



June 15, 2011

Dear Councillor Mammoliti:

RE: "Priority Neighbourhood" designation

The Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force established under Mayor Mel Lastman identified the importance of strong, safe neighbourhoods to the long term prosperity of Toronto. The Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, adopted by Council in 2005, directed that particular attention be paid to 13 underserved areas of the City and set the groundwork for investments from all orders of government, the private and voluntary sectors. My community has received important investments under the strategy.

The designation of "priority neighbourhoods" has nevertheless added to the stigma of these communities, is prejudicial and divides Torontonians. Given that the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy has been in place for five years, I recommend that council reviews and updates this strategy. This review is not intended to undermine investments from government, the private and voluntary sectors.

Conditions have changed in many Toronto neighbourhoods over the past decade and I believe the continuation of a single list of ranked neighbourhoods is no longer appropriate. The updated strategy should allow for more targeted investments to any and all Toronto neighbourhoods depending on the specific conditions, assets and needs of each neighbourhood.

The removal of the "priority neighbourhood" label would assist in attracting private investment and contribute to a sense of pride among residents of these neighbourhoods. To this end I would like to make the following recommendations for the consideration of the Community Development and Recreation Committee:

- 1. That the Executive Director, Social Development Finance and Administration provide a report updating the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy, including:**
 - a. Recommendations on how to better serve and invest in all neighbourhoods with identified needs**
 - b. The steps necessary and implications of removing "priority neighbourhood" designations, including references on all printed and online literature**
 - c. A City-wide approach to monitoring neighbourhood health, safety and wellbeing across all Toronto neighbourhoods**

Sincerely,



Vincent Crisanti
City Councillor – Ward 1 (Etobicoke North)