October 29, 2007

His Worship Mayor Fred Eisenberger
77 James Street North
Hamilton City Centre
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K3

Dear Sir;

This letter is to express the Waterfront Regeneration Trust’s whole-hearted support for the City of Hamilton’s bold plan to create a pedestrian crossing over the QEW to the Waterfront Trail and Greenway in east Hamilton.

Since the opening of the Waterfront Trail in 1995, the City of Hamilton has done an outstanding job of restoring public access along its shores of Lake Ontario and Hamilton harbour. This work has been accomplished hand in hand with critical environmental work. The result is a beautifully restored beachfront and a continuous off-road connection between the two waterfront communities of Burlington and Hamilton.

Having achieved this milestone, the City of Hamilton is now establishing critical north/south connections to the waterfront. Major highways cut-off residents and neighbourhoods of the City of Hamilton from the water’s edge and one of its finest recreation, fitness and green transportation amenities—the Waterfront Trail and Greenway. A pedestrian crossing over this busy corridor offers a creative solution to a frustrating situation.

The Trust has identified a pedestrian bridge over the QEW in Hamilton as one of 34 priority projects. Its completion addresses safety and connectedness issues that are critical to the future of the Waterfront Trail and Greenway, which now stretches 650 km from Niagara to Quebec where it connects to the la Route verte, the Province of Quebec’s trail system.

Further, the Trust encourages the City and its partners to apply the best design principles to the project so that it becomes an icon that proudly welcomes people to a new waterfront experience in Hamilton and expresses our collective commitment to environmental and personal health and wellness. For so many years, Hamilton’s waterfront has been dominated by its industrial heritage. A stunning, signature bridge would herald a new message about the City’s relationship to the lake and trigger a revitalization of the neighbourhoods it serves.
The Waterfront Trail and Greenway is unique in two important ways—it hugs the shoreline of Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River and it is an urban trail serving 60% of the provincial population and 22% of the Canadian population. Passing through neighbourhoods and communities, the Trail makes it easier for people to embrace an active lifestyle and green transportation alternatives. In doing so, it makes a major contribution towards achieving the Government of Canada’s objectives for the environment, green transportation and health.

The Government of Canada has served as a catalyst for the Waterfront Trail and Greenway since the beginning. In just 15 years, we have collectively taken the project from a Royal Commission’s recommendation to 900 km waterfront trail and greenway. The federal government’s continued participation in this legacy project will determine what milestones we achieve in the next 15 years. The pedestrian crossing in Hamilton is an excellent way to launch the next phase of investment.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Marlaine Koehler
Executive Director
Waterfront Regeneration Trust
*Do More On the Shore*

cc: Gerry Davis, Senior Director Capital Planning and Implementation Division
Public Works, City of Hamilton