



CITY COUNCIL REFERRAL OF MEMBER MOTION

Office of Neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto

Date: May 30, 2017
To: Executive Committee
From: City Council
Wards: All

CITY COUNCIL DECISION

City Council on May 24, 25 and 26, 2017, referred Motion MM29.17 to the Executive Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon, seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Deputy City Manager, Cluster B to report to the Executive Committee at its September 26, 2017 meeting, on:
 - a. the feasibility of and opportunities for the creation of an Office of Neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto; and
 - b. best practices, and case studies from cities in North America that have implemented an Office of Neighbourhoods.

SUMMARY

The City of Toronto is known as a City of neighbourhoods. Though our population is growing, and we remain the largest city in Canada, most residents enjoy that neighbourhood feel. As such, there are a growing number of community groups and residents associations all across Toronto. These groups are vital to the development of grassroots initiatives for neighbourhood improvement across the City. The City, however, does not have adequate resources to provide support for these groups.

In a similar way, businesses come together to form Business Improvement Areas to drive economic development and to provide support to one another. The City has an established Business Improvement Area Office that currently operates out of the Economic Development and Culture.

Other cities, including Ottawa, Calgary, and Portland, have all created an "Office of Neighbourhoods". These offices are mandated to work on issues at the neighbourhood level, to promote a culture of civic engagement and to build inclusive, safe, liveable communities. The City of Toronto can benefit greatly from having an Office of Neighbourhoods to strengthen and support neighbourhood initiatives and residents associations.