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Pocket Community Association

Toronto, Ontario

November 29, 2018

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

Re: Staffing decisions for Councillors' offices

The Pocket Community Association (PCA) endorses the letter signed by 55 Toronto residents associations (copy attached), calling for doubling of staff for each Councillor along with any other necessary measures, given the reduction to 25 Councillors.

PCA members who responded to our recent survey overwhelmingly supported this endorsement. Here's a sampling of what they had to say:

"If we want to have our needs in this area met and have our Councillor be able to fulfill our wishes, she is going to need extra assistance to get this work completed."

"The Councillors will have a much greater time commitment to properly serve the larger number of constituents. They will not have the time to deal with administrative issues, phone calls and responses to constituent questions and needs. They each require more staff so the levels of service are not diminished."

"Of course they will need enough staffers to help get the needs of our community met."

Our Councillors deal with constituents' issues, work closely with neighbourhood associations to address broader issues, and represent us all at the city level. None of us should have to suffer erosion of representation because the size of City Council has been changed.

Yours truly,

Handwritten signature of Susan McMurray in black ink.

Lori Zucchiatti O'Neill

Susan McMurray, chair, and Lori Zucchiatti O'Neill
Pocket Community Association

c.c.: David Harrison & Henry Wiercinski, Annex Residents' Association
Gail Misra & Sue Dexter, Harbord Village Residents' Association

Attachment

ATTACHMENT

November 20, 2018

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

Re: Staffing decisions for Councillor's offices

The new reality of a 25-councillor world presents an unprecedented governance challenge. Each Councillor will still have to attend to meetings and engage on City-wide issues, but now must represent the needs of many more constituents, averaging 110,000 residents per ward.

How Councillors can effectively shoulder this increased constituency load alone is unclear. What is clear is that without the allocation of additional resources, they will be unable to maintain the level of representation they currently provide, and which constituents have quite rightly come to expect. This will serve only to impair the effective operation of the City. Such a result is neither an acceptable nor necessary outcome.

One way to mitigate this imbalance between the legitimate expectations of constituents as to the level of service they receive and the ability of Councillors to deliver that service is to ensure adequate capacity in their offices. Councillors' staff are often the first point of contact with constituents. They effectively handle the calls and concerns directed to the Councillor, thus improving the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Councillors' work.

With wards doubled in size, at a minimum staff levels should be doubled. This would simply maintain a level playing field by continuing unchanged the prior budget appropriation for Councillor staff.

In addition, where wards have exceptional levels of planning and development, we further urge you to allow for additional staffing in recognition of the importance of those files and the work demand they represent.

It is imperative that the result of the change to the City's governance model not result in an erosion of representation or a deterioration in the overall effectiveness in the governance of the City.

We trust that you will act accordingly. See below the list of 55 Resident Association signators.

Yours truly,

David Harrison, chair, and Henry Wiercinski; Annex Residents' Association

Gail Misra, chair, and Sue Dexter: Harbord Village Residents' Association

1. Harbord Village Residents' Association, Gail Misra
2. Garment District Neighbourhood Association, Valerie Eggertson
3. CityPlace Residents' Association, Gary Pieters
4. Parkdale Residents Association, Ric Amis
5. Ossington Community Association, Jessica Wilson
6. Liberty Village Residents' Association, Todd Hofley
7. Roncesvalles Macdonell Residents' Association, Norman Kolasky
8. FONTRA, Cathie Macdonald and Geoff Kettel, including

9. Avenue Road & Eglinton Community Association,
10. Bayview Village RA,
11. Bedford Park/Wanless Residents' Association,
12. Deer Park Residents' Group,
13. Davenport Triangle Residents Association,
14. Don Mills Residents Inc.,
15. Edwards Gardens Neighbourhood Association,
16. Eglinton Park Residents' Association (EPRA), Thomas Cohen,
17. Forest Hill Homeowners' Association,
18. Governor's Bridge Ratepayers Association,
19. Glenorchy Residents' Association,
20. Greater Yorkville Residents Association (GYRA),
21. Lawrence Park Ratepayers' Association,
22. Greater Beach Residents' Association,
23. Leaside Property Owners' Association,
24. Lytton Park Residents' Organization Inc.,
25. Moore Park Residents' Association,
26. North Rosedale Ratepayers' Association,
27. Old Orchard Grove Residents Assn.,
28. Oriole Park Association,
29. Rathnelly Residents Association, Pym Buitenhuis
30. Andrew's Ratepayers Association,
31. Sherwood Park Residents' Association,
32. South Armour Heights Residents' Association,
33. South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association,
34. South Hill District Home Owners' Association,
35. South Rosedale Residents Association, Don J. Hogarth,
36. Stanley Knowles Housing Co-op,
37. Summerhill Residents' Association,
38. Uptown Yonge Neighbourhood Alliance,
39. West Keewatin Neighbours,
40. West Lansing Homeowners Association,
41. York Mills Gardens Community Association,
42. York Mills Leslie Ratepayers' Association,
43. York Mills Valley Association,
44. Yonge Ridge Homeowners Association,
45. Grange Community Association, Ralph Daley and Ceta Ramkhalawansingh,
46. Huron Sussex Residents' Organization, Danae Engle,
47. York Quay Neighbourhood Association, Angelo Bertolas, Carolyn Johnson,
48. Lakeview Avenue Residents Association, Jeff Hoedeman,
49. Palmerston Area Residents Association, Paul Maclean,
50. Seaton Village Residents Association, Jennifer Hunter,
51. Bay Cloverhill Community Association, Kathryn Holden,
52. Fort York Neighbourhood Association, Ryan Myhal,
53. ABC Residents' Association, John Caliendo and Ian Carmichael,
54. Cottingham Square Community Association (CSCA), Neil C. Blair