

July 12, 2021

Dear Mayor Tory and City Councillors,

Re PH 25.6 July 14-15 Council Meeting

Our organization, the Quantum Owners & Residents Association (QuORA) represents over 900 homeowners and residents at 2181 and 2190 Yonge Street, in two condominium towers directly across the street from the Canada Square site. Our home, the first major condo development in the Midtown core, opened its doors in 2007. We enjoy and value the benefits of residential intensification in Midtown. But, like all good things, residential intensification is not always the right answer. This applies emphatically to the current development application for Canada square.

QuORA requests your support for a City Council motion to endorse and conduct a feasibility study for the the Council-mandated Midtown Working Group (MWG) vision for Canada Square.

We believe the case for the vision, described in the MWG report, *Imagining a New Town Centre for Midtown Toronto*, speaks for itself. This vision for the Canada Square site, anchored by innovative post-secondary education and employment, and filled out with a public school, childcare, cultural amenities, public parkland, and 25%+ affordable housing, calls for essential social infrastructure that is sorely needed in Midtown and will add great value to the City as a whole. Yonge-Eglinton is about to become the City's second most significant transit hub. Good planning means it should be a work/learn/play destination for local residents and Torontonians from across the city – not just a transit transfer point.

This would be a legacy project to be proud of. The MWG has proposed creative and inspiring ideas like designing everything from built form to jobs, learning and culture as a proving ground and demonstration zone for urban net-zero innovation. It has also suggested a staged approach to development, with a governance model similar to that of of Waterfront Toronto (different composition of course).

We understand there have been years of investment of time and effort by the City, TTC, CreateTO, Oxford Properties and CT REIT. Commitments have been made with legal and financial implications. But in a way, this very fact makes the case for something fundamentally different from the massive housing development, combined with reduced employment space, in the current application.

All this work, and the application, are based on planning assumptions of 2007-9. These assumptions are now out of date. Good planning today, and in light of City and Provincial complete community policies, would be based on the MWG approach. This City-owned site is our last and only hope to create a Midtown that meets the needs of the local community and Toronto writ large.

We have heard about a financial loss that would result from the denial or failure of the current application: a \$60 million (approximately) contribution to transit-related physical infrastructure. From the perspectives of precedent and perception, we see this contribution as risky. We respectfully suggest you consider the following:

- The TTC or its government sources normally funds such capital projects. With this deal it seems that Section 37 and similar would not be provided to the local community. In a sense, local benefits from Midtown's biggest-ever private project would be taxed away to the TTC.

- The community was not consulted on this decision, nor did it participate meaningfully in the applicant's design process.
- The City stands to benefit financially from the project. It may be in a perceived potential conflict of interest regarding its responsibility to objectively assess the application on its own merits.

The City Council decision on Canada Square will be hugely consequential. In today's environment, it's rare that leaders have an opportunity to make such a substantial positive difference in the lives of so many people.

We are counting on you for that.

Sincerely,

David Ticoll
President, Quantum Owners & Residents Association