



Good morning. I am **Walter Benzinger**, the **Chair of the Windsor Port Authority**. I welcome all of you, who, due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions, have joined us for this virtual session for a second year. Like you, I look forward to 2022 when we can all anticipate life returning to normal, and in-person gatherings become the new normal.

It is my honour as Chair, to open the 21st Annual General Meeting of the Windsor Port Authority Board, to report on the Board's financials, activities, and accomplishments during the calendar year 2020.

I want to recognize and thank each of my colleagues on the Board of Directors for their continued confidence and ongoing support:

- **Anthony Mascaro**, our City of Windsor direct appointee since 2015, and Vice-Chair.
- Our newly appointed Director from the Province of Ontario, we welcome **Sophia Chisholm!**
- And our current federal appointments as recommended by our customers, the Port Users:
 - **Tom Porter**, Director since 2015
 - **Karen Behune Plunkett**, Director since 2018, and Chair of the Governance, Policy and Bylaw Committee
 - **Tom O'Brien**, Chair of the Audit, Risk, and Finance Committee, also a Director since 2018

Thank you to the entire Board of Directors.

I also want to take a minute to recognize and thank two Directors who left our Board this past year:

- **Barry Fowler**, Province of Ontario appointee, and past chair of our Audit and Finance Committee. Barry served the Board for two terms since 2013.
- **Bianca DeLuca**, who served for 3 terms, since 2011, as a User Representative for a total of 9 years! Bianca Chaired our Governance, Policy and Bylaw Committee for many years.

On behalf of the Board, I am deeply appreciative for all your contributions to the success of the Board, the vibrancy of our marine economy, and the health of our community that we all serve. We wish good health.

The year 2020 marked the 21st year of the Windsor Port Authority operating under the Canada Marine Act. It is the successor of the Windsor Harbour Commission and continues a history of vibrant commercial marine activity on the shores of the Detroit River dating back more than 10,000 years with the first Indigenous people. I would like to acknowledge that Port Windsor operates on the traditional grounds and waters of several local First Nation Bands, and we are committed to maintaining a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship.

At our meeting of May 23rd, 2021, I am pleased to confirm that the Board has re-appointed the firm of Grant Thornton LLP as the auditors for the Windsor Port Authority, for 2021 fiscal year. The financial statements for 2020 have been posted and made available in accordance with the Act, and representatives of Grant Thornton are present today to answer questions following our opening comments. Alternatively, feel free to email your questions of Grant Thornton to wpa@portwindsor.com for a response following this meeting.

The year 2020 also marked a most challenging year, not only in the history of the Port in Windsor, but for Canada, and the entire global economy.



COVID-19 came with very little warning and its impacts were immediate. The impacts across the economy were brutal and unprecedented. The impacts on our community, and our families were worse. Too many families experienced sudden unemployment, uncertain futures... resulting in fear and mental distress. Sadly, too many families were struck by illness, and the lethal claim of COVID, without warning, or opportunity to say goodbye. Too many of us felt alone, and unsure of what to do next.

Here at Port Windsor, we knew what we had to do... the port industry is essential for the movement of goods and products, and so were port workers. Port Windsor never closed for a single day throughout. Port workers continued to fuel the ships that kept sailing, mined salt for winter roads, crushed seed to manufacture vegetable oil for cooking and food products, delivered aggregates and concrete to support the construction of the infrastructure vital to our future, and bring in the steel and aluminum to ensure we remain a manufacturing powerhouse.

The seafarers of these ships, the workers in our terminals, the staff of Port Windsor, who kept us open and operating, these too have been community heroes throughout this pandemic.

We also never lost sight of our Vision to “**Connect Windsor-Essex to the World**”, and our Mission to “**Create an International, Integrated Transportation Hub**”. Our Strategic Plan focuses on opportunities for sustainable economic growth, environmental and community-based prosperity, effective stakeholder relations and partnerships within the Windsor-Essex region. Success always begins with effective leadership, and as such our Plan also includes a commitment to Excellence in Governance. Out of the gate under this new plan, Port Windsor has a new identity, a new look, a new presence in our community, and a renewed focus on economic growth and development.

But while we continued to make progress on economic growth and development, we never lost focus on our essential role of community contributions. The Port Authority maintained our commitment to community through several initiatives such as the donation of 55 iPads to the Windsor Regional Hospital COVID unit with our partners at Sterling Fuels, T2B and MNSi; we thought it important to bring a smile back to our faces through the donation of 100 dozen Smile Cookies in support of the John McGivney Centre and W.E. Care for Kids; the Port donated 850 pairs of winter socks for the homeless to the Downtown Mission and Salvation Army, which represented one (1) pair donated in honour of each our heroes... the 850 men and women who work each day in Port Windsor; our staff also spent a day with the United Way, handing out food boxes to the community, donated by the Port to assist families struggling with the job losses during COVID.

In the upcoming year, Port Windsor has committed to be the Presenting Sponsor of the Opening Ceremonies at Festival Plaza on the waterfront for the **2022 North American CanAm Police and Fire Games**, to be held for the first time in Windsor. We invite you to mark your calendars to join us for this community celebration on July 16, 2022.

As a Board, we recognize that strategic plans must not only continue to promote economic development, they must also include environmental sustainability within our operations. That's why years ago (2013 to be exact), this Board chose to forgo the economic opportunity of a 26-acre deep-water port land at Ojibway Shores for the greater of environmental benefits, and the community good.





Let me be clear, this Board has an **unqualified commitment to find a solution with our partners at the City of Windsor to secure the Ojibway Shores property as a permanent natural heritage site for generations to come.** We share the community's desire to see an end to this process and look forward to an announcement **soon.**

Port Windsor's future success will be a direct result of the past and current actions of the talented staff and Directors of the Board. I am proud of the work we have accomplished, and like everyone, I am looking forward to 2022, a year of even greater success at Port Windsor.

Our work is to ensure that "Prosperity Flows" for the Windsor-Essex region. We will, on behalf of our customers, our Port Users, the Windsor-Essex community, and all Canadians, continue to ensure that our National Port contributes to the economic vitality and growth of our region, and Canada.

Canada 