

## Time for a multimodal strategy for Ontario

The past few years have seen an incredible momentum at the Port of Hamilton. The pace of development, investment attraction and job creation has never been greater, and it's easy to understand why. Companies want to be at the Port of Hamilton because it is a true logistics hub: an industrial zone with excellent multimodal connections - marine, rail, and direct highway access. The port is of course a familiar landmark on Hamilton's waterfront, but it is also a truly regional transportation asset; it is critical infrastructure that underpins supply chains in several key Ontario industrial sectors, including manufacturing and steel-making, agri-food and construction materials.

This kind of location and infrastructure advantage is rare, and exceedingly valuable in supporting investment attraction and business growth. That's why we believe we need a vision and a plan, not just for Hamilton, but for Ontario, to make the best use of our robust multimodal transportation system, and to leverage this asset in developing modern industrial zones where job-creating businesses can grow.

Last year, the government of Québec released a maritime strategy that aims to make the most of that province's transportation network, and create 30,000 jobs as a result. Québec's strategy recognizes that transportation infrastructure, especially maritime transport, promotes industrial development. It involves the development of *logistics hubs* connected to marine ports, and the creation of *industrial port zones* at these transportation-intensive locations to support employment and investment growth over the long term.

The Conference of Great Lakes Governors and Premiers has also recently identified the need to recognize ports as job-creating development nodes, and recommended that this idea inform regional land use planning and economic development objectives.

We want to see the Great Lakes be

*“The government intends to adopt a new approach to revitalize the Quebec economy, especially the manufacturing sector, by developing industrial port zones. An industrial port zone is an industrial zone near port services that also includes road and rail infrastructure. An industrial port zone enables the companies established there ready access to inputs and accelerated transiting of the goods produced to North American and international markets.”*

– Quebec Maritime Strategy

the trade gateway it can be, using marine and rail transportation to their full capacity. Not only will this support our region's economic growth, it will also help reduce pressure on southern Ontario's clogged highways.

It's time to take a good look at the Great Lakes as a trade gateway of provincial and national importance. In part, this means allowing ports to preserve and add new space for transportation-intensive industrial development. It also means affording industrial port zones the flexibility to attract and integrate a range of transportation-intensive industrial uses and ancillary services.

Join us in exploring new ideas to build on our natural strengths, and to begin developing a comprehensive multimodal transportation strategy for Ontario and the Great Lakes. Together, we can work toward a goal of positioning our region to compete: attracting private sector investment, moving Canadian goods efficiently, facilitating global export and trade, and creating new jobs.

We call on all of our colleagues - whether providers or users of transportation services, policy makers or economic developers - to work with us to put these ideas into motion.



Photos: Hamilton Port Authority