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August 14, 2017

Hon. Steven Del Duca  
Minister of Transportation  
Province of Ontario  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Ferguson Block  
77 Wellesley Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Z8

Dear Mr. Del Duca,

The purpose of this letter is to seek confirmation of a provincial funding commitment to undertake an Environmental Assessment (EA) study for a downtown Ottawa tunnel, which would link the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and Ontario provincial Highway 417.

On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, I had the privilege of meeting with Premier Kathleen Wynne and to dialogue with her on a range of issues of mutual interest. At this meeting, Premier Wynne committed the Province of Ontario to participating in this important initiative.

It is also my understanding that Nathalie Des Rosiers, MPP for Ottawa-Vanier, has spoken to you directly about the Province's potential funding support for this important EA.

The EA is the next step following the completion of the 2016 *Downtown Ottawa (Truck) Tunnel (DOTT) Feasibility Study* that was undertaken by the City of Ottawa in collaboration with the Province of Ontario.

The Feasibility Study identified a route from the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge that would connect with Highway 417 in the vicinity of the Vanier Parkway interchange. The tunnel would be designed to accommodate both truck and vehicular traffic in the order of 25,000 vehicles per day.

The proposed tunnel is intended to correct a decades old problem of heavy truck traffic and excessive interprovincial trade and general vehicle traffic cutting through the high density residential neighborhoods in the heart of the national capital region and less than 1.1 km from the Parliamentary precinct. As many as 2,600 heavy trucks travel daily from the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge through the City's core via the local road network such as Nicholas, Waller, Cumberland and Rideau Streets and King Edward Avenue.



This interprovincial corridor continues to be a high collision location. To put this into context, imagine if Toronto had an 18 wheeler truck corridor winding its way down Yonge Street from Front to Bloor for nearly 3.5 Kilometres. High volume and speed coming from Highway 5, the presence of large heavy transport trucks in this downtown setting force workers, residents, tourists, pedestrians and cyclists to navigate this busy corridor on a daily basis. Between 2005 and 2015, there have been a total of 1023 collisions on King Edward between Rideau Street and the Ottawa River. This included 2 fatalities and 216 accidents causing injury. As well, 56 of these collisions involved pedestrians and 22 involved cyclists.

In 2006, a solution to the interprovincial traffic problem was the goal of the joint federal and provincial interprovincial crossing study, which involved both transportation ministries of Ontario and Quebec and the National Capital Commission. This study was terminated in 2013, which left the original goal of relief from the daily heavy interprovincial traffic for Ottawa's downtown residents, businesses, and visitors without resolution.

In 2014, the City and the Province of Ontario resolved to seek an alternative solution for the interprovincial traffic problem, which culminated in the joint *Downtown Ottawa (Truck) Tunnel Feasibility Study*, completed in 2016.

I would like to take this opportunity to outline just a few of the reasons why this project should become a shared priority of the Government of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the City:

- Truck traffic in current volumes is incompatible with the local traffic and our efforts at city building and community connectivity in the King Edward Avenue corridor;
- Ottawa needs a workable trucking route that avoids conflict with local traffic in our core and for the economic vitality of both cities;
- The tunnel would secure a major trade route to the United States to better serve regional economic development in west Quebec, and eastern Ontario;
- The Macdonald-Cartier Bridge is a piece of critical infrastructure from federal, provincial and local perspectives. In Gatineau, both highways 5 and 50 connect into the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge as well-established trucking corridors;
- As we examine security measures in the core of the City, we should consider the benefits of diverting commercial truck traffic away from sensitive national sites; and
- One of the three pillars of the National Capital Commission's recently adopted Plan for Canada's Capital 2017 to 2067 is "A Thriving and Connected Capital."



As a follow-up to the Feasibility Study, \$7.5M is required to undertake and complete the EA study and associated planning efforts (such as geotechnical studies, videos and graphics, etc.). To move forward on this project, the City committed \$2.5 M for this work through the 2017 municipal budget process conditional on federal and provincial funding. A similar funding request has been made to the Government of Canada to cost share on this EA project. Again, the purpose of this letter is to confirm your support to obtain a matching provincial contribution of \$2.5 M towards this important EA. Once funding is secured, the EA is anticipated to take approximately two years to complete.

Given that this is an interprovincial truck corridor that links major highway systems in Canada's two most populous provinces, and specifically replaces a 400-series highway connection, we believe that long-term funding for this project should be provided as a federal-provincial undertaking.

Since the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge is federal infrastructure, crossing a provincial boundary as well as municipal boundaries, there is a need for provincial participation and support to resolve a jurisdictionally-complex issue. I will look forward to having a fulsome discussion with you on this project at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jim Watson'.

Jim Watson  
Mayor  
City of Ottawa

c.c. Nathalie Des Rosiers, MPP – Ottawa-Vanier  
Steve Kanellakos, City Manager