



Via email: Jim.Watson@ottawa.ca

September 2, 2016

His Worship Jim Watson
Mayor, City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa ON, K1P 1J1

Dear Mayor Watson,

Re: The Potential for a Downtown Ottawa (Truck) Tunnel

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) is writing to express its thoughts regarding the potential construction of a truck tunnel in downtown Ottawa linking the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge and Nicholas Street/Highway 417. By way of background, OTA was founded in 1926 and today is both the largest and only association in the province to represent all segments of the industry including for hire, private, and courier members. As a major road user, having modern road based infrastructure is of the utmost importance not only to the trucking industry, but to the City of Ottawa and the Ontario economy. For example, 90% of all consumer products and foodstuffs are delivered by truck, as is the bulk of Ontario's domestic and international trade. Simply put, without trucks the economy stops.

As you are no doubt aware, consideration for improving the connectivity of this important corridor, linking the highway networks of Ontario and Quebec, dates back decades. As time has passed, the necessity to find solutions has only intensified and today remains as important as ever. OTA is encouraged that this remains a priority for the City, as industry shares the desire to find a solution that reduces the impacts of pass through truck traffic while better connecting the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge to Highway 417.

Based on preliminary feedback from member companies and our examination of the City's feasibility study, OTA agrees that the Cross Country alternative is the most suitable for supporting the trucking and goods movement industry. Having said this, a number of points for consideration remain. For instance, while the desire of the consultant team in their report to restrict the transportation of dangerous good (TDG) is clear, it is important to recognize the diverse range of products that are classified under this designation. With literally thousands of products listed as dangerous goods, all with different properties and risk levels, and traveling in an assortment of volumes, a blanket prohibition on dangerous goods may unnecessarily limit the benefits of this project for truck traffic. Established mechanisms agreeable to both government and industry are in place now to determine which products pose little risk during transportation. This will be essential as maximizing the possible use of a tunnel will surely be a priority. Likewise, discussions surrounding possible tolling options should also recognize that industry buy-in would be essential should this project continue. Moving forward it will be critical for the City to engage OTA and industry so these types of considerations may be properly vetted and discussed before any decisions are made.

While OTA is fully aware that no official decision has been made regarding this project, we look forward to being a part of the process and this project as it moves forward. In the meantime, should you or your staff wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Laskowski".

Stephen Laskowski
President

C: Steven Boyle, Senior Project Manager steven.boyle@ottawa.ca