

The Empire Club Presents



JOHN TORY
MAYOR OF TORONTO:

**LEADING TORONTO
FORWARD**

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and President of the Empire Club of Canada

March 20, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From Arcadian Court in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada. For those of you just joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting.

Today we present John Tory, Mayor of Toronto, for today's topic, "Leading Toronto Forward." The Empire Club has a long view of history. This is the third time Mayor Tory has spoken here as Mayor. I should note, he also spoke here when he was Ontario PC Leader; he presented his speech in

2008 entitled “Looking Outward Together as a Free Citizen in 2013.” Not only does Mayor Tory have a history speaking at the Empire Club, but he has also served on the board.

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speaker:

His Worship John Tory, Mayor of Toronto

Guests:

Mr. Izzie Abrams, Vice President, Government & External Affairs,
Waste Connections Canada

Mr. Mark Cote, Head of Development, Canada Oxford Properties Group
Ms. Jan De Silva, President and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Region
Board of Trade

Mr. Joseph Mancinelli, International Vice President & Regional Manager of
Central and Eastern Canada, LiUNA

Mr. Denzil Minnan-Wong; Deputy Mayor & Councillor, Ward 16
(Don Valley East) City of Toronto

Mr. Chris Murray, City Manager, City of Toronto

Mr. Gareth Seltzer, Co-Founder, RYOT; Chief Executive Officer, DAIS Creative
Media; Past President, Empire Club of Canada

Mr. Tim Smitheman, Government Affairs Manager, Enbridge; Director, Empire
Club of Canada

Ms. Antoinette Tummillo, President, Antoinette Tummillo and Associates Inc.;
Director, Empire Club of Canada

Recently, I took a look at our archives and found that as a board member, he was responsible for making introductions at a 1995 mayoral debate between then-candidates June Rowlands, who did become mayor of Toronto, Gerry Meinzer and Barbara Hall.

Welcome back. Unlike Saturday Night Live, we do not have a five-timer's club, but we should. You would be in it.

Mayor Tory is a cohesive force in Toronto. He managed to attract people from various political backgrounds.

In the recent municipal election, voters handed him a second term as Toronto's Mayor. On that night, Mayor Tory made a commitment. He said, "Building on the foundations of the last four years, over the next four years, my goal is to make sure that no one anywhere feels like opportunity is a distant point on the horizon." Then, he went on to say, "We must continue to be a city that is a place of hope for everyone, not a place where people should lose hope."

Today, after 100 days, he is here to give us an update on his vision, his work since then and how he is looking forward. We are particularly lucky to have the Mayor's view on the heels of yesterday's federal budget. Toronto is not without its challenges, and the Mayor is busy working on many of them, including rental housing, home affordability, crime prevention, addressing gridlock, transit and, of course, that dreaded snow removal. I hear there is a snowstorm coming this afternoon, Mayor Tory. Are you ready for that one? That is good. Mayor Tory has been an advocate for finding new funding solutions for Toronto to get away solely from relying on property tax. This has been a problem that has plagued many of his predecessors.

I find it interesting that if you look at the Empire Club records from 1974, former Mayor Crombie spoke about that very problem, and we are still dealing with it in Toronto.

He said, “We still labour along with a property tax base as our main source of revenue, to supply an ever-widening range of services while the federal government has access to ever-increasing sources of revenue.” Since that time, the funding challenge has remained.

Mayor Tory has had to consider the delicate balance of affordability and restricting property taxes to below the inflation rate. Toronto is a world-class city, ranking in the top ten livable cities. Today, we will be hearing from our world-class Mayor. Since first being elected to Mayor in 2014, he has focused on ensuring Toronto remains a livable and affordable city. He has led city council in passing successful budgets.

They have kept taxes below the rate of inflation and prioritized services such as housing, parks, and student nutrition. He has worked to make the city government more modern and effective to deliver better services at a more competitive price.

Born and raised in Toronto, Mayor Tory has spent his career giving back to the city. He loves working with organizations such as the United Way, St. Mike’s Hospital and Civic Action. In office, he has been a constant champion for Toronto, securing billions of dollars from the provincial and federal governments for transit.

Mayor Tory began his career practicing law in Toronto, and he became a managing partner of one of Canada’s biggest law firms. In the 1980s he served as Principal Secretary to Premier Bill Davis and as Associate Secretary of

the Ontario cabinet. He has served as Commissioner of the Canadian Football League, CEO of Rogers, and Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

Of course, everyone knows he was a radio talk show host. He and his wife Barbara have been married for 39 years. They have four children and five grandchildren.

Please, welcome the 65th Mayor of Toronto and Empire Club five-timer, His Worship Mayor John Tory.

His Worship Mayor John Tory

Kent, thank you for that very generous introduction. Head Table guests and ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming out today. I should correct the record.

You find yourself correcting the record the odd time in this job, and this one is particularly important. Since our eldest son is turning 40 this year, I should note that we have actually been married 41 years this year. Not that these days it particularly matters, but I just thought I would just correct the record, that is all. It is as simple as that.

May I, as the first order of business, do something that Kent and I agreed that I would do because it is my pleasure to do it? I probably would have done it a second time if he had done it, which is to introduce the members of city council, my colleagues on city council who are here today and there are quite a number of them.

Deputy Mayor Stephen Holyday, James Pasternak, Deputy Mayor Ana Bailão, Councillor Joe Cressy, Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong, Councillor Brad Bradford, Councillor Gary Crawford—who, while it was said I had shepherded those budgets through, he has been the Budget Chief for all five and has done a fantastic job at that—Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson, Councillor Jennifer McKelvie, and, I should note, only because he is here and you do not want to start with the Head Table, but our City Manager, who is relatively new to his job, Chris Murray, who is doing a great job; although, I am sure he asks himself at least three times a week, “What could I have been thinking?” One of his deputies, Giuliana Carbone is also here, I understand.

We have, at the moment, I should tell you, three Deputy Managers in the City of Toronto, all of whom are women. We have two new Deputy Police Chiefs who are women, and we are really trying hard, as a city, to make sure that we walk the talk when it comes to making sure that in our leadership ranks, that women are able to take on those jobs. President Kent, I should tell you, I mentioned this to you at lunch, so I am not surprising you with this, and I determined that he was a relatively recent recruit to MPAC.

Some of you will know MPAC is the organization that does the municipal property assessment. I said to him that when I was the Leader of the Opposition at Queen’s Park, if you were badly in need of a round of applause, all you had to do was spit out some line that was critical of MPAC.

I said I apologize. He has only been there three years,

so none of his was his responsibility. In fact, I can say he has fixed it. My position finally evolved to the point, as Opposition Leader, where I would just go into any room in the province, pretty much, and say that my only prescription for MPAC was to blow it up. I apologize for that if that is in any way connected to any of the work that you are doing.

I hope you all enjoyed the fact that walking over here, there is always that day of the year, and it happens to be the first day that spring is going to officially arrive, I guess, this day, this year. I think the real mark of spring is when you feel the warmth of the sun for the first time. It is there.

Many, many very pleasant winter days. I am going to mention, at my peril, winter a little bit later on in my speech, because I have an initiative I want to undertake in that regard. Today, the warmth of the sun was definitely to be felt.

I will just say to you that this winter has been very challenging, and it has reminded me in terms of the feedback, if I can call it that, that I get that it reminds me of the constant daily adulation I faced as a cable television president where daily you have got adulation from the public almost every day, all the time.

I will make reference to the winter, because I think that difficult as winters may be, they represent a huge opportunity for us. I want to thank you all for being here today, and, more to the point, I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk about this great city. It is an amazing place.

We are so lucky to live here. It does not mean by any means that we have achieved perfection, but I think we have

come a long way, as a city in years, going back a long way, under a lot of leaders in the nonprofit sector and business, in labour and in government. I use the term ‘our city’ quite deliberately, because this is our city.

All of us have a stake. I have lived my life as many people in this room. You are here because you care about the city. We all have a stake and a say in how the city grows and thrives and plans its future. It is my honour and privilege at this point in history to be the Mayor.

Everywhere I go and everything that I do, you try your best to make sure that it is to do the right thing, to try your best to advance the interests of the city and make sure that the success that we have enjoyed over time is continued going forward. It is one of the reasons why I have focused so much on working so hard to build better relationships with the people of Toronto. I spent a great deal of time out around the city listening to people because I find a lot of what you hear that is most valuable—and this is not disrespect to professional public servants or anybody else—is what you hear directly from people, as well as the members of city council who, themselves, are doing the same thing with the city staff. And, I think, what is very, very important is to work well with and listen to the people who are in the other governments because the bottom line is we have to work together. It is the only way that things get done.

You all know this. It does not matter what kind of occupation you have, if you try to do things by yourself, then you are not going to get as much done as if you work togeth-

er to get things done. I would say to you that we are getting things done. I am not going to give you a long recitation of that today, but I will tell you just a little bit of what we have done in the first 100 days of this second term.

I will say, it was gratifying for me, but it is not a matter of personal gratification. It was important as a means of allowing me to have the confidence to move forward with some of the things that we are doing and some of the things I am going to talk about today that are going to be seen as new that I received a mandate of 63% of the Toronto voters in the election, so it allows me with a degree of confidence to continue the work that we have started together.

In those first 100 days of the second term, we have made tremendous progress. We have, very importantly, found a way to speed up work on the Relief Line, which is our single most needed transit project. It is in the transit plan approved by the city council. Transit plans take a long time. Any opportunity you can find working with others to shorten the time that you can have that go from a concept and a plan to a transit line on which people are riding to and from different parts of the city is important. I can assure you that the way we found to speed up work on the Relief Line so far, by two years earlier than expected, is something that is going to be hugely important to the people of Toronto trying to get around, but also to our economy and to making sure that that opportunity that Kent referred to, that I talked about on election night, is shared more equally across the city. I can tell you right now that while we have achieved

already a speed up of two years and put the funding in place to achieve it, I am looking every day with the staff and with the other governments for ways to further speed up that most important of projects. We have also approved the first significant phase of what we call the “Housing Now Plan.” This was something that I actually asked for some information on during the election campaign, hoping that I would be re-elected, and I got to work on it the day after the election. What it is going to do, simply put, is open up 40 acres of land the city has declared surplus to its needs, owned by the city; it is going to open it up to developers that are both for-profit and nonprofit developers, likely by way of a long-term lease, so that we will maintain ownership of those lands. The resulting development, which will be done through a competitive process, will produce more than 10,000 new rental units in the city of Toronto, at least a third of them affordable.

This represents the largest ever expansion of affordable housing in Toronto; although, it is only a step in the direction of what we need to get done. Shovels will be in the ground on some of the projects on those 11 parcels as early as next year, which is an urgency that I hope we see demonstrated. In the budget that Councillor Crawford led on with only the most appropriate involvement of the Mayor, as the leader of the city council, in a very tough budget year, we have protected all city services and kept the property tax increase at the rate of inflation while at the same time, on some of the most critical services like transit and like hous-

ing, we actually increased the size of our investment.

It proved that budget did, as the previous budgets had done, that you can, at one and the same time protect city services, keep tax increases to the rate of inflation and expand particular priority city services all at the same time, something that people often declare to be impossible.

Beyond that, what we have done—those are things that really address the priorities we said we would address during the election campaign—I hope that what we have also done is to continue to set a tone and create a climate of civility and consensus building, both at City Hall itself, but also in my dealings with the other governments. I strongly believe, as I said at the outset, that you have to work together, and I strongly believe that in order to work together in any kind of credible way that accomplishes results, you have to act in a climate of civility and consensus-building, create that kind of climate. It does not mean you agree all the time.

I am not going to talk about the federal budget, today, but I am also prepared, because I now do not have a party affiliation in this job, to say that while there were some things that I would have seen—there are always things you want to see from the other governments that do not come through—I did welcome a number of the things that were in the budget, including \$167 million that we are going to get this year to help with our transit needs, including help for first-time homebuyers, including even funding for things like Harbourfront, which is a fundamental cultural attraction that exists in our city.

We need those things to be healthy for the people who live here and also for people who visit the city.

I think it is particularly important to focus, as I do and I will continue to do, without exception, I hope, on that climate of civility and consensus-building, because these are very charged times, politically. I think you know that.

You can see it from around the world in many different ways, but I think we, here in this country, especially, in this country, especially in this city, where we have shown the world there is another way when it comes to consensus-building and working together and accepting and embracing people as they are and getting the best of them, that there is a different way to do things.

I think the longer we can continue to buck those trends that are happening in many other parts of the world, the better, and we will continue to work together for the betterment of our city. We simply cannot and must not accept excessive division and polarization or bureaucratic inertia in an action. Working together means working.

It does not mean that you do not do anything, but it also does mean that you try to avoid, I think, excessive polarization and division, which we see in so many other places.

I do not think this is a lesson that is going to be new to any of you in this room, because I think no matter where you are, experience has certainly taught me in business, in law, in nonprofit work, even in the Canadian Football League where you want to see a bunch of people who are difficult to herd, it is the cats around that table who own sports teams

who are just a different breed of cat, I can assure you.

The bottom line is there is always a way to make something work if you put your mind to it and just say that is what you are determined to do.

That brings me to what I want to talk about next, and that is three significant new initiatives that part of my plans for the next four years. More importantly, I want to speak to you briefly about how I plan to deliver on them, because you get more done when you set priorities and make plans. We talked about obvious priorities that I am going to make reference to during the election campaign, but with the help of my office and our city staff and my colleagues, I have come up with some other things that I am going to lay out over the next few weeks that we have to do in order to keep this city successful and make the kinds of decisions and investments we have to make.

My main priorities, let me be clear, on which I sought re-election, have not changed. Every single day I will be devoting as much attention as I have to and as much attention as I can to working with city council and with the other levels of government to get transit built and to get that transit funded at the same time, because we have made huge progress to the billions of dollars in receiving financial support from the other governments that did not exist when I became Mayor.

We still have work to do, largely, because if we are doing our job properly—and I said this yesterday—we have to keep planning out for transit 20 and 25 years ahead and

not stop with a very complete, thorough and expensive and extensive plan that we have today. It is only the first phase of a plan that should have been the way we operated 25 or 30 years ago, which is continuous planning for future public transit projects to take account of the needs of a growing city. We will continue to work on that. We will continue to work very hard on building affordable and accessible housing, and we will continue to work hard on keeping taxes, especially tax increases to the rate of inflation or below, which I think is a reasonable standard that I committed to during the election campaign, given some of the affordability issues that exist in a big and successful city like this.

Last, but not least—but it really should be first, because in the end, attracting jobs and investment and making this city successful from that standpoint is fundamental to our ability not just to employ people and not just to have the city to be prosperous—is that it is fundamental to pay for the services, the transit and everything else that we want to provide in order to maintain the quality of life that Kent referred to at the outset of his introduction.

It is time to continue to do those things, but it is also time to look ahead. It really goes beyond four years. It looks ahead even beyond that because change does not happen overnight, I say especially at City Hall. We are also working to make sure that things happen faster at City Hall in a number of different areas as a part of what we call “the modernization of the city government.” Things do not happen quickly. Change does not happen quickly. I want to see us,

taken together with the priorities I just mentioned, building transit, building housing, attracting jobs and investment and keeping the finances in good order, including modest-only tax increases, be a safe, clean and prosperous city for us but also for the generations ahead of us. Let us start with safe.

I want our streets to be safer. We all do. I think you will take note of the fact that, when I mention priority areas we were able to invest more in at the same time as keeping taxes low and at the same time as protecting all city services, one of those areas we were able to invest more in this year was community safety. We made significant investments there through this year's budget. Safety needs to be protected and enhanced in more than just the one area of community safety as it relates to law enforcement and matters connected to that.

The number of pedestrian and cyclist deaths in our city is unacceptable, period, full stop. I would say to you that it becomes even more unacceptable, if there is such a thing, when many of those deaths are preventable. In 2018, there were 41 pedestrian fatalities in Toronto. Of those 41, 16 were in Scarborough. I took note of that when the statistics were mounting up to this level at the end of the year and asked for some background to be done on the deaths in Scarborough, since they represented 40% of all the fatalities of pedestrians in the city of Toronto, and, therefore, would give us some indication of maybe why those kinds of things were happening.

I am here to talk to you about this, today, partly because of what those numbers told us. Scarborough has the most arterial roads in the city—'arterial roads' being defined as roads with four or more lanes of traffic and a speed limit of 60 km/h or higher. Scarborough also has the longest walking distance between protected, safe crossings compared to the rest of the city. For example, pedestrians have to walk, on average, six additional minutes to use a safe crossing, a crosswalk or a signalized intersection, compared to residents of Toronto and East York. An additional six-minute walk—you all would know this, but it is especially so for seniors or for young people—is quite a hike, especially in wintertime and especially for seniors and students and people like that, that might find that more of a burden.

The reality is, especially, if you have a destination that is right across the street, directly across the street, many people are not going to make what could amount to a 12-minute walk down to the intersection, across the street and back up the other side. Instead, they will cross mid-block. One of the other things you see when you examine these statistics is that many of the people who happen to be disproportionately senior citizens are being killed in mid-block trying to cross the street. That is true in Scarborough more so than any other area of the city—that plus people speeding through red lights are accounting for a disproportionate number of these deaths. The analysis of the Scarborough experience and the Scarborough statistics tells us both of these things.

We also know that the wider the road, the longer the distance is between signals and crosswalks, the more likely a driver is to speed. That is why I support bringing forward a “Vision Zero 2.0” plan. By that, that is kind of code that I guess people only at City Hall might understand.

“Vision Zero” was a program that we committed to during the last term in office, which is aimed at a very simple straightforward and, I think, common-sense objective, which is to achieve zero fatalities from pedestrians being killed by cars. It really is a pedestrian safety program that has been adopted in places around the world. The ‘2.0’ simply says we have been embarked on phase 1.0, which has seen a number of things and a very substantial investment of your tax dollars in enhancing the safety of the city. Clearly, our experience in Scarborough and across the city has indicated we have to do more.

I will be asking to be brought forward a Vision 2.0 plan with recommendations to lower speed limits on arterial roads across the city. Right now, there are arterial roads that have their speed limits reduced and the City of Toronto itself, on a local basis—the old City of Toronto and East York—have decided to lower speed limits across all of their streets. I will be asking for a report to be brought forward that proposes the lowering of speed limits on all arterial roads across the city. When I say all arterial roads, certainly many of them, if not all of them, are where a lot of these things are happening that I have been describing to you.

I will also be asking that report to be brought forward to city

council for the appropriate debate and approval and public input, so that we can see the establishment and introduction of more mid-block crossings, because it is clear that all people, but especially senior citizens and young people, need to have more places to cross the street in a city that is growing, so that they do not have to make the decision to either walk the 12 minutes or to cross the street in a manner that is unsafe.

I will be asking that report recommend appropriate road design changes which enhance safety on these arterial roads. Finally, I will be asking that the report contain a proposal to see us significantly increase the number of red-light cameras. We have installed a fair number and, in fact, a dramatically increased number of red light cameras which, I think as you know, are designed to deal with people who speed through, effectively, on a red light. They have proven to be effective.

When you see numbers like you see that trace the cause of death of so many people in the Scarborough numbers—and by the way, we are now analyzing the numbers for the rest of the city to look at the same thing, because there are differences in different parts of the city—you will understand why the red light cameras are an effective tool that we must use if we are going to reduce the number of preventable deaths. We simply have to do a better job of catching and penalizing those drivers who clearly disregard pedestrian safety and endanger others, quite frankly, by driving in a reckless manner.

That is also why I have been fighting very hard for automated speed enforcement on our roads. Last year, we began testing, as part of an overall regulatory approval process—because this is something like so many things sometimes, unfortunately, that are under provincial regulation.

Part of what we have to do to reintroduce speed enforcement cameras in school zones and community safety zones is to test the technology, so that we can prove that it works. I think that is a fair requirement, regardless of whose regulation that is.

Last year, we began testing new speed cameras by rotating them around the city. The results were, to say the least, very concerning. A driver on Queen Street, for example—you are all familiar with Queen Street—clocked at 127 km/h. Because the cameras are only being tested, they cannot actually lead to the issuance of a ticket.

They are only being tested to make sure they work and to make sure we foolproof the technology, but they are clocking people. If you saw the thousands of people on some of these roads where we are testing around the city that are violating the speed limit, you, too, would be concerned because 127 km/h on Queen Street is quite a feat that we would not want to see repeated by anybody, anytime.

On Renforth Drive, the speed limit is 40 km/h where the test was going on. A driver was clocked at 202 km/h.

I will be pushing provincial regulators and our own staff to ensure that by the start of the next school year—this has been going on now. I asked for permission to introduce

these speed cameras in Toronto, or reintroduce them, about two years ago. I understand the need to be careful in the way you reintroduce these things and in the way you test the technology and so on, but I will be pushing very hard to make sure that by the start of the next school year, which means September of this year, we are able to widely deploy speed enforcement cameras in school and community safety zones across the city because, simply put, we must put safety first.

I think we can, and we have to do more on these initiatives, today, that are going to be the subject matter of this report and action, and I am hoping for approval by the city council. I am counting on that. I believe the majority of Torontonians understand these are some of the changes we must make in order to make sure this remains a safe city.

As we continue to grow, and as we hopefully take steps forward on a number of fronts to make sure the city remains safe, I also want to make sure that we keep the city clean for generations to come, which brings me to the second initiative I want to talk about today.

Toronto is a beautiful city, as you all know, with a beautiful waterfront. Oftentimes, I think we undersell the beauty of our own city—the ravines we have, the fact we are on a lake that, I think, to all intents and purposes, it seems like an ocean. We always talk about how other cities in Canada are on the ocean, and we are sometimes envious of that, but I think our lakefront is beautiful. Lake Ontario, where our waterfront is, is the 13th largest body of freshwater in the

world. We have to do all that we can to make sure that that lake, that precious asset that we have, and our entire waterfront, are protected. Just as governments took action in the past to address acid rain and smog days and other pollution, we have to be bold now and make changes so that our lake remains clean and safe. Right now, as you have probably read, but maybe not, when a major storm hits our city and they are hitting with increasing frequency, our wastewater system goes into overdrive to prevent major flooding.

As the water rushes in from the storms, our current system pushes wastewater overflow into the lake when it reaches a certain threshold. That prevents it from rushing back into the sewers and backing up into people's basements, quite frankly. Now, wastewater overflow is a polite phrase.

I could just stick with that at a lunch like this, but the bottom line is what that represents is stormwater combined with raw sewage. It is going into the lake when these storms occur. I believe that it is high time we acknowledge, faster than we were planning to acknowledge, that that represents an unacceptable choice, a choice between sewage-tainted water either being in basements or in Lake Ontario.

Given the current system, of course, we have ended up choosing the lake, so this tainted water goes into the lake.

That cannot continue if we value the lake as we should and if we want to protect and preserve it for future generations. I am going to bring forward a new, dramatically accelerated plan to put a stop to it. Again, I have to rely on the work of our professional public servants and the coop-

eration, which I am sure I will have, of our city councillors in doing this.

We have a plan now. You will be heartened to know that it was not just that people sat back and said let us not worry about it, but the present plan has us being able to say that wastewater containing raw sewage is as close to zero as it can get 20 years from now in 2038. If you saw the size and the scale of the work that needs to be done in order to reach that point of guarantee, you would understand it is going to take a long time. What I propose to do is to cut that 20-year time in half with a goal of ensuring that within 10 years, not 20, all of what flows into Lake Ontario will be free of sewage. I think this is a goal that a self-respecting, global city that is as admired as we are should set for itself and then should go about achieving. I think the important thing in this regard is to note that we have a plan in place. It is all laid out as to all the things that have to be done to get there by 2038. What it involves, really, is deciding on a way that we can accelerate that work, and we can.

I did not come here to make this commitment to you on my own behalf as Mayor to bring it forward before I consulted the experts who told me that it can be done. As with most things, it is a matter of will; it is a matter of the resources and pulling those closer in time to the present and just getting it done in the 10-year timeframe. I have also already begun discussions, because I think it is something in which the other governments should quite properly be a partner with us in making this happen, because it is as

much a precious asset for Ontario and for Canada as it is for Toronto. I hope that those other governments will become our partners, and I hope that my colleagues on city council will share my desire to significantly speed up this important project.

The third initiative I want to address is my continued support that I referenced earlier and my encouragement of our businesses and our commitment to continue to strengthen the economy. I read last week, and I was proud to read it—not proud of myself or proud of the city council.

I was proud of the city that it achieved the highest number of people ever in the history of the city employed in the city of Toronto with an unemployment rate that is now down to 6.1%, and I hope we can take it down even further.

We have to continue to grow the economy and to see people invest and create jobs here in an ambitious, thoughtful and inspiring way, so that we can continue to draw not just the admiration, but, obviously, the investment and the job creation know-how of people from around the world and maintain that quality of life that I referred to earlier, which can only be financed through the creation of wealth in the private sector that the government can then hopefully, prudently, put to work by building the kind of infrastructure I have talked about today in providing the kinds of human services that our city is so proud to provide.

That quality of life will, of course, help us to continue to attract tourists to our great city, even in the winter months. In 2017, 44 million tourists came to Toronto.

A record year. I want to see us create more records under the leadership of this city council and other city councils in years to come because tourists also mean jobs. They also mean good advertising for the city and they attract a lot of people who see the city, experience the city and decide they want to invest here. The very mention of winter caused a few grimaces. I could see around the room when I mentioned it earlier on and now, as we conclude what has been a difficult winter season. “Difficult”—actually, I am known for being relatively understated. I am known for being understated, but to describe it as “difficult” would be an understatement of some considerable magnitude. My staff told me I should crack a joke about snow removal at this point in the speech, but I think we need a few more warm days where you can feel the sun before any of those would be funny.

It is hard for us to think, in light of the winter we have just experienced, as a time of opportunity for us but I think it is time we started to do just that, to look at winter as an opportunity. It comes every year. It will continue to come every year. Cities like Montreal, Quebec City and Denver, just to cite three, have all embraced the winter and the potential for a lot more exciting outdoor events that are good for people who live here and also good for people who visit.

Why cannot we do something that will be enjoyed by us and by visitors, alike, who may not think of Toronto as a place to be in the winter? Because we do not give them any reason to think that way. I want Toronto to continue to

attract tourists from around the world as we are doing, but I also want those tourists to come in increased numbers.

I think one of the ways we can do that is to make sure they come all year long. If you look at the numbers, of course, there are more people who visit here in the summer months than in the winter months. I do not believe that we should just limit the fun you can have or the perception of the fun you can have in Toronto to just the summer months.

I will be working with our city staff, again, with my council colleagues and with partners like Tourism Toronto, to significantly step up the pace of applications and initiatives to get more winter-focused events and festivals here because I think a lot of the reason why people come here in the summer is there is so much going on, all kinds of different things that you are familiar with. We will also be looking for more all-season patios. This is a concept that is not something we are going to invent here; it is something that is done elsewhere. We want to have more winter recreation activities in our own public spaces and public parks, events and places which make it more attractive to live in Toronto and to get through each winter when it comes and make it a more attractive place to visit. We are doing more of that here than we used to do, but there has to be more done.

Each winter, we can enjoy, for example—and some of you may have had this experience, as I have—the Bentway, that magnificent new park financed in part, thanks to the generosity of the Matthews family, which is underneath the Gardiner Expressway. It is literally packed with skaters,

hundreds of skaters enjoying this unique, new public space and enjoying being outside in the winter. The creative buzz we see with the winter art installations on Woodbine Beach—and Councillor Bradford was there for the opening—has been recognized by the New York Times.

I will bet you that there is a large number of people in this room who have never heard of it. It is a unique installation of artwork done by people from around the world who compete for the right to have their art shown on the beach in the middle of the winter, and people go there to see it and enjoy themselves on a winter day.

I want to make these kinds of places and events even better and create several more like them across the city.

It involves us, then, looking at a plan, in a planned and methodical way at how we can take advantage of the winter and make sure that we do things that other people are doing and that we should be doing to make it a more attractive place, as I said, to live, but also a more attractive place to visit.

At the same time as looking at the winter, I think it is high time we took a more in-depth look at the night economy. Toronto, like other global cities, is becoming a 24-hour city. It already may be one. For many people, it is a reality of the way they live and work. While that does raise some concerns that we have to address in tandem with an examination of the potential of the night economy, we cannot lose the opportunity that that represents or let it start to become a nuisance. Again, it is better for us to look at it in

a planned and methodical way, including some of the consequences of a night-time economy as well as looking at the opportunity that it represents. The bottom line is that I think people expect us to work together on developing a balanced plan that takes account of the fact that we live here, but also that, increasingly, the city is a 24-hour city.

What I have outlined here today with three initiatives that I am going to be pursuing with all of the people that I have mentioned that will be my partners is just the start.

We have so much more that we want, as a city, and that we want for our city, and that we can achieve in the next four years and beyond. We have our work cut out for us on the major priorities of transit, housing, taxes and jobs, but also on some of these other challenges that I have made reference to, today. I think that if we work together, we can achieve great things in those priority areas, but also in the things that I am going to be adding to that list of important priorities in the weeks ahead. My approach to council leadership will also try to better reflect that commitment to working together.

Under the City of Toronto Act, as you know, we have a system where councillors have a tremendous amount of responsibility and accountability as individuals. The intent of the Act, I believe is to have City Hall function as a team.

If that is the case, then we need to work more as a team, which is why in this term, I will be taking a slightly different approach, by asking councillors from across the spectrum and across the city to work with me on individual files.

I have outlined three today that are files, and there are going to be more of those to come in the coming weeks.

I am going to ask, in each case, a councillor from across the city and across the spectrum to work with me, to partner with me, in advancing these plans, because it is not going to be as good a result if I try to do it myself; it is just going to be more effective to involve them as properly as they should be involved. I am confident that with respect and focus and collaboration and hard work, we can do more together than by any of us working alone, any councillor or any mayor, because it is amazing. It is amazing what we can achieve when we work together.

As I indicated, this will be the first of a series of announcements that I will be making in the coming weeks to set out some of these additional initiatives that I think we should and must undertake, as a city, to continue to move ourselves forward. Stay tuned.

There is more to come. That brings me to my last point: What this all means for our city in the long run. For me, that is fairly simple.

We want everything we have now and that includes addressing some of the challenges that we have now, because those are things we have now.

The challenges include, in particular, the challenge of disparity between the different parts of the city and some of the people who live here one from another, but we also want to have the things that we have now that are good about the city, but we want more of those, and we want better.

Toronto has always been a city where people from every culture, from every belief system, every background, every stage of life, every place of work, can find an accepting home, a place where they can pursue opportunity.

Some may joke—and I face these jokes regularly, including jokes about snow, in the rest of the country when I visit with some of my fellow big-city mayors.

They often joke that Toronto thinks it is the centre of the universe. You know what? There is a reason why we think well of our city because it is an absolutely amazing place.

That is subjectively measured by others who routinely find us among the best places to live in the world.

We continue, fortunately, to be a magnet for people from around the world who feel an accepting home here, a place of opportunity for them. When we succeed—and I passionately believe this as a proud Canadian—Ontario succeeds and Canada succeeds. This is the economic engine of Canada.

That does not mean that we cannot and should not aim even higher or that we can ever afford to be complacent about what we have achieved because there continues to be challenges in front of us, some of which I have addressed today and some of which I have not, and those will have to wait for another time.

I believe that working together, we can fix the things that need fixing. We can build what needs to be built.

We can introduce innovations and new ideas that the rest of the world will want to emulate.

We can make the changes, some of which I have talked about today, that the evidence suggests we should make now, as opposed to making them another time.

We can ensure that everyone has a roof over their heads, that everybody feels safe, that everybody has access to opportunity, which is fundamentally important to the health and well-being, not just of the economy, but of the society that we have built so carefully and so caringly here.

I believe we can do all these things in the best way possible. I think the best way possible is what I will call the “Toronto way,” which means we are going to do it together.

We are going to do it together in that spirit of civility and consensus-building and partnership that I have talked about today, because I think if we do that, if we focus ourselves on that, there is nothing that can stop us from being one of the greatest cities in the world, which we already are. Staying there is not going to happen by accident.

I look forward to continuing to provide the leadership in the coming years to make sure that we can do just that which is to stay the best city in the best country in the world.

Thank you very much.

KE: Thank you, Mayor. I have one correction, too. I was only going 126 km on Queen Street, and not 127.

We would like to invite Joseph Mancinelli, form Li-UNA, up here to give the thank you as our lead sponsor for today. Thank you.

**Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Joseph Mancinelli,
International Vice President and Regional Manager of
Central and Eastern Canada, LiUNA**

Mayor Tory, members of the Empire Club, ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to be with you here, today, not only as a sponsor, but also as a ratepayer in this wonderful city, in order to see the level of enthusiasm and optimism that was expressed here by Mayor John Tory.

Being the mayor of the largest city in the country, even at the best of times, is a daunting task for the Mayor and for city council, but there are so many challenges that our city here faces that, quite frankly, have to do with decades of downloading from the provincial and federal governments onto the municipal government—with respect to the lack of infrastructure spending and so many other issues.

It was so encouraging to hear that the agenda is to attack transportation infrastructure, housing, which is so important, and affordable housing, which is also so important, and safety for the citizens of this great city. It is so nice to see the way you embrace those challenges, which are pretty daunting and embrace them with, I think, a level of urgency and optimism as well. Thank you so much for your comments. Mayor Tory, we really enjoyed it and keep in mind, and as you say that we are all in this together.

We are. There are many of us in this room that are your partners in this challenge as well. Thank you, again.

Concluding Remarks, by Kent Emerson

Thanks to all of you for coming today and supporting our event. We have a number of events coming up.

We will have the CEO of Bruce Power, Mike Rencheck here on Monday; on the 28th, we will have the Honourable Vic Fedeli, Ontario's Minister of Finance, prior to his first budget, which is going to be an amazing, huge event at the Convention Centre North.

I think there are only a few tables left for that one, and many other events.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for coming today. Thanks again to our sponsors, LiUNA, Waste Connections, OMERS.

Meeting adjourned.