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Slomka Proposes Kingston Waterfront Innovation District Along Cataraqui River

(Kingston ON) Mayoralty candidate Brenda Slomka called for the creation of a Kingston Waterfront Innovation District along the Cataraqui River during the first all-candidates' debate on Tuesday evening.

The proposed Waterfront Innovation District would extend along the Cataraqui River from MetalCraft Marine, past the Woolen Mill, National Grocer Building and former Bailey Broom Factory and extend to incorporate the 37 acres Davis Tannery Property.

Similar to the proposed Guelph Innovation District, Slomka's proposal would work to combine the latest in energy self-sufficiency and clean tech residential and commercial development. The intention would be to generate a collaborative environment and creative culture that is attractive to businesses and social enterprises that create the "sunrise jobs" in emerging sectors. This would be facilitated by intentional urban design to connect research institutions, clean tech businesses and social enterprises with entrepreneurs, artists and area residents.

Protection and utilization of existing heritage properties and trails on the site would see the further beautification and enjoyment of greenspace in Doug Flurher Park. In concert with many Kingstonians and community groups who spoke at 2013's town hall meetings regarding the future of the site, Slomka does not support the proposed high volume and noisy roadway along the waterfront (the Wellington Street Extension).

Instead the District would incorporate an innovative, all-weather public transportation system along its 2 km distance as a key feature to attracting new residents and investors. The eventual selection of the particular transportation technology to be utilized would take into account manufacturing and marketing spin-off potential. The District design would also seek to enhance sports opportunities/facilities - both nearby and on site.

“As Mayor, I want to lead us to create jobs, to retain more post-secondary graduates in Kingston, provide existing employees and entrepreneurs with new work opportunities and grow the commercial tax base to take the pressure of property tax revenues. To do so we need projects like this to spark excitement and opportunity,” commented Slomka.

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Media Contact(s):

Roxanne Leung

Campaign Manager

Brenda Slomka Campaign

info@brendaslomka.ca