



June 15, 2017

Jennifer Forkes  
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Chair Mayor John Tory and Members, Executive Committee

**RE: EX26.44 Office of Neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto**

This is to express our strong support for the creation of an Office of Neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto.

As well described in Councillor McMahon's letter, Toronto is known as a "city of neighbourhoods". An "Office of Neighbourhoods" would be mandated to work to promote a culture of civic engagement and to build inclusive, safe, liveable communities. The Office of Neighbourhoods would support neighbourhood initiatives and liaise with residents associations.

Resident associations are at the heart of strong neighbourhoods, working cooperatively to build community spirit and civic engagement, and protect neighbourhood character. At its heart, local social solidarity is a kind of "social capital" with benefits for public health and safety, and general well-being. Our traditional model of a neighbourhood imagines streets with single-family houses and other low density built form. But some of the strongest need for neighbourhood social capital probably arises in larger built forms that may encourage or allow isolation. With the current development patterns most new construction in Toronto is for larger buildings. As Jane Jacobs's adopted city, Toronto should put its mind to the neighbourhood qualities of larger buildings.

An Office of Neighbourhoods could play an important role in encouraging and supporting social capital development in all kinds of neighbourhoods.

Respectfully submitted,

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel  
Co-Chair, FoNTRA  
129 Hanna Road  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4G 3N6

Cathie Macdonald  
Co-Chair, FoNTRA  
57 Duggan Road  
Toronto, ON  
M4V 1Y1

c.c. Councillor Joe Mihevc  
Jennifer Keesmaat, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division

**The Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations (FoNTRA)** is a non-profit, volunteer organization comprised of over 30 member organizations. **Its members, all residents' associations, include** at least 170,000 Toronto residents within their boundaries. **The residents' associations that make up** FoNTRA believe that Ontario and Toronto can and should achieve better development. Its central issue is not *whether* Toronto will grow, but *how*. FoNTRA believes that sustainable urban regions are characterized by environmental balance, fiscal viability, infrastructure investment and social renewal.