

Community Council Boundaries Consultation - Summary of Input

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize input from the public on the City of Toronto Community Council boundaries. During May 2018, City staff invited the public to provide their ideas and suggestions for new Community Council boundaries that could be implemented in December 2018 for the new term of Council.

Overview of the Feedback

An Options Paper was developed by staff which provided information on Community Councils, highlighted three primary, and five alternative models, and asked what issues or considerations would support the selection of a final model for Council's consideration (see www.toronto.ca/CommunityCouncilBoundaries). Over 600 responses were received with some support for each of the three primary options based on a range of considerations, concerns and rational. Support for any of the options was primarily a factor of where respondents lived, rather than other factors such as the distribution of agenda items or population. A significant number of responses favoured options that grouped a respondent's own ward with those that shared a similar built form, history, or community of interest.

In addition to collecting information on a preferred model, the consultation sought public input on why one model was thought to be better than another, what geographic considerations would contribute to an effective Community Council, the impact changing the boundaries would have on respondents, and whether or not respondents had previously attended a Community Council meeting.

This report considers the overall themes and trends which emerged from the input rather than a statistically representative vote on the options. Responses came from across the City, but significantly higher response rates came from a few areas of the City including current wards 13, 16, 17 and 18.

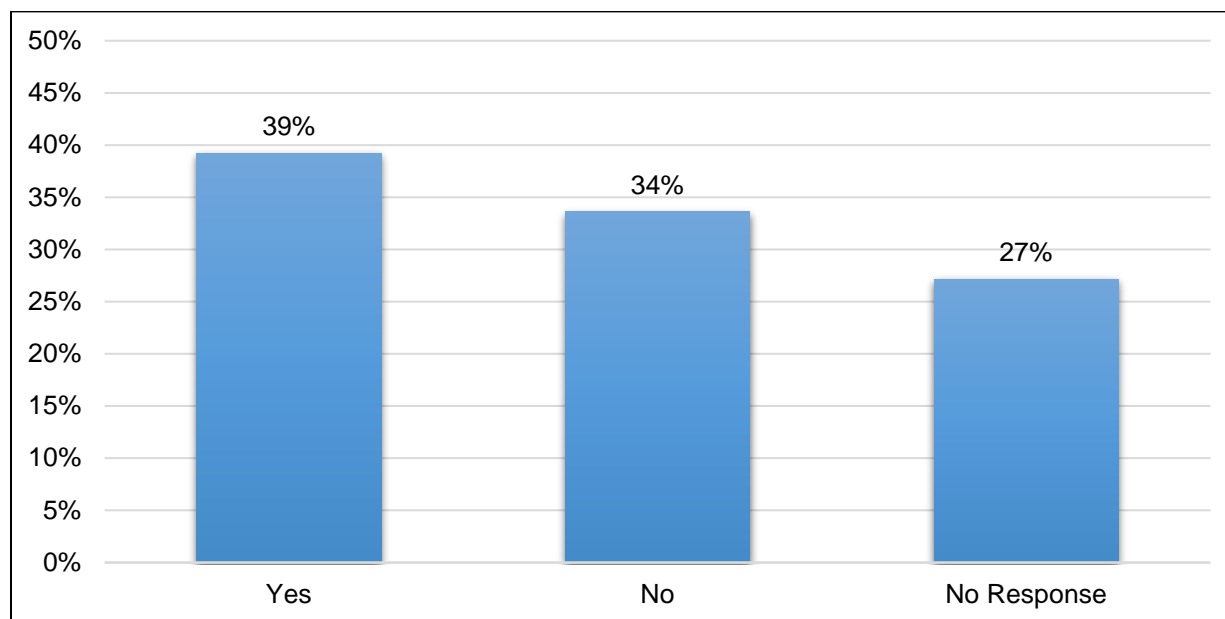
The survey asked respondents to first select which model they preferred and then comment on their considerations for new Community Council boundaries. Most respondents were not concerned about the Community Council their ward was in with the exception of current wards 13, 16 and 17. Many respondents selected a model and then provided their comments which often suggested amendments to that model. For example many selected an option which put their ward in the Community Council they wanted to end up in, and then they indicated they were less concern about the overall option, than they were about their ward.

Consultation Process

City staff sought input from Members of Council and the public on Community Council boundaries and what principles they considered most important in determining new boundaries. Input was received between May 3 and May 27, 2018.

Six hundred and twenty-eight responses were received through an online survey, at Doors Open Toronto, by email, and during a public open house on May 15, 2018. In addition to providing input on possible boundary models, respondents indicated if they had previously attended a Community Council meeting and what the impact on their interactions with the City would be if changes was made to their Community Council boundaries (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

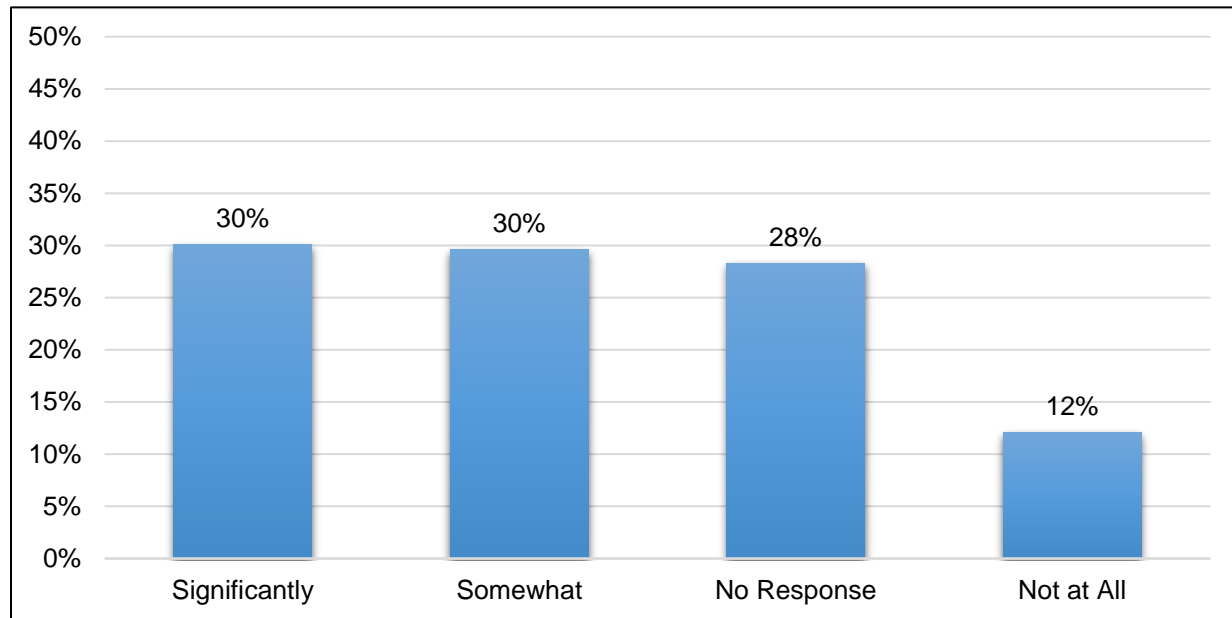
Figure 1. Respondents who reported attending a previous Community Council meeting



Question - Have you ever attended a City of Toronto Community Council meeting? (Number of Responses 623)

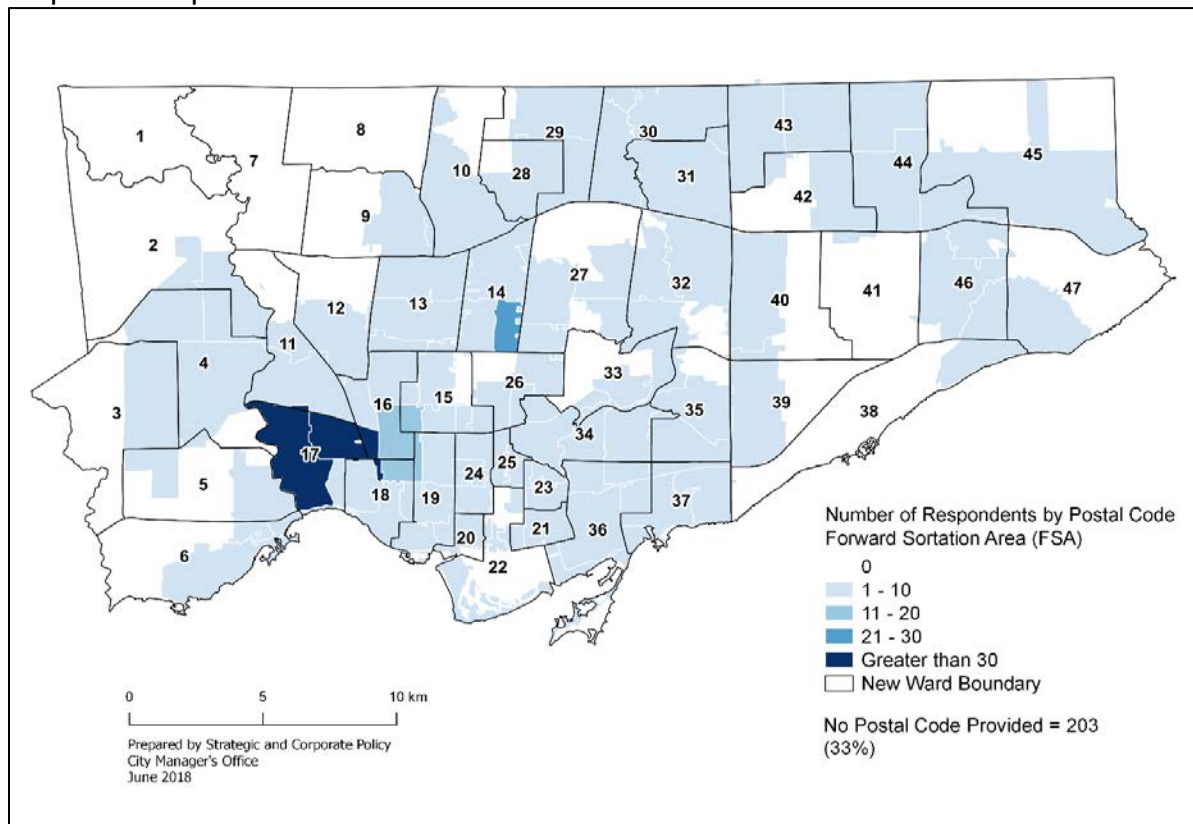
Survey responses were received from across the city. Most (67 percent) of respondents provided the first three digits of their postal code. Of the respondents who provided a postal code, the ward with the most responses was new Ward 17, with 226 responses (55 percent). The ward with the next highest number of responses was new Ward 14, with 37 responses (9 percent).

Figure 2. Respondents' description of the impact of Community Council boundary changes on their interactions with the City



Question – How much would a change in your Community Council boundary impact your interactions with the City? (Number of Responses 623)

Figure 3. Geographic distribution of survey responses by first three characters of respondents postal codes



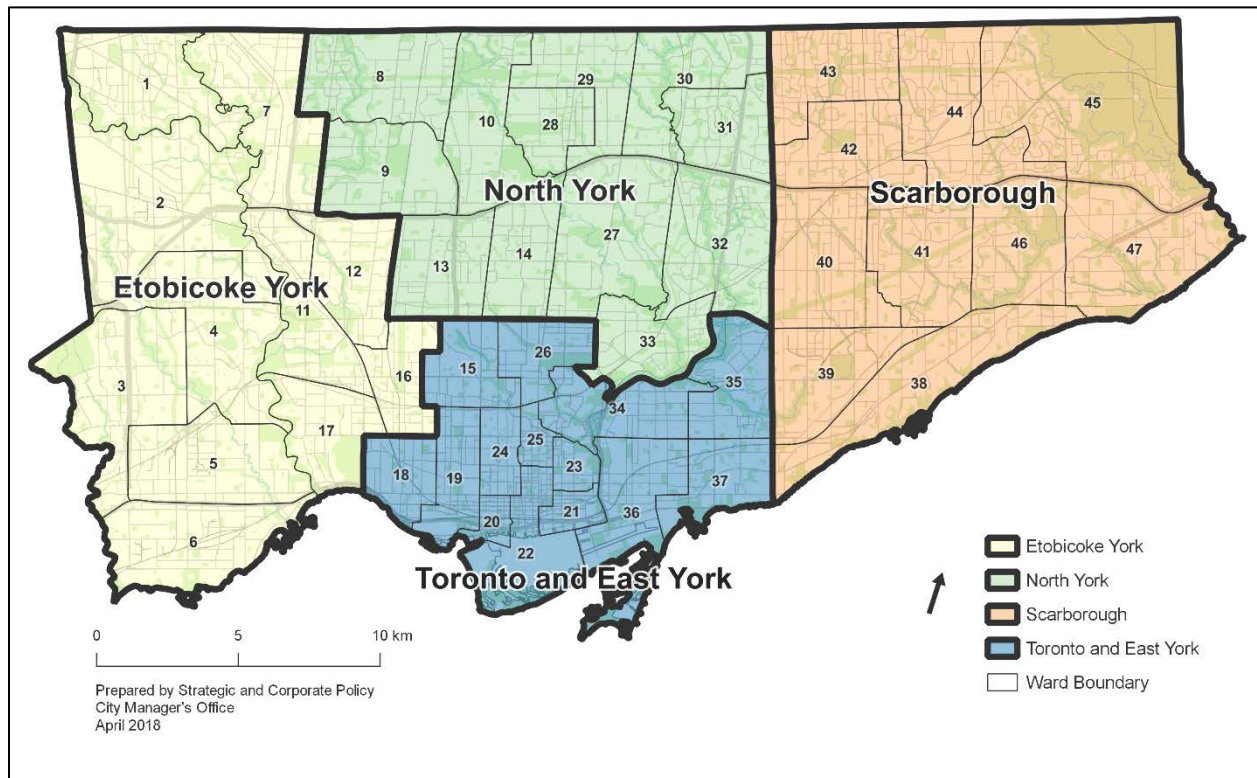
(Number of Responses - 420)

Feedback on Option A – Minimal Change

The number of responses favouring Option A was 66 (11 percent). Option A proposed minor adjustments to the current Community Council boundaries to accommodate the three additional wards in the new 47 ward model (Figure 4).

Respondents who preferred Option A highlighted that it was cost effective and that it maintained existing communities of interest.

Figure 4. Option A - Minimal Change



Key Theme - Cost Effective and Efficient

Generally, people indicated that they favoured Option A because it was seen as cost effective and more efficient than introducing a fifth Community Council. For example, one respondent stated:

"Everything has been ongoing with these current councils already established. It is costly to make these changes and it will be difficult for adjustments to be made. We will constantly be told it's somewhere else and we came to the wrong place or it hasn't been transferred. I see no reason to change."

Key Theme - Communities of Interest

Respondents who favoured Option A also commented that Toronto and East York Community Council should be maintained and not divided as described in Option B or Option C. For example, one respondent stated:

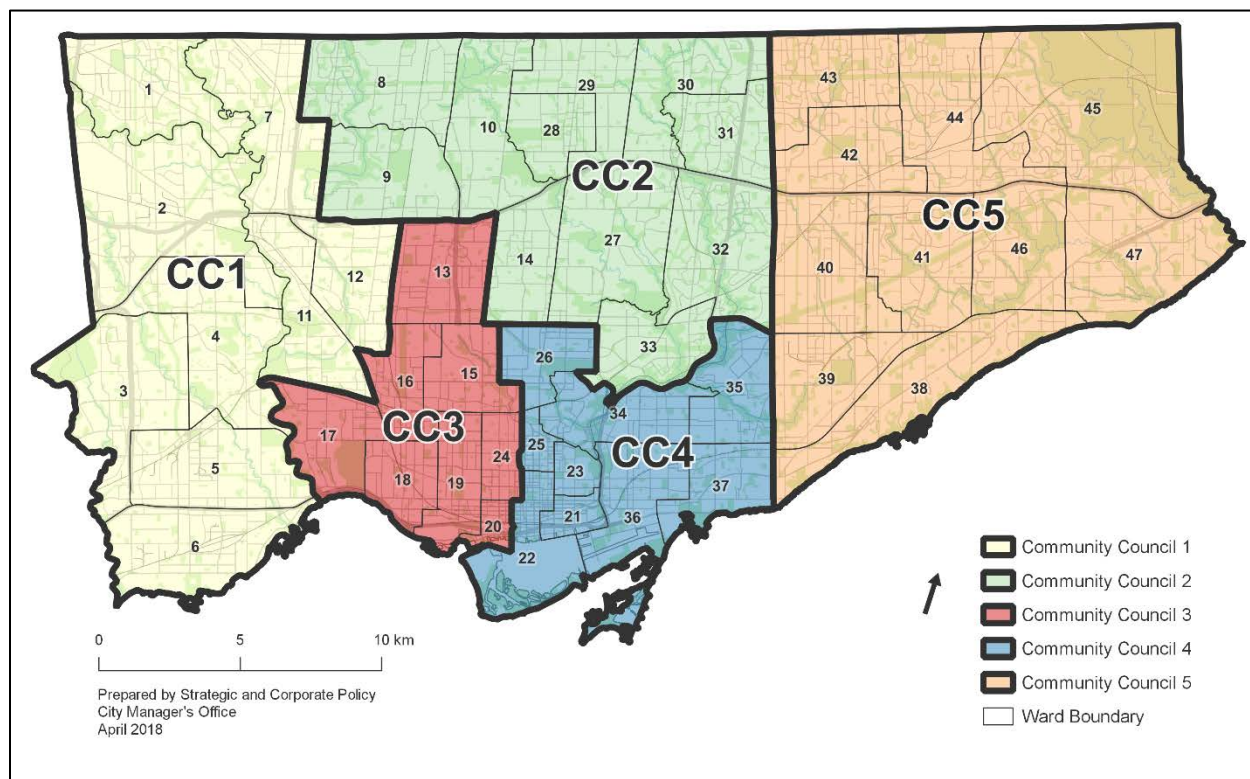
"I understand that from a population equity perspective, option A is the least fair, but, I think the Toronto and East York community council has issues and concerns that are unique to them, and shouldn't be split up. It would be a waste of money to split it up into two community councils that would likely grapple with and decide on very similar issues. I think this cultural issue overrides concerns about representation by population. We haven't split Ontario up into smaller provinces because we have the highest population in Canada. History, culture, and local needs need to be taken into account when trying to determine the boundaries of the community councils."

Feedback on Option B – Distribution of Agenda Items

This option proposed introducing a fifth Community Council and creating a new Community Council by dividing the current Toronto and East York Community Council into two along a north-south line to redistribute agenda items (Figure 6).

The number of responses favouring Option B was 337 (55 percent). Of the 337 respondents who preferred Option B, 203 (60 percent) indicated they live in postal codes that form part of new Ward 17 (see Figure 3).

Figure 5. Option B - Distribution of Agenda Items



Key Theme – Group New Ward 17 with Wards to the East

A majority of respondents who preferred Option B and provided comments (81 of 124) indicated they selected this model because it grouped Ward 17 with wards to the east. Option A and Option C grouped Ward 17 with wards to the west.

Respondents indicated more affinity with wards to the east because of similarities of built form, street widths, the presence of laneways, issues with accessing Etobicoke Civic Centre, and the importance of the Humber River as a natural boundary. Comments included a general theme of wanting to group what were described as "urban wards" with other urban wards, instead of grouping "suburban" and "urban" wards together. For example, a respondent stated:

"I believe that being realigned with other "urban" Wards in the inner-city would be a much better fit for [current] Ward 13 generally, and for our community in particular. It is clear we have much more in common with our inner-city neighbours on a multitude of issues such as traffic concerns, parking rules, cycling infrastructure, speed limits and appropriate responses to proposed intensification along our main streets.

Key Theme - Agenda Items

A smaller number of total respondents (28 of 124 comments) indicated support for Option B and an interest in balancing agendas across Community Councils. For example, one respondent stated:

"Option B seems to be the model which would produce the most efficient outcome as it's based on need - in this case the distribution of agenda items. Prioritizing this distribution, rather than that of population (as seen in Option C) or geography (as seen in Option A), seems to be the fairest option as Torontonians throughout the city could expect to see the ability of their assigned community councils to address issues in a manner equitable with other community councils. As well, I find it perfectly reasonable to add a fifth community council (as B and C propose) - after all we're a big city that had six city councils operating in our territory as recently as twenty years ago."

Generally, respondents who commented on both the distribution of agenda items and population placed more importance on agenda items. However, similar to the majority of all respondents, the theme of grouping "like" communities was supported more than either the distribution of agenda items or population. For example, one respondent stated:

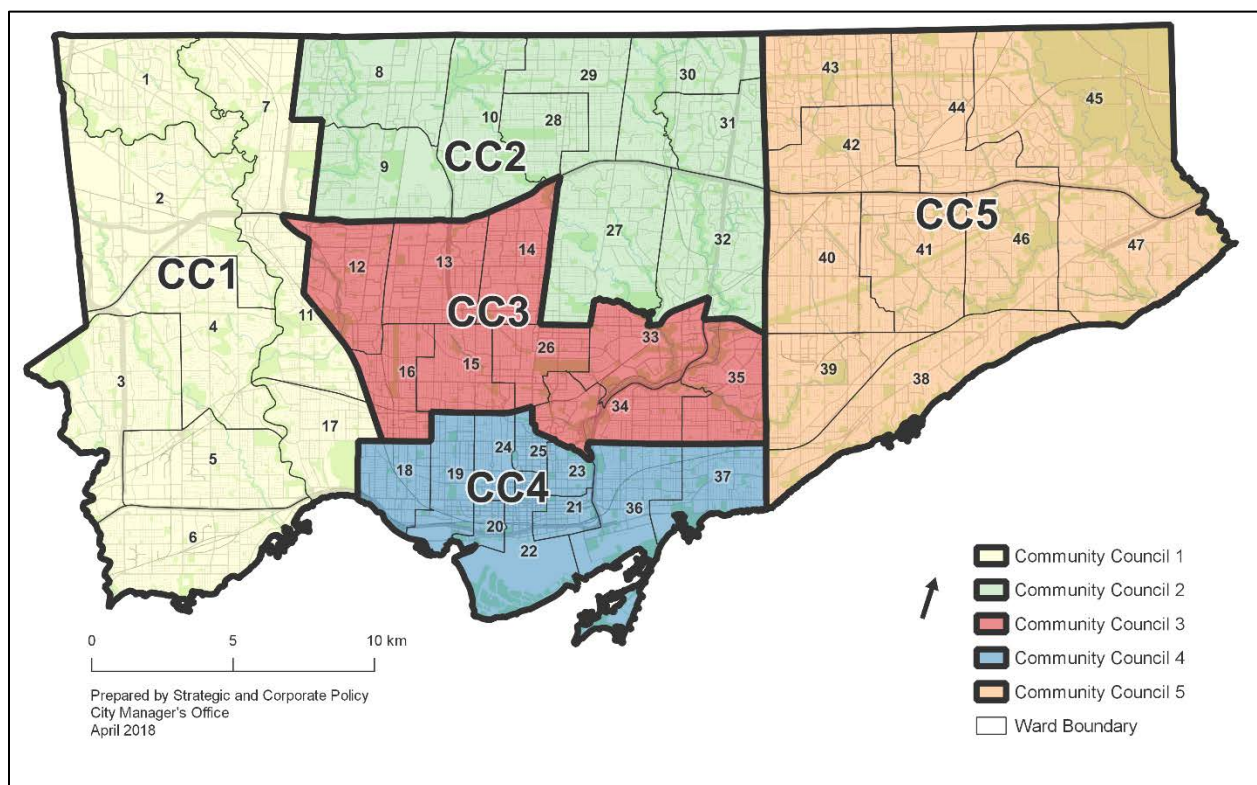
"I like the idea of distributed workload (option B), however I think the geographic breakdown in option C is more intuitive to how we think of what our local neighbourhood and area is (i.e. north of bloor/CN rail line, versus dividing a boundary on either side of Yonge). I would like to see the third option be improved so that workload is better distributed."

Feedback on Option C – Distribution of Population

The number of responses favouring Option C was 183 (29 percent). This option proposed introducing a fifth Community Council to distribute projected populations across Community Councils. The new Community Council would be created in the centre of the city between the current North York and Toronto and East York Community Councils (Figure 8).

Respondents who preferred Option C highlighted that it would reflect the way they experience a natural division of the city between the Humber River and Victoria Park into a downtown, midtown, and North York. The ward with the highest number of respondents who favoured Option C, was the new Ward 14 (37 of 183 respondents).

Figure 6. Option C - Distribution of Population



Key Theme - Communities of Interest

Respondents who preferred Option C over Option B noted that keeping the downtown and waterfront in one Community Council was a greater priority than the distribution of agenda items. Respondents also noted that supporting historic boundaries and grouping "like" neighbourhoods together was also important. For example, one respondent stated:

"Option C, more than any other option, seems to provide the best qualitative results out of the three. It is best at supporting historical city/neighbourhood boundaries, supports the most even population distribution, and also coincides with the ideal urban form in each [Community Council]. Furthermore, each

[Community Council] has a well-defined 'centre' (Etobicoke Civic Centre, North York Centre, Yonge/Eglinton, Downtown, and Scarborough Centre). In terms of the Agenda Items, I do not believe this is an appropriate measure on which to divide [Community Councils] because resources should be divided where the work is. Option B does not meaningfully reduce the items in CC4 relative to [Option C] 32% vs 39% based on *historical* values may not materialize in the future and would be within a reasonable amount of error, and dividing the Downtown into separate [Community Councils] will make longer term urban development projects, such as Waterfront development and east-west transit programs (e.g. King Street Pilot) and ancillary development (urban growth along these corridors) more challenging to coordinate."

Key Theme - Midtown

Generally, respondents who supported Option C supported the idea of a "midtown" grouping of wards for reasons including similar built form and local development. For example, one respondent stated:

"Option C - Distribution of Population has the new Ward 14 grouped with a more central area of the City. This would be a better geographic fit for Midtown. Many of the development issues in the Avenue Road/Lawrence/Yonge/Eglinton area are quite different from those of the broader North York catchment area in which Ward 14 is placed in the other two options."

Key Theme - The Danforth

Several respondents were strongly opposed to using Danforth Avenue as a boundary between Community Councils. For example, one respondent stated:

"Option C is terrible for the east-end. We are finally seeing mid-rise development applications along the Danforth - there is no way that this growth can be effectively managed if the north side of the Danforth is in one Community Council, and the south side is in a different one."

Public Community Council Boundary Submissions

Respondents had the option to submit their own Community Council boundaries. A total of 88 boundary submissions were received (Figure 7).

The majority of respondents who drew new boundaries (57%) provided revisions to one of the three options in the paper.

Figure 7. Boundary Submission Themes

Submission Type	Responses (Percentage of Total)
Modification to Option A	10 (11%)
Modification to Option B	21 (24%)
Modification to Option C	19 (22%)
Six Community Councils	9 (10%)
Other	5 (6%)
Incomplete or Partial Submission	24 (27%)

Data

Data from the online feedback form will be posted to the City of Toronto's Open Data portal at www.toronto.ca/open. Additional information, including the Options Paper, reports to Council and links to related information (e.g. Toronto Ward Boundary Review) is available at www.toronto.ca/CommunityCouncilBoundaries.

Contact:

For information on this report, and the Community Council Boundary Review, please contact:

City Manager's Office, City of Toronto
100 Queen Street West, Toronto ON M5H 2N2
416-392-7531
engagement@toronto.ca