



Councillor Paul Ainslie

Toronto City Council
Scarborough East - Ward 43

Chair, Scarborough Community Council
Chair, Government Management Committee
Chair, Toronto Public Library Board

Date: January 10, 2012
To: Executive Committee
From: Councillor Paul Ainslie
Re: Enhancing the City of Toronto's engagement with Citizens, transforming City Hall.

Like numerous other Members of Council, I had the pleasure to attend a most interesting exhibit on transforming City Hall late last year. "The Fourth Wall: Transforming City Hall" was an exhibit at the Urban Space Gallery curated by Dave Meslin. It closed on December 31, 2011.

The exhibit contained 36 different proposals for ways to enhance the City's engagement with citizens. Before leaving, those attending the exhibit were asked to endorse their favourite proposals by placing a coloured dot on a graphical representation of the proposals. (A copy of the full list of proposals is attached.)

Like others who attended, I voted with my own series of dots. I'd like to take a step further by now recommending the City take action or study many of these proposals.

While there may be statutory or budgetary obstacles for implementation of some of the following measures, I believe it is nevertheless important for Council to be educated on the merits of these proposals so it may consider all options available to it now, and in the future.

Recommendations:

1. The City Manager and City Clerk report on measures already underway to improve the way notice is given for formal and informal meetings and open houses, and on any additional actions City Council can take to improve the way residents and businesses are given notice of things which affect them.
2. The City Manager report on ways to increase public participation in the budget process including the number of annual budget information sessions across Toronto.
3. The City Manager and/or City Clerk, as appropriate, report on the feasibility of the following electoral reforms:
 - a. Holding elections on Saturday or Sundays
 - b. Using ranked ballots and instant run-off voting
 - c. Improving the City's elections website including a ward search information, links to candidates' web sites and contact information
 - d. Pro-actively promoting the nominations process and encouraging nominations
4. The City Manager report on the feasibility of providing child care for all public meetings hosted by the City of Toronto to increase the participation by parents of small children.

Sincerely,

Councillor Paul Ainslie
Scarborough East Ward 43

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