



April 11, 2019

10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Nancy Martins
Email: gvc@toronto.ca

RE: GV2.2 Special Committee on Governance Work Plan and Engagement Strategy

Dear Councillor Stephen Holyday, Chair and Members of the Special Committee on Governance,

First, we would congratulate the Special Committee on Governance (SCG) and its staff for an excellent start to the process with the proposed Workplan (Attachment 1), Engagement Strategy (Attachment 2), and the summary analysis of Submissions to date (Attachment 3).

The information submitted to the SCG is critical to its directions. The submissions of Dave Meslin and others have identified a fundamental concern that Toronto has a “democratic deficit”, due to a combination of its “single layer” structure and its high “population to representative ratio”, when compared with other major cities in North America. This touches at the heart of governance; the relationship between residents and their representative(s), and goes far beyond making sure that the reduction in number of councillors does not result in reduced service. Therefore we believe that the comparative analysis referenced under Theme 1: Supporting Neighbourhoods and Communities Relationships with Local Governance will be very important to understanding how to address the democratic deficit.

Specific suggestions for improvements are as follows:

- A Governance Project Advisory Committee should be established to act as a sounding board for research, ideas, preliminary results, etc. City Planning Division regularly uses this approach for its area studies, with good results.
- An additional Phase between Phase 2 and 3 to allow for development, and public consideration of options and models developed in Phase 2.
- In addition we recommend that at each meeting the SPG should invite presentations from outside specialists to inform the discussion, i.e. continue the practice started in Committee Meeting #2 (UofT Report). For example the June 2019 meeting might have a presentation on Comparative City Governance Models.
- Appendix 3, page 1: Phase 1 Questions and Consideration column: add - Conduct legal research on delegation of powers under current legislation

Yours truly,

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Cc: Chris Murray, City Manager
Meg Shields, A/Director, Corporate Policy, City Manager's Office

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.