

July 4, 2019

# Dear Toronto,

Toronto is emerging as one of the world's great cities thanks to our strong economy, sustained growth and openness to people from around the world. However, we also face many real challenges that must be addressed — including a housing market that has become unaffordable to far too many, one of the longest commute times in North America, increasing flood damage from a climate at risk, and growing income inequality. While these are certainly big challenges, we want to be a city that is willing to mobilize all of our talents — be they in science, politics, academia, community organization or business — to find new ways to solve them.

In March 2017, Waterfront Toronto launched a competitive RFP with the goal of finding an innovative partner to help improve how Waterfront redeveloped our lakefront industrial space. Several months later, Sidewalk Labs won that RFP. Last week, Sidewalk submitted a 'Master Development Innovation Plan' for consideration by Waterfront Toronto, which will then be reviewed by all three levels of government in their various roles as Waterfront property owners, shareholders and regulators. From this point forward, the company's ambitions and plans for the Quayside site can be evaluated against whether they will help Toronto with the challenge of city-building.

We are writing to encourage Torontonians and public officials to do just that — to welcome and evaluate this proposal for the many positives it can bring. From our collective perspective as leaders in the fields of urbanism, business, public policy, arts, education, social policy and environmental advocacy, we can each see aspects of this project which represent huge opportunities for our communities, and for Toronto. Where there are areas of disagreement or points worth debating in the proposal, we know that there is more than enough room for governments to respond, negotiate, or adjust plans with the company to address them.

Some issues and details must still be resolved, like data governance and a final path to rapid transit financing. However, we also believe there are many exciting ideas in this proposal that can help Toronto tackle some of the major challenges we face, whether it is a new approach to affordable housing construction (in partnership with local firms and companies), the proposed investments in a new urban innovation institute, standard-setting plans on green construction and utilities, or the proposed investments that would come with a new Canadian Google headquarters site.

As Jane Jacobs has observed, "communities have a right to say 'no' to things that are going to harm them, but a responsibility to say 'yes' to things that will help." We believe the Quayside proposal can help — whether it's helping us to develop the Waterfront, helping us to find new ways to solve pressing and persistent civic challenges, or helping us to build a better city.

Toronto has the civic and political strength to say yes and make Quayside work for all its residents.

**Sincerely,**



**Sharon Avery**  
President & CEO, Toronto Foundation



**Jan De Silva**  
President & CEO, Toronto Region Board of Trade



**Barbara Hall**  
Former Mayor of Toronto



**Dominic Barton**



**Dr. Sara Diamond**  
President, OCAD



**Tim Kocur**  
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**Alan Broadbent**  
CEO, Avana Capital



**Janet Ecker**  
Former Ontario Finance Minister



**Dr. Mohamed Lachemi**  
President & Vice Chancellor, Ryerson University



**Mark Cohon**  
Chair, Toronto Global



**Hon. Art Eggleton**  
Former Mayor of Toronto



**Farhaan Ladhani**  
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**Herman Ellis**  
Acting Executive Director, Scadding Court Community Centre



**Medhat Mahdy**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
YMCA of Greater Toronto



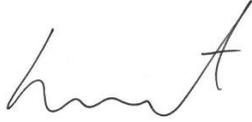
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Executive Director, CNIB Foundation Ontario South (GTA)



**Dr. Richard Florida**



**Mitchell Marcus**  
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**Dr. Danielle Martin**  
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