

## HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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To Executive Commitee:  
Ward Boundary Review Recommendations.  
EXE 15.2

97 Willcocks St.  
Toronto, M5S1C9.  
May 24, 2016.

I am here to talk a little bit about the Downtown and to recommend council adopt the proposed ward boundaries minimal change option RW 24 -- from the tracks north of Davenport, to Queen, and from Bathurst to University/Avenue Road.

I am Sue Dexter. I am on the board of the Harbord Village Residents' Association. Our boundaries are Bloor-College, Spadina to Bathurst. We are in the northwest corner of the City's Downtown zoning area.

Does the present system work democratically?

2011 population Ward 20: 76,600  
compared to St. Paul's 48,640  
Davenport 44,970,  
Ward 19 57,240.

These 2011 numbers do not take into account what has been built since, nor what has been approved, let alone what is in the pipeline. Today's imbalances will get worse. Look at the cranes.

Population and development pressures also create invisible hardships on councillors in the densest wards. The Ward 20 Councillor has a barely sustainable workload. This, too, curtails the access of voters to fairly balanced representation at Council.

So our question is how to make our votes count as much those of residents living outside the downtown. Otherwise, we are discriminated against—or they are advantaged.

Clearly, we have too many people and too little power. What to do?

Adding office staff could solve potholes, general office administration, garbage, streets. It would not address the strength of our voice in council decisions, which at the moment is about two-thirds that of our neighbours... a democratic deficit created in part by public planning policy and OMB decisions which funneled so much development to King-University-Spadina.

Rather, we believe our representation should be increased. Boundaries must change, and they should respect the local political realities. We support the consultant's

recommendation to add a councillor, splitting ward 20 into two distinct parts, one north, one south.

The logic is this: there are two distinct worlds in the west Downtown. The high-rise world south of Queen, the house-form world north of Queen. Different built-form, different problems.

To the north, we are stable neighbourhoods. For the most part, Victorian two and two and-a-half storey houses or walkup apartments. Walkable, often treed, shared porches. Tight. Mid and low-rise, predominantly. We are communities.

And there is one element that binds us and separates us from our southern neighbours.

There is a single dominant developer in RW24: the University of Toronto.

Its decisions determine much of the character of adjacent neighbourhoods from rooming houses, to rents, to congestion at nodes, to the kinds of businesses that have grown up along Bloor St., to developments on College, Bloor and Spadina, to the inexhaustible stimulation of the students who live amongst us.

To redress the balance between town and gown, the City formed the University of Toronto Area Liaison Committee, which brings the Councillor, the City, the flanking communities and the University together at a common table. This has resulted in more respect from the University, and strong working partnerships among the community members of the committee.

The challenge of the University's expansion in the last twenty years, as well as more recent private developments and applications, has resulted in the strengthening of the neighbourhood collaboration. I need only list the numbers of joint studies we are working on: University of Toronto Secondary Plan, Huron-Sussex, Bloor Block, College, Westbank/Honest Ed's, Spadina to come. The Annex shares its development portal with us. We are regular attendees at its planning committee meeting. We are working with heritage folks in Kensington on their HCD. Our community association donates scholarship money to Scadding Court.

The bonds are deep. But they do not extend south of Queen or east of University/Avenue Road. And most important, they include neighbourhoods on both sides of Bloor Street. To draw a line separating south of Bloor from the north would absolutely violate the way we experience and work for a great City.

In sum, we support RW24. It reflects our experience in the City, our local political institutions and rights a democratic wrong.

With thanks

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Board HVRA

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