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PAUL BEDFORD, KEN GREENBERG AND PATRICK LUCIANI IN CONVERSATION WITH CHRISTOPHER HUME VISIONS FOR THE TORONTO OF THE FUTURE

Chairman: **Noble Chummar**
President, The Empire Club of Canada

Head Table Guests

Chief William Blair, Chief of Police, Toronto Police Services; Stephen Hewitt, Senior Manager, TD Bank Group, and Director, The Empire Club of Canada; Jim Kershaw, Senior Vice-President, Head of Business Management and Strategic Initiatives, TD Wealth Private Investment Advice; Dr. Gordon McIvor, Executive Director, National Executive Forum on Public Property, and 3rd Vice-President, The Empire Club of Canada; and Rev. Chris Miller, Retired Minister, United Church of Canada, and Chaplain, Context TV.

Introduction by Noble Chummar

It's a distinct honour to have our guest speakers, along with our esteemed moderator today, to speak about the future of the city of Toronto. Our guest speakers are experts in urban life and city building. Christopher Hume is the architecture critic and Urban Issues columnist of the Toronto Star. He's won a National Newspaper Award and has been nominated for that award, a very prestigious award, several times. The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada recognized him with an award for architectural journalism. He appears frequently on radio and television as a commenter on urban life.

Ken Greenberg is an architect, urban designer, teacher, writer, and former director of Urban Design and Architecture for the city of Toronto. And he's a principal of Greenberg Consultants. He is the recipient of the 2010 American Institute of Architects Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Design Excellence.

Mr. Patrick Luciani is currently senior fellow at the Global Cities Program at the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto. He is also co-founder of the popular Salon Speaker Series at Grano and is co-director of the Munk Debates.

Mr. Paul Bedford is a member and fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners, with over 45 years of experience in urban planning. Paul was Toronto's chief planner for eight years and served eight mayors over his 31-year career at the city of Toronto. Since his retirement in 2004, he's been appointed an adjunct professor of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Toronto and Ryerson University.

Today's lunch will allow us to dream about the future and discuss the challenges that our City faces. Toronto is one of the great cities on this planet. It is our home and the home to many new Canadians who have not yet arrived and to new generations that will inherit it. So how we deal with urban issues really matters. International events, gridlock, neighbourhoods, transit, urban sprawl, and architectural excellence are some of the topics that today our experts will discuss. They will gaze into their crystal balls to tell us what is in store for the great city of Toronto. Ladies and gentlemen, here are your guests.

Christopher Hume

We don't have a lot of time. We're going to try to keep it short and punchy and to the point. As you know, the topic today is Toronto in 2050. Of course, in a world that doesn't look much beyond the next quarter, thinking ahead 35 years is a leap for a lot of us. Yet, everything we do in terms of city building seems, at least in Toronto, to take 35 or more years to get done. So I think 2050 looms much closer than we like to believe.

Of course, the other thing that makes this talk even more interesting than it would otherwise be with my three guests here is the fact that we had such an interesting election last night. Even though we might not all be thrilled—I am—it would seem to me that there's no argument that one could make that this election at some level or another was about cities. It was about urban Ontario. Even though most of us live in cities and in suburbs— mostly suburbs, but of course we like to ignore that and concentrate on the urban part of the equation—this is, I think, a part of our lives, a part of the life of this province that we are very uncomfortable with for some reason.

I think that the most interesting thing about Kathleen Wynne is the fact that she embraces the urban. I mean, she actually mentioned transit in her victory speech, which, I think shows some

kind of change is happening. She didn't just talk about chopping budgets and firing people and all that kind of stuff that we hear so often and that we've heard for so often, for so long. Anyway, I'm getting off topic already.

The three of you each have two minutes. I guess I'm not going to ask a question at this point. You guys will give your two-minute version of things. Then we'll fire some questions. If there's enough time, of course, we'll look to you for some queries from our experts. Paul, your two minutes, please.

Paul Bedford

Thanks, Chris. I'm really happy to be here. I'm going to try and focus right in on key issues. I think, as we've all heard, we're living in a great city now. We are the largest city on the Great Lakes now. We've surpassed Chicago. We're going to evolve into a world metropolis, but I don't think we're thinking or acting like a world metropolis or doing what's necessary to prepare us to become a world metropolis. That's what I'm going to get into.

My premise is that we have to think big and we have to think long. I know Chris said this is about 2050. I'm going to advance it a little more to 2067, because that's Canada's 200th birthday. It's only 53 years away. The young people here are all going to be alive. I don't think we up here will make it. The reality is I want to help you envision that next half century. Go backwards 53 years to 1961. For those of us here, who were obviously alive then, decisions were made in 1961 that we are still living off today—subways, GO Transit, building infrastructure, schools, parks—all making up a civilized society. The real- is that we need to think about all those things, not only for the next four years, but for the next half century.

I'll just give you a couple of figures here that I think are quite interesting. Many of you know about the Places to Grow growth plan that the Province of Ontario adopted in 2006. If you fast forward the population and employment projections for 2067, which is my benchmark, the GGH, or Greater Golden Horseshoe, is going to have a population somewhere around 16–17 million. That's about the same size as Greater New York City today. Just to get your head into what this place will be like in the future, that's the scale and the magnitude. Think of the kinds of infrastructure investment decisions that are needed to make a metropolis or a city region of that size work. If we continue the way we are now, we're not going to get there.

My theme, really, is about choices and consequences. I want people here, when we get into the discussion, to think about the choices that will be made over the next several decades and to connect those choices to the consequences. If we have our head in the sand and make short-term decisions, I think we're going to pay a huge price and huge consequences in the future. That's one key thing.

One other area that I want to just touch on, and I'll wrap up my piece, is think about two cities in the world that have gone through a huge transformation. One is Tokyo with 35 million people in greater Tokyo. I don't know if anybody here has been there. It is mind-boggling, but it works. It works because of the right investment decisions in a whole variety of things that make up that civilized society.

Now look at Detroit, down the 401 here. It lost a million people in the last 30 years. If you've ever been there, you know they're paying a massive price for not investing in their public realm and their public infrastructure.

The last thing I'll say is that—and last night, I think, is very timely—in my experience in the city and in planning, people generally react to emotion first, reason second. I found at tons of public meetings they only talk about the reason. It helps, but you also have to connect the passion and the inspiration. You've got to put out a vision that is inspiring enough so that people want that vision. They crave it. The facts come and then there are choices that are made. I think that's what's before us now and

that's what's before us in the next half century.

I'll end by saying my key question is: What are you doing to fix the city? What is your organization doing to fix the city? What are you doing? Are you thinking about your kids and your grandchildren who are going to be here in terms of transportation, employment, education, housing, environment and so on? I'll elaborate on that in the questions.

Christopher Hume

Thank you, Paul. Ken.

Ken Greenberg

I'm going to pick right up on the themes that Paul has laid out, and I want to put as background the fact that two and a half generations ago, right after World War II, we collectively, in North America bought into a paradigm. The paradigm was about exodus from the city. It was about taking the automobile, which is a wonderful tool, and pushing its use to levels that can only be described as abuse, about separating where we lived from where we worked, from where we shopped, and we transformed the urban world in North America to the point where two thirds of us now live in auto-dependent places.

We now find ourselves in a situation where a second paradigm shift, equally powerful, is underway. We see it being led by young people. One way of looking at it is there's a new North American dream, which doesn't look like the old one. It's not the driveway with automobiles for every adult member of the household. It's living some place where you can walk to buy your groceries and where you can have access to transit.

Twenty-six per cent of North Americans now between the ages of 16 and 34 do not have driver's licences and have no intention of getting them. If you think of what a rite of passage it was for most of us in this room, that's an extraordinary change. Faced with that, cities will succeed, including our city, to the extent in which they embrace this new paradigm. We can choose to be

proactive—to deal with mobility, to deal with climate change, to deal with a range of social issues for diverse populations, diverse in terms of culture, but also in terms of age, and deal with the issues of young families. The other choice is we can be a grudging laggard and opt for hanging on desperately to the old paradigm and trying to succeed by being a low-wage, low-tax environment, with minimal services and technologically unsophisticated.

I think what's really interesting about the election last night, for me, is it was a referendum on life support for cities. If you actually look at the seats that were won and lost, all the cities that are experiencing extreme congestion, all those pressures that I've talked about, were the ones who opted for change. I think we've answered that question, for the moment, in the Province of Ontario, at a high level. Now the proof is in the doing.

When Chris asked me to write a little piece in the Star under the Big Idea rubric, what I suggested is the key to dealing with these issues is getting out of silos. We have created professions. We've created ways of doing things, which are all about juggling one ball at a time and talking about one thing at a time, whether it's transit or housing or public health. The truth is, they're all connected. So my thesis was "connect the dots." If we see that what we really need to use our resources efficiently, our limited resources efficiently, are lateral solutions where we're solving multiple problems at one time and where we're getting over false dichotomies.

A really obvious one is the false dichotomy that's been perpetuated between dealing with the environment and prospering economically. Clearly the world is making a shift to a green economy. Any part of the world that refuses to do that is going to find itself behind the eight ball. We have to get denser. We have to get more diverse. We have to cultivate civil society and all of its resources.

The dichotomy between public and private is another one of

those false dichotomies. I think in looking beyond the silos, we have potential in this city. We already have a huge leg up in our relative peace and harmony in an extraordinary diverse population over all the jurisdictions in North America, I would say. We have a huge leg up. We have lots to build on. I think if we embrace the change, rather than hold back and fight it, the future is ours.

Christopher Hume

Thank you, Ken. Patrick.

Patrick Luciani

Thank you. We've got two great planners here. My background isn't in planning. I see myself more as a citizen of Toronto.

Christopher Hume

That's good enough.

Patrick Luciani

We're all experts as far as cities are concerned. Depending on who you are, where you live, what you do, you see different problems. You might even see different solutions. When Chris asked me to do a piece for the Star as well, I was thinking about Toronto. Rather than looking forward, I was looking back. I said, "If you were here in Toronto 40 years ago and you come to Toronto today, what would you see?" You would see a dynamic city, a city that's grown completely contrary to what a lot of planners had hoped Toronto would be 40 years ago, because cities are very, very organic places. You can't really control what their priorities are or what their development patterns are going to be.

If I were to come back to Toronto 40 years from now, what would I see? I'd see a dynamic city with a lot of better shopping, a tremendous number of restaurants, very creative housing, a very, very progressive and interesting art community. But what you would recognize would be our public transit system. The fact that in 2014 the TTC is still giving out paper transfers tells you a lot about what's actually happened in our public sector. What

I've concluded was that the dynamism of the city is basically being propelled by the private sector rather than the public sector. If we really want a dynamic city in the next 40 years, we're going to have to find a way for the public sector to become more creative. They're going to have to become more risk-taking, and they're going to have to, in a sense, invest in ideas that they don't have now. If we don't, then we're going to be back in this panel 40 years from now wondering what actually had happened.

That's what I want to leave you with. I want to leave you with the notion that, if you take a look at what's happening to Toronto, it is basically being driven by individuals with visions in the private sector rather than the public sector. The public sector simply seems to be incapable of taking care of some of the problems that we need. I'm not going to say that all of the things in the public sector haven't worked out. That's not true. But the one big thing, and it's been alluded to by Paul and Ken, is that public transit and traffic has been an absolute disaster for the city and it's holding us back. Unless we have good, creative ideas to deal with this—and I've recommended one thing in the Star article, which got a tremendous amount of criticism—we should privatize our public transit system. Now, when I say to privatize it, of course that implies a lot of negative aspects to it. But we have to unleash a level of creativity that we have never seen before in the public sector. That's a theme that perhaps we can get into as we finish up our lunches and continue our discussion this afternoon.

Christopher Hume

Thank you, Patrick. I should have explained that the three panelists here today were all invited to write ideas for the Toronto Star's Big Ideas series, which continues, although this part of it is over with. We had five or six weeks of big ideas ranging from the kinds of things these guys wrote about to the argument that we should leave our bars open until 6:00 o'clock in the morning, if you can believe it.

I wanted to kind of mix things up a bit and talk about things

other than booze. I think Patrick gets at something that we can't ignore. I think that it's about planning and somehow our failure as a city to harness the energy of the private sector. We have a planning department that seems to me—and I guess I'm talking to you, Paul—at odds with the manifest destiny of Toronto. It seems to want to squash things because they're too tall. It wants things according to a set of rules that may or may not make sense any longer. I'm not sure. Is it just my imagination? Is it just our planning department? Is it the same everywhere? How can we take better advantage of this enormous energy that's changing this city?

Paul Bedford

I would say the answer is mixed. I think the planning department—of course you'd expect me to say this because I'm somewhat biased—is doing a lot of good things, especially under the leadership of Jennifer Keesmaat, the new chief planner. It is struggling with enormous, unprecedented growth. I think you all know there are 150-plus cranes in the air in the city, the most in North America, to keep up with that. So there's a challenge.

But I hear what Chris is saying. I think he's referring or alluding perhaps to the David Mirvish proposal on King St., among others. There was a very, very bold proposal for the three towers, that is now going to be two, I gather. I assume it will probably move ahead in some form or another. I think the constant thing that the planning department always has to do is balance off local issues and city-wide issues. You have to do both. The role of a planner—I teach my students this—is to do two simple things. You have to provide solutions to current problems and develop ideas for the future. You've got to do both. You don't just do one of those things or you're useless. I think, frankly, with planners, like any profession, there's good, and there's mediocre, there are some who aren't so great, and they're all struggling with balance and how to respond to those pressures. I think in that kind of environment the potential is there.

I actually feel very positive. I think that the plan is going through a review process. The transportation issue is coming into focus, I believe, finally. Just on that—and I want to digress for a second—I think we need more of everything. We need to electrify the GO network. It's a no brainer. Those tracks are sitting there empty all day long except for the Lakeshore quarter. What the hell? You want to electrify it and have a 15-minute service throughout that whole network. That's critical.

You need more subways in the right places, but you don't build subways where they cost a fortune and there are no riders on them, because you're going to tie up the land use. You need more buses on the street. You need more streetcars. You guys know that just the streetcar network in this city carries far more people a day than the entire GTA GO system. Just the streetcar network. It's important. But people don't sort of connect all this. I think all these pieces are on their agenda, and they're struggling to, as Ken says, connect the dots and bring them forward.

Christopher Hume

But Paul, just to get back to what Ken was saying, there's a post-war planning paradigm, which puts shopping here, residential here, all neat and tidy. We've discredited that now, although I think those regimes still exist in many places. I want to know where these ideas come from. Surely the whole point of Jane Jacobs was to make the obvious obvious. Is planning a profession that can rid itself of this intellectual baggage that it brings with it, these discredited notions about what a city should be, how we want to live, and actually look at the evidence and draw from that to tell us how we should plan?

Paul Bedford

I know Ken is dying to say something.

Christopher Hume

Sorry, Ken.

Paul Bedford

I think we're doing that. I think if you look at the mixed use—mixed is the keyword—in terms of walk to work, employment, housing choice, the whole range of housing choice throughout your entire life cycle, from the first rental apartment as a student to the nursing home, should be in all communities. You don't just want to go to Mars when you have to leave your house. All of those philosophies, those outdated philosophies, are not found in the official plan of today, are not found in Places to Grow. You don't find them in a lot of the practices in this city. But as Ken says, we're going through this paradigm shift. There are still a lot of people who still believe in the separation of uses and the reliance on the car. But that's clearly changing, and I think the planning department is in sync with that.

Christopher Hume

Maybe it's just having a hard time keeping up.

Paul Bedford

That's part of it.

Christopher Hume

Ken.

Ken Greenberg

I'm going to start off by recommending a book. You probably all know "Death and Life of Great American Cities" by Jane Jacobs. You may not know "Systems of Survival." "Systems of Survival," I think, is one of her most important books, in which she argues that having a strong public sector and a strong private sector in a dialectical relationship is the key to success in cities. She calls them entrepreneurs and guardians. I think what's happened to us in the last 15, 20 years is it became fashionable for government to attack itself, for people who run for office saying, "Government is discredited, it can't do anything, demoralize it." It's like cutting off your own limbs. I think we now have to get back to a point where we revalidate that relationship and the fact that these are two crucial complementary roles.

I'm just going to tell you a little bit about my day yesterday to illustrate the point. I was in Ottawa. I'm working on two projects there: one with my colleagues, Bruce and Marianne, KPMB, with the Aga Khan Foundation on the Global Centre for Pluralism. I spent the day with a new executive director at the National Capital Commission. He is the kind of civil servant that we really need. He was all about, "How do we implement the plan?" How can we step in and use all the modalities that government can use to execute a plan and make a great place?

I then went over to City Hall, where I'm working with a senior planner at the city. We're doing a public ground plan for the Rideau Centre Arts Court District. We're transforming all the streets in that whole area between the Byward Market, the University of Ottawa, Rideau Centre, and Rideau Canal. There are fantastic people at the city.

In Toronto—and we've got to get over it—we've gone through a period recently where we demoralized the people who were working for us, many of whom are very good and working very hard at City Hall. We made them feel invalid. When Paul and I worked at City Hall—and we go back to David Crombie—we were proud to devote a part of our lives to being in what we called the civil service. It was seen as an honour to serve the city. It may sound a little bit archaic now, but I think it's important that we get back to that understanding that these two roles work best when they work in a partnership, a creative partnership, and where the assigned roles are different, but they enable each other.

Christopher Hume

Patrick, you have talked about the creativity and the innovation that comes from the private sector. What relationship does that have with the public sector? What is government's role? Just to stay out of the way?

Patrick Luciani

The government's role is to make sure the nuts and bolts of the

city actually work. Of course, we're talking about anything from garbage pickup, to transit and so on. I was listening to our guests. I always think that planners propose and reality disposes. Let me give you a small example—I might be going off topic a bit—and that is the whole notion that Toronto should become more friendly for bicycles and that we want more lanes for bicycles. I have a bike. I cycle. I've been cycling ever since I've been in Toronto in the '70s. But I also have a car tucked away in a small garage, because I can't rely on the system the way it is right now.

Back to the bicycles for a while. We've encouraged a lot of cycling in some of our major routes along College St., where I live, and University. What seemed like a good idea at the time seems to be a bit chaotic now, that is, with cyclists. We don't have fewer cars on the road. Now we have more of both—cars and trucks and cyclists. The cyclists now are, I think, in an environment, that has become even more dangerous than it was before. That certainly wasn't intended by people, who were pushing for more cycling in Toronto, but just an unintended consequence of the reality of what actually happened. But we have to live with the consequences of basically having more of both now.

When I came here this morning, there was a tremendous amount of traffic. I was wondering why there was so much car traffic coming into the city. Where are they going? Are they shopping? Are they going to work at this hour of the day? I just think it's just a growing city, with a lot more traffic, and a lot more people. I would think that the public transit system, simply as full as it is, Paul, is still incapable of taking care of traffic. I see no plan to make that different. In fact, the streetcars along this route have clogged things up all the way along. The question I ask is, "Why would drivers put themselves through that?" The only answer I can come up with is that taking the alternative way to come into the city is going to be worse; it's going to be more expensive in terms of time and money.

Christopher Hume

But of course, from a passenger's perspective, i.e., mine, it's those cars that are messing things up, not the streetcars. There's a famous picture. I think Paul has it in one of his presentations. It's 50 cars on a road, 50 people standing, and then a streetcar, all with the same number of people having completely different effects on the city. Paul, I just want to get back to something that you were talking about—how we created these silos. We talk about transit, but perhaps transit's not the issue. Perhaps mobility is the issue, and there's a larger package of tools, or whatever you want to call them, techniques—transit, walking, driving, bicycling, crawling along the street, whatever—but we see transit and all these things as separate functions and don't think much about coordinating them. How do we get out of that mentality?

Paul Bedford

Mobility is absolutely it, because people move every day somehow. My wife's in a wheelchair. She moves in a wheelchair. We need to look at that whole spectrum. Just to pick up on Patrick's comment, cars are not going to go away. I know that. People think we can eliminate cars and all problems will be solved. There will always be cars, whether they're electric, or hydrogen-powered, or what have you. For the last 30 years we have not kept up with the kind of investment we need in the transit infrastructure. That relates to the GO question, the TTC question, and other forms of mobility.

I was on the Metrolinx Board, as some of you know, for a couple of terms. We're in the situation now where we're trying to catch up for not doing an awful lot in the last 30 years and looking ahead for the next 30 or 50 when we're going to have 16 million people in this region. Anybody here who's been to New York City knows that cities of that size and those regions don't work unless they have phenomenal transportation systems. That's the challenge that we have now. What kills me is that there are solutions to this, but it's not free. People have to connect the

dots, as Ken said, in terms of nothing is free.

When I took you back to 1961 earlier, the provincial government either borrowed money or whatever to build subways and the GO networks. There were different funding formulas and all the rest of it, but somebody paid. It was us, collectively. We've got ourselves into this situation, unfortunately I think now, where a lot of people are expecting all this to be provided, but they don't want to pay for it. If you buy a house, you're generally expected to pay for it. This disconnect is a real, real problem.

The solutions are as controversial as hell. All of you have read the articles about what Metrolinx recommended, the Transit Panel I was on with Anne Golden and a lot of other bodies, Board of Trade and everything else. They're all controversial. There are road tolls. There's sales tax. There's gas tax. There's you name it. Other cities around the world have already had that debate. They already have all those tools. They've done it, because they know that nothing is free. I'm getting off topic again, but it is so critical that we absolutely come to terms with that and bite the bullet on this. You've got to start somewhere. The last thing I'll say on this is that it is absolutely nuts that every time new politicians get elected or come to office at any level of government they chuck it all out and start all over again. We can't afford to do that. That's crazy.

Ken Greenberg

I want to pick up a few threads in the conversation. When Mike Bloomberg was mayor of New York, he had two superb people working in City Hall—Amanda Burden, who was the chief planner, and Janette Sadik-Khan, who was the commissioner of transportation. Broadway from 23rd Street up to Columbus Circle was a public initiative, which has transformed New York in a way that everyone would think is exceptional.

Along with that, to segue into another issue, New York has added huge amounts of proper bike lanes, separated bike lanes, safe ones with curbs, not only in Manhattan, but throughout the

boroughs, while we've done virtually nothing. We have this one little bike lane on Sherbourne Street that has a half-hearted curb. It's not really a curb, because the taxis and the cars roll up over it and block the lane. The point is, there is no big city in the world, the size that we are, where people rely on the automobile as a primary means of transit. None. There will be cars. There will be people who need to use cars. But we've long passed the point when we can keep thinking about that as the most important thing to deal with. What's fascinating is Tokyo, which was mentioned, where my son lives, which has almost as many people in a city as the entire population of Canada, where it's really easy to drive. Why is it easy to drive? Because hardly anybody does.

We all have friends in New York. Who has a car in New York, except to go out to the Hamptons on the odd time on the weekend? That's the paradigm shift. We have to aggressively make that move to enable us. As the Board of Trade keeps pointing out, in 2001 there was a $6-billion drag on the local economy because of congestion.

What's fascinating is it's not only Toronto, but every municipality in the 905—Markham with its downtown centre, Richmond Hill with its downtown centre, the Metropolitan Centre in Vaughan, Mississauga, Burlington, Oakville. They're all creating places, which are mixed in the way Paul was describing and where people can walk to things. You may or may not know that in downtown Toronto now, 46 per cent of the people who live in downtown Toronto walk to work. That's not bicycle, that's not transit, that's just walking. Therein lies the answer.

Patrick Luciani

Who was the applause for, by the way?

Christopher Hume

The walkers.

Patrick Luciani

I'm a big believer in markets. I think that people who use the

roads, and who drive the roads, have to pay the proper price to do so. We have the capacity, technologically, to almost toll every single road in Metro Toronto, inside the city and outside the city. We can do that. Every car, basically, would have a transponder, and that would be the end of it. We'd basically say, "You want to drive along Queen St. at this hour every day? Then we're going to charge you so much for it." That would clean up the traffic immediately.

We could also, in a sense, use innovative technology, if only our municipal politicians would allow it. We could fix our traffic lights system so they could be sensitive to traffic flow, rather than simply be mechanical devices that stop traffic for 50, 60, 70 seconds, whatever it is. This technology exists out there. The question is, "Why don't we have it? Why don't we use it? Why don't we invest in it and take some chances and take some risks?"

If you go up and down the street or if you live in the city, you see buses lumbering up and down streets with no passengers, big, big buses. We could have much smaller buses doing that. We could actually invite the private sector to run those particular routes for us.

I talked about innovation in the private sector versus the public sector. There's only one idea out there right now that is moving people around a bit better than it was just a year ago, and that is Uber taxi. Now you can use your cell phone to call a cab. This idea of calling a cab now with your cell phone is revolutionizing how people are moving around now in big cities around the world. Why? Because the public sector has protected an archaic taxi industry. Taxis can go places subways and buses can't go. Why isn't that technology encouraged? Because the cities and the municipalities and governments are too much invested in protecting the current structure the way it is, than jobs, increasing, let's say, income for cab drivers and so on. That shouldn't be the priority. Their priority should be to move people around quickly, efficiently, as cheaply as possible and to bring ideas into

this city that would encourage more investment rather than discourage it.

I had a couple of other thoughts, but I'll think of them as I go along.

Christopher Hume

Paul.

Paul Bedford

There are so many things we haven't even touched on. We've been tending to talk about transit, for obvious reasons, and mobility. But I also want to talk about the city of the future. We have, as I think a lot of you know, this urban/suburban discussion and the rich and poor discussion. This is a serious thing. There's over 100,000 people on the waiting list now for Toronto Community Housing. It's just growing, growing, growing. The city manager at a recent function I was at said that we're getting to the point where it's not just a crisis, but we're going to have to, if no new funding source comes forward, renovate the housing we've got and provide for this critical need. We will have to actually evict people from the existing housing, close the units because they're uninhabitable. I mean, this is the Detroit scenario. This is nuts. He advocated that a 1-per-cent sales tax or a 1-per-cent income tax or whatever would instantly provide the money to do much of these things, the housing, the transit, etc., etc.

Many of you may or may not know, that so many U.S. cities have a municipal sales tax, have a municipal income tax. This is not a new idea. This has been around for decades. But we don't want to have this kind of discussion. For not only transit, but housing and public realm and all these other things we do need a new revenue source, but we can also do other things that Ken was involved in and I was involved in when we joined the city. We can make far better use of the public land that we own now. What's the biggest source of public land in the city? The roads, the right-of-ways.

Most of you perhaps know Berczy Park, that lovely little park

behind the Gooderham and Worts Flatiron Building. Well, Ken and I remember when that was an asphalt parking lot owned by the city. There was a political decision back then by David Crombie and the Council to rip up the asphalt and create a park. Thirty-five, 40 years later, it is what it is. St. George St. between Bloor and College is another example. Where the right-of-way existed was a four-lane road. It was narrowed to two lanes, proper bicycle lanes put in, and the sidewalks and the trees widened. There are so many examples of doing that.

One of the things Jane Jacobs always taught me and is the expression I used when I was at the city: "See, feel, touch." For people to get it, they've got to see some examples. They've got to feel it in their heart, the emotion part, or their gut, and they've got to touch it, because then it's, "I get it. This works." One last piece on this, because it all fits together about connecting the dots, is one of my passions— main streets, the avenues, mixed-use on the main streets, Yonge, College, and so on and so on. Generally mid-rise—five, six stories, seven stories. Chris wrote articles about this in terms of two examples that communities experienced, on lower Ossington and the Lick's Hamburger Place in the Beaches on Queen St. People went nuts. They opposed six stories. It was the end of the world, death, everything. They fought it to the bitter end and lost, OMB approved it. Do you know what happened? The vast majority of people who live in the neighbourhood that opposed it bought a unit and they moved in, because, "See, feel, touch. I didn't know it would be like this. I can stay in the same neighbourhood, sell my house, have half a million bucks in the bank and still have all the network that I had before."

There are all these things that are important. I always think you have to connect big-picture choices that are very difficult for people to grab onto in daily life experience. It is connecting the dots.

Christopher Hume

Before we go any further, are we out of time?

Noble Chummar

About ten minutes.

Christopher Hume

Do we have some questions from the audience? We have about ten minutes left.

Question

I think there are some interesting themes developing here, one of which is, "How do we get innovation in? I would tend not to agree with Patrick and think we actually need some innovation somehow in our public service. Consider this one example. We have a downtown relief line, which is supposed to be the saviour of everything. They say they're going to do it and everyone's behind it. It's scheduled to open in 17 years. This is a third of the way through your 53 years. This is in 17 years. Eight of that is going to be taken up with planning it. Another nine of it is going to be taken up with building it. John Tory comes along and says, "Well, why don't we use the right-of-ways we already have?" I know that there are a lot of people who get very scared because politicians beat down on the public service, but how do we get this innovation? How do we get this to change? Because 17 years is not acceptable.

Christopher Hume

Why doesn't Ken answer?

Ken Greenberg

That triggers a few things for me. The political discussion of one line at a time in a vast city region is nuts. We have to be talking about all technologies, everything from innovative use of taxicabs, to buses, to bus rapid transit, to light rail, to subways, to commuter rail, all together as networks. We have to be talking about issues like fare integration, where we're lagging so badly behind. We have to talk about issues like tolling. All these things

together form a network, and they can generate revenues that can be applied to improving parts of the system. You cannot do that kind of planning if every time you have an election you change your mind and you start something completely different.

The cities that have dealt with this successfully in the world have found a way to make the planning for major transportation networks one step removed from the vicissitudes of electoral cycles. For example, in the U.S., which does many things wrong, one of the things they do right is they have a six-year federal transportation bill. The fact that their federal government is involved in funding transportation is already a big difference from our own situation.

There are published criteria for eligibility for the states and the cities to get federal transportation money, i.e., there has to be ridership. They never build lines to nowhere, which we seem so fond of, or lines with no stops or virtually no stops, because you can't get the funding to do that. The six years is deliberately chosen because it doesn't coincide with the electoral cycle. We are in a syndrome. The amount of money that has been wasted in cancelled contracts, in plans that have been drawn up and then abandoned, in vehicles that have been purchased and then not used in recent decades in Toronto, is just appalling.

Christopher Hume

Holes that are being filled in and that kind of thing.

Ken Greenberg

Holes being filled. It's untenable.

Christopher Hume

I have to wonder, Ken, if there isn't some kind of subtext to this whole thing, whether it's planning, or whether it's transit, whatever it may be. There seems to be some kind of subtext, some kind of underlying cause, that manifests itself in these various different ways. Perhaps those issues themselves are not the problem, per se, but there's something about this city that

makes it impossible for us to actually make a decision, stick to it, ante up, and see it through.

I know you want to say something, but we have some questions over here.

Question

Yes, I'm glad you just mentioned that, because that was exactly the question I had. If you look at all the issues, all the things we've heard and seen this afternoon, you have to wonder about a decision to create a city governance structure consisting of 40 councillors and a mayor with an equal vote, to look at the way things can't get done and all the issues that surround that kind of a structure. Instead of thinking of the city as a whole, you could think of your neighbourhood or your ward. Vancouver has a very different system. Why don't we get rid of the structure? It was a mistake. Can we find a new way of organizing the way the city government works?

Patrick Luciani

I'm a big fan of Jane Jacobs, but I think sometimes Toronto needs more Robert Moses than Jane Jacobs. We need the province and the city to give power to a planner to do things and execute them. This is a political problem, though. It's a policy problem. Our governments are simply just too weak to execute a lot of these things. We may have too many stakeholders involved in the decision-making process. The reason I actually recommended the privatization of the TTC was to basically do two things: get the TTC out of the hands of the politicians and basically bring in a lot more capital, because the province and the municipalities don't have the money to really do a great job.

Here's a crazy idea. Toronto is one of the world's great cities. I imagine people would want to invest in Toronto from around the world. We could probably get hundreds of billions of dollars for a private investment project for our TTC in terms of building hundreds more subway stations and transit. They would invest in it. How would we pay for it? Well, we could sell air rights at

subway stations right across the city in terms of investors getting a return on their capital. This has never been floated, as far as I'm concerned. The time to do it is now, because international capital is so inexpensive. That's how you unleash money coming into the city.

If you keep begging the provincial government for money for transit, it's not going to come. The Feds have no interest, and you're never going to get that 1 per cent or 2 per cent as far as our taxes are concerned in terms of the GST. It's just not going to happen. If it does, it's simply going to be diluted.

Christopher Hume

Foreign money already owns half the condos in Toronto. It already owns the 407. I think Patrick raises a good point, but we're going to get another question from over here.

Question

This question builds on the other two in that it has to deal with the system of governance and the way that ideas are put forward. There are two basic ways that governance can happen. There's the whole top-down model, and then there's the bottom-up model where there is a lot of citizen participation. You mentioned the "Systems of Survival" by Jane Jacobs, talking about entrepreneurs and guardians. In terms of entrepreneurs, I'm with a start-up company. We're looking at a platform that would allow citizens themselves to put forward their suggestions, with a lot more real-time feedback happening, rather than a system with 40 councillors and representation like that. The technology exists nowadays that everybody can have a voice. We don't necessarily have to go through a human means to get to the top. I'm wondering if you can talk for a moment about matching the two different systems, because they are both necessary—the top-down governance and the bottom-up. See how those can be reconciled or matched.

Ken Greenberg

Great question. I want to first just pick up on the question that you asked, "Chris, is there a big theme underlying all these dysfunctional situations?" I think we've been having a big argument with ourselves about whether or not we want to grow up. That's basically it. We're a big gangling adolescent. We've outgrown our clothes. We don't know whether we want to be an adult or remain this kind of irresponsible teenager.

Christopher Hume

I have a feeling we don't want to be an adult.

Ken Greenberg

Having said that, I think the point you're raising is really interesting in a couple of ways. One of them is a wonderful concept called subsidiarity—you make decisions at the lowest competent level where thosedecisions can be made, and you only elevate things when it's necessary to look at a bigger picture. I think with amalgamation, we totally lost track of that. We've created something which is both too big in terms of the internal workings of the city and too small in terms of the Greater Toronto-Hamilton area or the Golden Horseshoe. We've got to come to terms with that.

The other thing that I think is really interesting is that in the private world and the world of communication that we're all increasingly adept at—if everybody was 10 or 15 years younger, we'd be even more adept at it—there's all this immediate feedback and the ability to get responses and so on. Our government systems are caught in a time warp. When you get notice of a rezoning, you get a letter in the mail. If you go online, you get a long, dense piece of text. There's no imagery. We have interactive technology, so when a rezoning comes up in your neighbourhood, you should be able to go on a three-dimensional interactive model and move around your neighbourhood and see exactly what it's like. That's what the private world does. There's a huge opportunity to take all of these technologies that are now

currently available and just upgrade our ability to communicate and create feedback loops that would accelerate and make better decision making.

Christopher Hume

You know what? We're out of time. One last comment.

Paul Bedford

On the governance, I think there are solutions if you look at other cities, but it's got to be a made-in-Toronto solution—what works at the city-wide level and what works on a more local scale. Ken and I have been involved with the Community Board system in New York City, eight and a half million people, but there are 59 community boards of about 150 to 200,000 each. They are closest to the decision making. And there's a planning board, and all that stuff flows up from the bottom to the city council. So there are many models.

Christopher Hume

On that optimistic note, we've run out of time. Thank you very much for coming. I'd like to wish the students over there in the corner the very best of luck in 2050. We'll be thinking of you.

The appreciation of the meeting was expressed by Jim Kershaw, Senior Vice-President, Head of Business Management and Strategic Initiatives, TD Wealth Private Investment Advice.