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The Hon. François-Phillippe Champagne  
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities  
PO Box 8777 Postal Station T  
427 Laurier Ave. W 10-013  
Ottawa, ON K1G 1C0

January 11, 2019

**Re: The failure of public process for Sidewalk Labs**

Dear Minister Champagne,

Since my letter of last October where I brought forward numerous concerns regarding Google's sister company Sidewalk Labs' and Waterfront Toronto's Quayside development, public concern over this project has only deepened. And there has been no credible response or acknowledgement from you on this growing concern.

An audit of Waterfront Toronto by Ontario's Auditor General raised serious red flags about this project. The audit found that Waterfront Toronto provided Sidewalk Labs and a select few other companies with advance information ahead of the Request for Proposals (RFP) period. The audit also notes the unusually short timeline for submitting the RFP – six weeks for a project of unprecedented complexity, tremendous financial value and unknown scope and impact, compared to a ten week period for an RFP public art project elsewhere on the Waterfront.

The Auditor General's report also noted that Waterfront Toronto "did not adequately consult with any levels of government regarding the Sidewalk Labs project," and that instead "this was being discussed at a senior political level." **Having a project of this scale pushed through by political staff behind the scenes would be wildly inappropriate.** Your government needs to be clear about exactly how this deal was arrived at, particularly the role of several ministerial

staffers who have gone on to work directly for Sidewalk Labs, including your predecessor's chief of staff, John Brodhead.

There is also a worrying lack of clarity about the precise geographic scope of the project. The initial RFP was very clearly for the small, 12-acre Quayside parcel. In the Plan Development Agreement (PDA), however, released publicly last summer, the map of the site to which the forthcoming Master Innovation and Development Plan will apply appears to be that of Waterfront Toronto's entire designated waterfront area. None of this has been explained to the people of Toronto.

**I find it hard to believe that your government would be so vague as to the actual size of the project being offered to Google. If your government is indeed willing to cut a deal for the entire waterfront area, you need to explain why this is in the public interest.**

Former Ontario privacy commissioner Ann Cavoukian has resigned from her advisory position on the project, citing serious privacy concerns. For a project that claims to be committed to the principle of privacy by design driving away the very person who articulated that concept in Canada is fairly stunning. Hers is just one of several resignations from advisory roles on this project, with concerns ranging from humane use of technology, overly restrictive non-disclosure agreements, to fears that this whole procedure is being rushed.

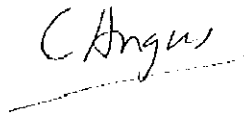
Sidewalk Labs has been actively lobbying the three levels of government while downplaying its connections to its sister company Google and parent company Alphabet. But I note that in the internal meetings with government officials, little distinction is being made between Google, Alphabet or Sidewalk Labs. Your officials see them as interchangeable.

I also note that following the growing outcry over the project, a meeting was convened between Sidewalk Labs CEO Dan Doctoroff and numerous Liberal government officials including a Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet, three Deputy Ministers and a host of assistant and associate deputy ministers. **This "all hands on deck" approach to stickhandle the growing criticism speaks to the fundamental problem – you are focused on helping Google, and not taking the time to alleviate the growing concerns of the public.**

As I communicated to you in my last letter, Canada could benefit from urban innovation and smart city development. But such a vision must be rooted in transforming public spaces for the benefit and empowerment of citizens. This deal, unfortunately, is looking more and more like a plan cooked up with American lobbyists to benefit Google. Your failure to show public leadership on this file only adds to the growing unease about the Sidewalk Lab project.

I urge you, to push the pause button and show respect for the legitimate and growing concerns of Toronto citizens, innovators, designers and privacy experts who have tried, without success, to be part of the planning of a truly smart city project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Angus". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Charlie Angus, MP  
Timmins—James Bay