Dear Councillor Wong-Tam:

Women's College Hospital
Application for Renaming Portion of Elizabeth Street North of College Street

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the Board of Women's College Hospital. Women's College Hospital celebrated its 100th Anniversary in 2011, and looks forward to the opening of Phase One of a new hospital building on the existing Women's College Hospital site, in May, 2013. Phase Two is slated to open in August of 2015, resulting in a brand new purpose built hospital. This will be Canada's only hospital with a mandate to provide exemplary research, teaching and clinical treatment in women's health. The new Women's College Hospital is designed completely around an ambulatory model of care and focused on developing new treatments and programs that create tangible health-system solutions.

The Federal Government has recognized the work of Women's College Hospital in pioneering both healthcare for women, and the training of women as healthcare professionals, by designating it a National Heritage Site of Interest.

I write to request your support of an application to the City consistent with the City's Street Naming Policy, to honour an important pioneer in women's health and a founder of what is now Women's College Hospital. To summarize the enclosed information, Doctor Emily Howard Jennings Stowe was not only the first Canadian woman to practice medicine in Canada, but also a life-long champion of women's rights. In 1865 Emily Stowe applied to the Toronto School of Medicine but was denied admission. "The doors of the University are not open to women and I trust they never will be", the University's Vice President told her. She obtained her medical degree in 1867 in the United States, and returned to Canada, practicing in Toronto, although refused a medical license until 1880.

Determined to help make medical education more readily available for women, she put relentless pressure on the University of Toronto to reverse its policy. Her own daughter, Augusta Stowe-Gullen was the first woman doctor to graduate from a Canadian medical school, in 1883. Since women graduates still had to take hospital based training as residents, but were refused placement within Canadian hospitals, Doctor Stowe, in 1883, spearheaded the creation of the Ontario Medical College for Women, the precursor to Women's College Hospital.
We request that the City of Toronto rename that portion of Elizabeth Street running north from College Street to Grenville Street, and which forms a ceremonial entrance to the new Women's College Hospital, after Doctor Emily Stowe.

We have reviewed the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy and procedure, and submit that the proposed name meets the criteria of honouring and commemorating noteworthy persons associated with the City, as well as commemorating local history and events. Given Doctor Stowe's direct link to the founding of what is now Women's College Hospital, renaming the short stretch of Elizabeth Street, north of College Street, leading to the Hospital's new building is a fitting and direct way of ensuring public memorialization of both Doctor Stowe, and her legacy to women's health and women's leadership in medicine.

In addition, a title search has established that no other property on the short stretch of road, north of College Street, to Grenville Street has a municipal address of Elizabeth Street. Therefore, no other party will be subjected to a change of address as a result of this honouring of one of Toronto's woman pioneers.

We believe this request entirely meets the goal of the City's honourific and street naming policy, in that it would honour and promote the heritage and identity of the City through the recognition of an important person, movement, and legacy within the City.

We look forward to providing you with any additional information you might require, and will enthusiastically work with you and as required, the City Surveyor to process this application to a successful resolution.

Yours very truly...

N. Jane Pepino, C.M., Q.C., LL.D
Chair, Women's College Hospital

NJP/sh
Enclosures (Information on Dr. Emily Stowe and Hospital's Story)

c.c. W. Kowalenko, City Surveyor, Technical Services, Survey and Mapping Services
Marilyn Emery, CEO, Women's College Hospital
Lili Shatev Shawn, Chief of Communications, Women's College Hospital