

Swansea Area Ratepayers' Association

Reflecting the interests of the Swansea Community



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Swansea Area Ratepayers' Group

Written on behalf of the Swansea Area Ratepayers Association (SARA)
Swansea Area Ratepayers Group (SARG)

April 11, 2019

Attn:

Deputy Mayor S. Holyday

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Councillor Perks Ward 4

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Ref: GV2.2 Public Input on Interim City Council Governance System Mtg. April 12, 2019 from the Swansea Area Ratepayers Association/Group

The Swansea Area Ratepayers Association appreciates the effort of the City Council to reach out to the communities in Toronto to get feedback and direction on this important opportunity to change the governance dynamic of our City.

With reference to the **Engagement Section**, while the consultation opportunities are extensive through the various media outlets, actual meeting opportunities are limited. The Community Meeting is probably the most authentic forum for getting a cross-section and interactive consensus of public opinion. Only one community meeting per Community Council area is suggested which is totally insufficient as we are changing the shape of governance in one of the largest cities in Canada. During the process of the Bloor West Village Avenue Study, we had four Local Advisory Committee and three Community Meetings in approximately the same time period as this consultation on City Governance.

We are also concerned about the lack of detail on the specificity on the timelines for providing summaries, feedback and responses to be forwarded to the Special Committee on Governance. While anticipating a ten day posting of this agenda item, I contacted the Clerk's office on April 2 and was told that the posting of the agenda items happens now with 5 days notice. Thanks to Ms. Martin's intervention, this agenda was posted with 8 days notice.

With these two concerns in mind we make the following suggestions in order to provide **authentic opportunities for Community input and direction**:

Local Advisory Committee & Community Meetings

- 1. The formation of a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) in each Ward with representation from all the Ratepayer Associations, BIA and Community advocacy groups.**
- 2. The LAC for each Ward should hold at least 3 meetings which would be followed up by the Community Consultation meetings.**

3. Minutes of each LAC meeting should be forwarded to the Committee for verification and comment no later than two weeks following the meeting. Amended minutes of each meeting shall be posted on line for public input from each Ward.
4. To complement the Community Consultation meetings of the Community Council Areas, there should be at least 3 Community Consultation meetings held in each Ward with the same process for Minutes.

Timelines for Response and Posting of Information and Agenda

1. At least 14 Calendar days notice for the posting for the Special Committee on Governance Agenda
2. A minimum of 30 days notice for LAC and Community Consultation meetings through the Councillor's and Ratepayer Associations' Contacts Ward Wide.
3. Any online or media outlet notices should be issued at least 30 calendar days ahead of the deadline for response.
4. A 10-day reminder shall be issued ahead of all requests for meetings and response deadlines etc.
5. The Minutes and Responses from all meetings, surveys etc. shall be posted on the Website no later than 20 days post the suggested verification.

Summary of Submissions

The **Summary of Submissions** did not appear to articulate clearly and in detail the suggestions presented on behalf of Resident & Ratepayers Associations. We would like to repeat the suggestions presented at the last Special Committee on Governance by SARA/SARG

Inclusion of Community Communication, Engagement and Support.

Larger Wards mean that the avenues of communication between the man on the street and City Hall have become more crowded than ever. The ordinary citizen will need help to be heard.

To ensure that this valuable feature of democracy is able to fill the need left by the 25 Ward system to be strong and vibrant; we recommend the following:

1. **Recognise the incorporated Area Associations by providing per capita funding along with spending regulations and requirements that they must (1) be responsible to the community, (2) not be associated with any political party and (3) must be autonomous. This will provide another layer of governance and support at a time of shrinking City Council Governance**
2. **Improve communication between Area Associations and the City departments which should have liaison officers to respond to contacts and queries from these organizations.**
3. **Provide for staffing at the Councillor's office and meeting space in the community to meet with the Area Associations.**
4. **Legislate a greater role for meaningful consultation with the Area Associations.**

Yours Sincerely,



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