

Deputation to Toronto Budget Committee

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January 21, 2020

Good afternoon Members of the City Budget Committee.

Toronto is one of the best Canadian cities to live in. I will speak to you today about ideas to create an even better city.

I have traveled a lot for business and observed big cities that really work. London, Paris and the entire country of Germany, as well as Shenzhen, China have all done very well at building subways and entire transit systems that work well. Toronto should try to do something similar.

My daughter is travelling from our home at Shepherd and Yonge to the University of Toronto Scarborough campus by car. She would like to take the TTC, but it takes three times as long.

Toronto should build a subway so people like her can travel more quickly. Gas taxes could help support the building of more subways. It is better to take public transportation than to drive a car.

This will also help the problem of bad traffic jams. The City can put money towards this project.

I also observe that Toronto needs more revenue to build a better city. I urge you to adopt a vacant home tax and an extra tax on luxury homes. Home owners who do not use their buildings or condominiums are wealthy and they can afford to pay a tax. They see the home as an investment. Luxury home owners need to pay more. This way we could indirectly support low income people, who need some financial help buying a home.

I noticed in London, England that the city did a lot of marketing to attract Arab peoples to move there. London has been considered a financial centre. Bringing Arab people to live and bank in

London was a good idea. With Brexit more Arab people will be looking for a new home.

Toronto should do more to attract this community. We are a financial centre in Canada.

I am sure everybody knows Canada as a very stable country compared to many others. Many people around the world are interested in coming here to live or make investments, and they are ready to pay more and more for it.

At the end we can follow some other strategies to increase funding for the city of Toronto. We can attract people through professional exhibitions in all fields, as they do in Dusseldorf, Germany.

We have to make additional investments in new universities in this city. This will provide needed facilities for MSc and PhD students, and prevent them from moving to the U.S. for continuing education.

Thanks you for hearing my deputation today.