

August 17, 2014

Jennifer Forkes
10th Floor floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Ms Forkes,

Re: Acquisition of 11 Wellesley Street West by the City of Toronto for Public Parkland

This letter is written on behalf of the more than 1,400 households the Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association (CWNA) represents in Ward 27.

We strongly urge the Executive Committee to **adjust the 2014-2023 Capital Budget and Plan for Parks, Forestry and Recreation** to enable the purchase of land at 11 Wellesley Street West, so that a public park can be established.

We believe the funding is fully justified on the following grounds:

1. Equity

The surge of development in Ward 27 over the past ten years has triggered significant contributions to the City's treasury, including money flowing to the Parkland Acquisition and Park Maintenance Funds. Only 25% of these funds ever come back to Ward 27. This opportunity represents perhaps the last chance for Parkland Acquisition monies to be used in the Ward, given that there are very, very few undeveloped sites available to purchase. It is only fair that some of the monies contributed by development in the area are used to ameliorate the area.

2. Amenity

Currently, each person living within the CWNA's boundaries is serviced by parkland the size of one 8.5"x11" sheet of paper. This will diminish further as the currently-authorized high-rise developments are completed, and thousands of new residents (a significant proportion with dogs requiring space to exercise) move into the area.

More open public space is required simply to service the many new residents at current levels of provision, let alone improve the already-deficient provision offered to existing residents.

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3. City Building

Every great city knows that it is judged by the quality of life it offers its citizens and parks play a major role in making life bearable and enjoyable, especially as an area undergoes intense development. Green spaces are enjoyed not only by an area's residents, but also workers who commute into those areas, and visitors from Canada and abroad, who form and spread opinions about Toronto's stature.

High-quality open space is instrumental in creating a world-class experience for residents, and creating a desirable place to visit for non-residents. Toronto is in competition with other cities for inward investment and tourism, cities such as Chicago, which have invested in creating downtown spaces to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. 11 Wellesley represents perhaps the last opportunity in Toronto's downtown core to show that our city is as forward-looking as any of our competitors.

We fully understand that the price per square foot of this site is expensive. Ironically, the price has been driven up by the intense development that a park at this site would service. We would reiterate, we cannot foresee any further opportunities to deploy Park Acquisition monies in Ward 27 – simply, there may be no more acquirable land – and therefore this is the last chance for funds generated by Ward 27 to be used in Ward 27.

We therefore strongly urge the Executive Committee to support the purchase of this land.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Horberry
President, Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association