

Toronto High Tech Waterfront Plan Gets Nod

Blueprint To Be Created With Sidewalk Labs, Owned By Google's Parent Firm Alphabet



TORONTO: An additional US\$40 million has been secured for a plan to build a new high-tech neighbourhood at Toronto's waterfront.

Waterfront Toronto said on Tuesday that its board voted to move forward in creating the plan with Sidewalk Labs, which is owned by Google's parent company Alphabet.

Sidewalk Labs said the funding comes as the two sides signed a legal agreement on the plan. The company was chosen by Waterfront Toronto last October to present its ideas for a brand new area of the city.

The high-tech district will be in the Quayside development, along Toronto's eastern waterfront.

According to a press release, Sidewalk Labs initially committed US\$50 million to the planning phase. Sidewalk Labs spokesman Dan Levitan said another US\$40 million had been committed on Tuesday.

Levitan said the next steps for the planning includes holding a series of public consultations and noted that a draft plan will be released in early 2019 for another round of approvals.

A proposal for the project says the high-tech community would centre on sustainability and affordability.

Waterfront Toronto said the only commitment for the project at this time is creating a plan for Quayside.

In May this year, the project faced a lot of criticism about privacy issues. The plan envisaged a brand new area of the city built from scratch with innovative technologies and infrastructure, including roads designed for driverless cars.

But critics said the public knew very little about the company's intentions along



with many privacy and data concerns about the implications of living in a high-tech neighbourhood remain unclear.

Andrew Clement, a professor emeritus with the University of Toronto and

co-founder of the school's Identity, Privacy and Security Institute, said the lack of information released thus far "invites speculation and skepticism" and has only stoked data security and surveillance

fears, particularly since the Facebook and Cambridge Analytica scandal broke in March. "My position is that as an individual whose information is being captured, I want to know what it's going to be used for, at least in broad terms, even if it's de-identified. I'd also want to know who's going to make money on this data, even if it's anonymized," says Clement, who imagines the neighbourhood's streets will be dotted with video cameras and other sensors that could potentially track people's movements, traffic patterns, and the IDs of mobile devices connecting to wireless networks.

During public consultation meetings about six weeks ago, Sidewalk Labs head of legal Alyssa Harvey Dawson was non-committal when asked whether the project's data — including information about citizens in public spaces — would be retained within the country, saying only "security is going to be paramount." A Waterfront Toronto executive later said the U.S. company "hadn't foreseen" that so-called data residency would be a critical "non-negotiable." — CP/Pics: Waterfront Toronto

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Danish Ban On 'Burqa' Goes Into Effect



COPENHAGEN: A Danish ban on garments covering the face, including Islamic veils such as the niqab or burqa went into force on Wednesday. With 75 votes in favour and 30 votes against, the Danish Parliament adopted the act on May 31. Balaclavas are also banned. The legislation said "anyone who wears a garment that hides the face in public will be punished with a fine", Xinhua news agency reported.

The government said it was not aimed at any religion and does not ban headscarves, turbans or the traditional Jewish skull cap. Moreover, it allows people to cover their face when there is a "recognizable purpose" such as cold weather or complying with other legal requirements, for example using motorcycle helmets under Danish traffic rules.

Violation of the law will result in a fine ranging from 1,000 Danish kroner (\$150) to 10,000 kroner (about \$1,504) for repeat offenders.

France became the first European country to ban Islamic veils in public in 2011.

Trudeau At Richmond Hill Seniors' Residence



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, bottom left, meets with senior residents of Mon Sheong Court in Richmond Hill, Ont.. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Nathan Denette

NDP Bill Against 'Gouging' At The Gas Pumps

QUEEN'S PARK:— The NDP wants the Ontario Energy Board to regulate the retail price and wholesale mark-up of petroleum products in Ontario, protecting drivers from being gouged at the pump. Timmins NDP MPP Gilles Bisson tabled a private member's bill on Tuesday to accomplish that, the Fairness in Petroleum Products Pricing Act, 2018.

"Drivers across the province are being gouged by big oil corporations with no end in sight," said Bisson. "Prices spike when-

ever these companies decide to raise them, and family budgets are at their mercy. It's time to get these price hikes under control so Ontario drivers and their families can have peace of mind — and a healthier cost of living."

Since Doug Ford was elected, gasoline prices have continued to go up across the province, despite crude oil prices staying stable.

The NDP bill, Fairness in Petroleum Products Pricing Act, 2018, will give the Ontario Energy Board the mandate to pro-

tect the interest of consumers by implementing predictable and consistent retail pricing of petroleum products; prevent pricing practices that undermine the stability and competitiveness of retail markets for petroleum products, including retail markets in remote, rural and northern areas; and ensure transparency and reasonableness with respect to the prices of petroleum products.

"The steep price fluctuations from day to day and between regions are frustrating and painful

for drivers," said Bisson. "The Ford government can put an immediate end to price gouging for millions of drivers and their families by supporting this bill."

Bisson and the NDP have tried multiple times to regulate gas prices in Ontario — but Liberal and Conservative MPPs have blocked the attempts. Regulation is considered more consumer-friendly than getting rid of the gas tax, since companies could just take the extra profits and refuse to pass those savings on to drivers.