Board of Trade: Move Oversight of Quayside Civic Data Hub & Public Realm Data Policy to the Toronto Public Library

TORONTO, ON, January 9, 2019—Today, the Toronto Region Board of Trade (the Board) released a report entitled BiblioTech, recommending that policymakers assign oversight and development of public realm data policy to the Toronto Public Library. The proposal is in response to the debate over public realm data management at Waterfront’s Quayside project. BiblioTech also recommends improved data privacy enforcement, and the creation of a city-led policy for intellectual property commercialization. The Library was selected because it is a longstanding public institution with broad respect in the technology community for its balanced approach to data policy and information management.

The Board’s President & CEO, Jan De Silva, noted that most Board of Trade members strongly support Sidewalk Labs and Waterfront Toronto’s efforts to develop this complex project, despite the ongoing debate about governance and other milestones in the Quayside plan. BiblioTech provides an answer to legitimate questions about data governance that should be resolved to clearly define public and private interests.

“Sidewalk’s Quayside pilot has the potential to be a marquee project for the City of Toronto’s tech community,” said De Silva. “But for Toronto to be a relevant global city in the New Economy and for tech companies to commercialize their innovations at home here in Canada, we need to get our policies in order on data governance, and we need to accelerate the deployment of pilots. Other global cities are actively organizing and preparing for these challenges with a similar approach already.”

While the report was drafted in response to the debate over Quayside, Toronto’s technology economy needs consistent data and IP policies which transcend any one controversy or debate.

“We know other businesses are asking questions about what’s appropriate on the issue of capturing public data, and we know the City is dealing with similar challenges of its own with public realm data,” said De Silva. “It’s time for cities to start answering these questions, alongside broader provincial and federal policies to address these issues.”

-30-

Positioning the Toronto region as a global champion
The Toronto Region Board of Trade is one of the largest and most influential chambers of commerce in North America. Our constant flow of ideas, people and introductions to city-builders and government officials firmly roots us as connectors for—and with—the business community. Backed by more than 13,500 members, we advocate on behalf of business for policy change to drive the growth and competitiveness of the Toronto region. We act as catalysts to make Toronto one of the most competitive and sought-after business regions in the world, which starts with the success of our members. Learn more at bot.com and follow us @TorontoRBOT.

For more information:
Brian Kelcey, VP Public Affairs
Toronto Region Board of Trade
416-862-4528
bkelcey@bot.com