
City Council

Motion without Notice

MM51.12	ACTION			Ward: All
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**Federal Government Decision to Cancel Long Form Census - by
Councillor Davis, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pantalone**

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair. Council has added this Motion to the agenda for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Davis, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pantalone, recommends that:

1. City Council immediately request that the Federal Government reverse its decision to scrap the mandatory long form census, which will reduce the City's capacity to plan and deliver quality public services.
2. City Council direct the City Manager to work with other governments, community organizations, and academic institutions in urging the federal government to reverse this decision.

Summary

The Federal Government is doing away with the 35-year-old long census form for the 2011 Census and will replace it with a voluntary "National Household Survey". This recent announcement has taken municipalities and the NGO community by complete surprise.

The City relies on this data as a vital resource to help better understand the socio-economic characteristics of the residents that we serve. The work on the City's Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, inter-governmental initiatives, neighbourhood revitalization such as Lawrence Heights, and many other service programs rely on Census long form data and their comparability historically.

The City relies on valid, credible and good quality census data, and this decision will hinder the municipal sector's ability to plan policies around everything from immigrant settlement programs to public transit design. Major users of this data at the City include Social Development Finance and Administration; City Planning; Children's Services; Economic Development; Toronto Employment and Social Services; Shelter, Support and Housing Administration; Public Health; Toronto Police Services, Toronto Transit Commission, and Emergency Medical Services.

All of the City's current Neighbourhood and Ward Profiles (which the community sector uses constantly) will also be impacted in the ability to update these important information resources. This move also jeopardizes the effectiveness of a variety of initiatives where the City is taking leadership, such as the Quality-of-Life-Reporting System and the Community Social Data Strategy.

(Submitted to City Council on July 6 and 7, 2010 as MM51.12)