

Tuesday October 27, 2020

Mayor Tory and Toronto City Council
12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE: CC25.1 Deciding the Method to Fill the Vacancy in Office of Councillor, Ward 22 - Scarborough Agincourt

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of City Council:

On behalf of the Scarborough Civic Action Network (SCAN), a non-partisan network that aims to support civic engagement activities across Scarborough to address inequities, we are writing to urge you to choose Option B, the by-election option, to fill the vacancy of city councillor for Ward 22 - Scarborough-Agincourt. SCAN believes the people who will be represented by this position ought to decide who their city councillor will be. A robust democratic process that involves inclusive, widespread community engagement is essential for deciding who will be councillor for Ward 22.

However, should you choose Option A whereby City Council would fill the vacancy “by appointing a person qualified to hold office in the City of Toronto,” SCAN strongly urges an appointment process whereby residents, community leaders and community organizations including grassroots groups from across Ward 22 are consulted to ensure public input informs this decision and thereby has some democratic legitimacy.

Just over the past week, SCAN conducted a community survey online and in-person in English, Chinese and Tamil across Ward 22 and obtained input from over 60 residents about what they want to see in their next city councillor. Below is a summary of the survey’s outcomes:

ISSUES OF CONCERN FOR WARD 22:

- Affordable housing for low to moderate income market rental tenants (73% of respondents)
- Affordable public transit (almost 60% of respondents)
- Addressing violence and conflict in underserved communities (almost 60% of respondents)

KEY QUALITIES FOR A CITY COUNCILLOR FOR WARD 22:

- Over 75% of respondents would like a city councillor who communicates and consults with a wide range of community members in who represent the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of Ward 22
- Almost 75% of respondents would like a city councillor who spends time connecting with community members in Ward 22 including marginalized and low-income individuals
- Additional comments include:
 - ✓ *someone who is able to bring communities together*
 - ✓ *Be a greater listener, and not a loud mouth or surly and unfriendly Councillor.*
 - ✓ *Have to be honest*
 - ✓ *A councillor who has an interest and caring heart*
 - ✓ *sending information to the people in the ward. Knowledge is power.*
 - ✓ *More services for low income families*
 - ✓ *I hope the new councillor can do work that will have impact.*
 - ✓ *To enjoy the flower garden of people, be accessible, helpful and produce answers.*
 - ✓ *Responsibility*
 - ✓ *Caring about the safety of our community’s infrastructure, community, and school.*

KEY GOALS RESIDENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE ACHIEVED IN WARD 22 BY 2022 (GROUPED ACCORDING TO THEMES):

Community-centered leadership

- *I want to be represented by an individual who is community minded, visible and is ready to serve and represent the interests of ward 22 residents.*
- *When we have events don't just come for "photo ops" come and have meaning engagement with the community. I would also be good that when there is a tragedy come and show support to the family/community (let us know that you care).*
- *More community consultations, listen to residents more*
- *Arrange and plan for more frequent public community meetings,*
- *equal representation of diverse interests (not just property owners)*

Public Transit Improvements

- *LRT or subway along the Sheppard Corridor*
- *Better bus service on Birchmount and Sheppard especially in the winter.*
- *More buses to public transit*
- *Transit issue - express buses on Warden, Birchmount and Kennedy during rush hours.*
- *Improvements in sheppard subway, transportation east. ttc is vey important. Sheppard/finch*
- *improvement on transit plan for Scarborough*
- *Better transportation*
- *Have a LRT or subway System serving Scarborough Agincourt*
- *Three-hour transfer can be given to the seniors who take the public transit.*
- *to see a subway for agincourt, an extension for sheppard subway. The need for improvement retail and affordable housing.*
- *Better subway*

Community Infrastructure, Programs and Spaces

- *More funding for community programs that are relevant to improving and strengthening our community and opportunities.*
- *I would like to see a new splash pad and park in the Glendower community.*
- *More sports spaces. More pretty things like flowers, statues.*
- *more spots to gather, more community pride*
- *community pool, more trees*
- *Stop with all the development and let's talk infrastructure and social supports*
- *More open and free spaces for residents to use*
- *Upgraded playgrounds and outdoor spaces, increased support for low income families, funding for community initiatives*
- *more cultural togetherness*
- *Get the community hub at Bridletowne Circle done. That would be huge.*
- *More real life learning educational programming for youth.*
- *Give low-income adults affordable fares. Enable low-income families to travel. Participate in community activities. Avoid home. Because of insufficient exercise. Get sick. Increase the medical burden*

Community Safety

- *No violence. No shooting. No bullying.*
- *More police patrols.*
- *Better safety*
- *More community safety*
- *more police patrols in libraries and neighbourhoods, and other public spaces.*
- *Stop gun violence*
- *No violence*

- *See more peace within the community*
- *Improved property and personal security. Police presence provides security.*
- *Road safety and driver education. Need more public information and education about road safety.*
- *More citizen contact with our Law enforcement workers, for better cooperation.*

Health

- *COVID policies are kept in place, preventing the spread of COVID.-19.*
- *More health services for seniors.*
- *More investment to community health. Not particularly hospitals or doctors, more food accessibility, community gardens, thinking of health holistically. Thinking about public health. As a community we can do more improve holistic health. More safe community spaces that are free.*

Efficiency

- *Monitoring public works like road repairs, snow removal. Do not waste money on useless processes - use it on social services to help people.*
- *Get things done quickly. Tired of waiting*

Economic development

- *Need more grocery stores in Bridlewood Mall, near us*
- *Improvement In living environment, more clean and more beautiful*
- *I hope to see the economy recover and everyone is healthy during the epidemic.*
- *More businesses opening*

Housing

- *More housing options, employment opportunities, funding and investment, safety*
- *For affordable housing, priority can be given to the low-income senior applicants, over 70 or 75 and have waited for over 10 years.*
- *Affordable housing*
- *Improvement of housing*

While we support a by-election for Ward 22, we hope this community input from residents will help inform the process should you opt to appoint a councillor for Ward 22. Furthermore, SCAN is happy to support additional community engagement for deciding the councillor for Ward 22 whatever option you decide and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

The SCAN Stewardship Group