



**BRAMPTON
BOARD OF TRADE**



2023 Ontario Pre-Budget Submission

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2023 Provincial Pre-Budget Submission

The Brampton Board of Trade is a catalyst for enterprise growth and community prosperity. Together our 1,900 voting members, made up of business owners and their representatives, employ more than 61,000 in Brampton, or provide about 4-in-10 jobs in our city. Brampton is Canada's 9th largest city and the country's fast growing, welcoming more than 14,000 newcomers each year. Located at the centre of Canada's Innovation Corridor, a dense cluster of industry and high-tech employment that span the Kitchener-Waterloo Region to Durham, our unique geographic and strategic positioning informs many of our policy priorities.

Our members are businesspeople representing all sectors, including logistics and advanced manufacturing, information technology, food processing and a growing post-secondary footprint. 75% of our membership are small businesses employing 10 or fewer people in our restaurants, retail and business service sectors. Brampton's economy plays an outsized role in our region, province and country:

- Advanced manufacturing contributes approximately \$4 billion to the national GDP while employing 30,000 across 1,500 different companies
- Food and beverage production adds more than \$1.3 billion in national GDP with contributions from iconic international brands and up-and-comers alike
- Innovation and technology offers limitless growth opportunity with programs at leading educational institutions and initiatives to support the start-up ecosystem

On January 11th 2023, Minister Bethlenfalvy kicked off the 2023 Pre-Budget Consultation process over breakfast with Brampton Board of Trade members. At that meeting, our Chair Daniel Lewis shared the perspectives and priorities of our membership ahead of Budget 2023. We are pleased to take this opportunity to expand on those priorities in this written submission.

Summary of BBOT Recommendations

- a) Further our innovation economy, including by focusing on domesticating the supply chain for electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing.
- b) Partner with the federal government and other provinces to remove interprovincial trade barriers.
- c) Partner on the Main Street LRT Extension funding request.
- d) Continue investing in TWADG so that a 7-day service level connecting Brampton to Toronto and the surrounding region is achieved.
- e) Make progress on a third hospital for Brampton.
- f) Move the GTA West Corridor (Highway 413) project ahead in the face of federal government delays.
- g) Expand Brampton's post-secondary footprint, including in areas suffering acute labour shortages such as the skilled trades and healthcare.

- h) Implement affordable childcare, with focus on the local context of a great deal of employment that takes place outside the traditional 9-5 workday.
- i) Make it easier for willing partners to provide solutions for the housing supply crisis.
- j) Partner with community-based organizations that have ideas on how to be a part of the solution to the housing supply crisis.

1. Stimulating Economic Growth

The Brampton Board of Trade welcomed major strategic investments in the past year – specifically, provincial support of MDA and Stellantis have formed a cornerstone for Brampton’s innovation economy. We encourage the provincial government to look for further strategic partnerships in the innovation economy that can build on and further cement these wins.

One such opportunity could be found in domesticating the supply chain for Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure so that our region fully benefits from this emerging technology. With the commitment to Stellantis and the broader shift towards EVs underway, attention should be given to potential spin-off economic benefits including the supply chain for manufacturing these vehicles.

A longstanding priority of the Brampton Board of Trade has been the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers. It remains difficult to comprehend why it is easier for some businesses to do business in Chicago than Calgary. Budget 2023 represents another opportunity for the province to show leadership on this important file.

BBOT Recommendations:

- a) Further our innovation economy, including by focusing on domesticating the supply chain for electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing.
- b) Partner with the federal government and other provinces to remove interprovincial trade barriers.

2. Investing in Critical Infrastructure

The Brampton Board of Trade welcomes the province’s on-going commitment to build the infrastructure needed for our city in 2023. The year ahead will offer more opportunities to invest in Brampton. It is critical that capital funding be available for the Main Street LRT Extension when the city requests it. In order to maximize the chances of achieving full capital funding, the province may wish to consider a commitment based on transit capital funding investments for projects in municipalities in Ontario.

Continued investment towards Two-Way All Day GO (TWADG) that reaches a 7 day service level is another critical priority for Brampton and the surrounding region more broadly. At this time, an absence of TWADG service means that Brampton’s connectivity to many parts of the GTA, including downtown Toronto, is limited, which has the effect of placing employers at a disadvantage when it comes to recruiting talent and other factors.

Further, given the acuity of the healthcare crisis and the importance of reliable access to healthcare services, Budget 2023 should make a commitment towards furthering progress on a third hospital for Brampton. In the Brampton Board of Trade's 2022 Business Confidence Index, 43% of respondents identified an additional hospital as the city's largest infrastructure need, ranking ahead of other well known projects such as TWADG and the LRT Extension.

While the provincial government has been a champion of the GTA West Corridor project (Highway 413), the project has encountered a roadblock in the form of the federal government's impact assessment. We encourage the province to continue to seek any available levers to move the project forward during this phase.

BBOT Recommendations:

- a) Partner on the Main Street LRT Extension funding request.
- b) Continue investing in TWADG so that a 7-day service level connecting Brampton to Toronto and the surrounding region is achieved.
- c) Make progress on a third hospital for Brampton.
- d) Move the GTA West Corridor (Highway 413) project ahead in the face of federal government delays.

3. Post-Secondary Footprint

Some may not think of Brampton as a post-secondary town, but that perception is increasingly outdated – we are home to many public and private institutions and our footprint grows every day. A major victory for our city came last year when the province committed to the Toronto Metropolitan University School of Medicine, a longstanding advocacy priority of our organization that will bring cutting-edge healthcare training right here to Brampton, offering the opportunity for our youth to learn medicine close to home.

Going forward, the province should look for opportunities to further enhance Brampton's post-secondary sector. A particular area of focus should be improving access to training and certifications in the skilled trades, and working with employers to ensure that post-secondary programming is adequately tailored to existing labour force gaps. We know that Brampton has the potential to be a big part of the solution to this challenge.

BBOT Recommendations:

- a) Expand Brampton's post-secondary footprint, including in areas suffering acute labour shortages such as the skilled trades and healthcare.

4. Childcare

The federal-provincial agreement on affordable childcare was welcome and accomplished a longstanding advocacy priority of the Brampton Board of Trade. We encourage using Budget 2023 as a lever to further its expeditious implementation. This is especially urgent in a local context given that the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has identified Brampton as a 'childcare desert.' As we have

noted in previous submissions and correspondence, it is critical that sensitivity be shown to Brampton's unique workforce conditions – namely, a significant amount of employment that falls outside the traditional 9-5 workday. Affordable childcare must be provided in a fashion that serves this population in order to maximize its impact.

BBOT Recommendations:

- a) Implement affordable childcare, with focus on the local context of a great deal of employment that takes place outside the traditional 9-5 workday.

5. Housing Supply & Affordability

It is clear that the government took seriously our 2022 pre-budget submission's call for urgent action to address the housing supply. Recent legislative and regulatory changes have helped to unlock some of the tools that industry and local governments need to help meet this challenge. As Bill 23 is implemented in full, we encourage the province to fulfill its commitment to work with municipalities to ensure that there are no revenue shortfalls as a result of changes to development charges. It is also important that Budget 2023 offer opportunities for partnerships with the many community groups and institutions who want to be a part of the solution on this file – for example, those with surplus lands that they wish to convert to housing.

BBOT Recommendations:

- a) Make it easier for willing partners to provide solutions for the housing supply crisis.
- b) Partner with community-based organizations that have ideas on how to be a part of the solution to the housing supply crisis.