deputation to Executive Committee re PWCs.pdf](#)

---

**Ms Regan: I wish to depute at the Executive Committee on April 15, 2026.**

**Would you please put copies of the attached letter before the Committee members.**

**I have no objection to it being posted on the public agenda or on the internet.**

**Thank you.**

**Ed Hore**  


Sent from my iPhone



Executive Committee Meeting, April 15, 2026

Item EX30.2 - Toronto Personal Watercraft Safety Plan

I am a lawyer and Chair of Waterfront for All, an umbrella group of residents' associations and other groups interested in the Toronto waterfront. I have also been a kayaker for approximately 20 years. I paddle around Toronto Island most days in the summer.

In general, Waterfront for All applauds the recommendations in the March 30, 2026 staff report, subject to some comments below.

We also support the suggested change put forward by Friends of Hanlans that the recommendations NOT be limited to personal watercraft (PWCs). Other boats going too fast can be a problem too.

We also support Friends of Hanlans' suggestion that Toronto Port Authority finance the cost of physical demarcation buoys. Similar buoys around our waterfront such as channel markers and Marine Exclusion Zone buoys are not paid for by the City so far as we know. TPA has jurisdiction over the harbour and surrounding waterways and seems to be the appropriate funding party.

### **For Paddlers, the Biggest Safety Concern is Excessive Speed**

There are many thousands of paddlers out on our harbour and around the waterfront particularly in summer. This number has continued to grow. Paddling is a wonderful way to experience our beautiful waterfront. More people are discovering it all the time.

However, paddling the Toronto has become more dangerous in recent years due to the ever-growing number of motorized boats of all sizes going too fast. There are speed limits, but they are often ignored.

It is true that personal watercraft are often the worst behaved, sometimes to the point of being dangerous. It is very unpleasant to have a personal watercraft, sometimes more than one, apparently heading directly at you at high speed if you are in a kayak or canoe. You may have no idea if the operator is watching where he or she is going. I have sometimes had to wave my

paddle above my head to alert personal watercraft operators, zooming right at me, that I am there. If a PWC hits a kayak or canoe, the results could be fatal.

It is my perception that many and perhaps most PWC operators are renters, often teenagers, who may have little or no experience of operating a motorized craft on the water.

However, safety problems involving excessive speed are not limited to personal watercraft

For example, I have been personally hit by a water taxi near Wards Island while in a kayak, and overturned. I know this has happened to other paddlers. The number of water taxis has been steadily increasing; they have every incentive to go as fast as possible across the harbour to pick up and drop off as many passengers as possible. This summer, there will also be water taxis going east-west between the Portland Slip and Ookwemin Minising as part of a Waterfront Toronto “Seabus” pilot program, creating more potential for collisions. While many water taxi operators stay well within the speed limits, some do not.

From the perspective of a paddler, motor boats, particularly large cabin-cruiser-type boats going too fast in congested areas, are also a serious safety concern. They leave a large and powerful wake, particularly in a narrow space such as the Western Gap which is only around 110 metres wide.

The Staff Report mentions “excessive speed, erratic operation” at page 5, but seems not to stress the fact that excessive speed are at the centre of most safety issues on our crowded harbour.

The speed limits on Toronto’s waterfront in sections 14 to 16 of the Toronto Port Authority [Practices and Procedures](#), part of the Federal Regulatory Framework mentioned at page 6 of the staff report:

### Speed Limits

14. Unless otherwise authorized by the authority:
  1. No vessel shall exceed a speed of 5 knots (10 km/hr) within 150 metres of any shoreline or breakwater.
  2. Except as provided for above, no vessel shall exceed 10 knots (19 km/hr) elsewhere within the ‘Inner’ and “Outer” Harbours.
  3. No vessel shall produce a wake within Toronto Island lagoons, nor navigable waters between the shoreline and Western Breakwater.
15. The foregoing provisions shall not apply to any craft engaged in life saving, the police patrol service, or any craft when used for fire fighting purpose.
16. Notwithstanding the above, no vessel shall be operated on any of the waters of the Port and Harbour of Toronto in a reckless manner, or at an excessive speed so as to endanger life or property.

Waterfront for All therefore supports in particular recommendation 4 in the staff report that “City Council request the Toronto Police Service to Board to request the Chief of Police to further enhance boating and water-safety enforcement.”

We suggest that special attention be paid to efficient ways enforcing the speed limits. My personal view is the speed limits should be lowered. Also their two-stage structure makes them difficult to remember and hard to enforce. Why not 5 knots everywhere in the harbour, instead of only within 150 metres of shore. Who can say if a boat is “150 metres from any shoreline or breakwater?”

But as a starting point, let’s at least enforce the current speed limits as much as possible.

**A suggestion: more speed limit signs**

Many boaters may not be aware of the speed limits. There almost no signs anywhere on the harbour setting them out. True, there are difficult-to-read signs at either end of the Western Gap. That seems insufficient. More signs, perhaps on the shore and on the buoys that already exist, would help.