



October 27, 2020

12th floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2  
Attention: Marilyn Toft

**RE: EX17.1 Towards Recovery and Building a Renewed Toronto**

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of City Council

We thank you for this extremely comprehensive report from the Toronto Office of Recovery and Rebuild (TORR), and the City Manager's assessment and recommendations. The City should be congratulated for its foresight in establishing this Office in the early days of the pandemic.

We propose strengthening the recommendations as follows:

1. The City Manager's recommendations (1 and 2, out of 6) emphasize and prioritize the need for "partnership" with other orders of government. While we agree it is clearly important to advocate cooperation, it is apparent that other governments, particularly the provincial government, is unwilling or unable to truly deliver on partnership.

The report cites examples of Provincial failure to fulfill partnership responsibilities:

(a) HousingTO Plan for affordable housing:

*The required investments and commitments to-date include:*

- *City investments of \$8.5 billion (\$5.5 billion committed to-date);*
- *Federal investments of \$7.9 billion (\$1.48 billion committed to-date); and*
- *Provincial investments of approximately \$7 billion (\$148 million committed to-date)*<sup>1</sup>

(b) The federal government's announced COVID 19 Resilience Funding Stream:

*...however the Province of Ontario has not yet indicated if it will opt-in to this stream and accept project applications.*<sup>2</sup>

Therefore we recommend that the City show the needed leadership, not just through supporting partnership, but by speaking with force to the Province, and leveling with our residents on where the laggards are, and what are the consequences.

2. The TORR report and the City Manager's analysis appear muted in regard to Climate matters, despite being the most profound issue of our time. The City has declared a Climate Emergency and yet the issue does not merit specific recommendations by the City Manager. The TORR report recommends that: *...the City formalize the application*

<sup>1</sup> City Manager Preliminary Analysis, page 2-3

<sup>2</sup> City Manager Preliminary Analysis, page 6

of a climate lens alongside equity analysis in any decision around infrastructure stimulus funding..<sup>3</sup>

We request that you include the specific insights and directions proposed by Gil Penalosa, founder of 8-80 Cities, and Dianne Saxe, Climate Advisory Committee for Toronto. Ms Saxe's report illustrates the merit of reaching out and engaging with the universities and colleges, which, as part of the civil society sector, currently appear to be missing from meaningful engagement in these matters.

3. The TORR report does not apply a "place based analysis" to the impact of COVID. The impacts are on whole communities, not just on individuals, and on places as well as people. City Planning should be applying a place based analysis to all the recommendations.
4. The attention to Municipal Finance<sup>4</sup> is weak, and does not address the critical revenue issue. The City should implement new forms of revenue, several of which have been discussed, but not addressed for years. These include: a vacancy tax, a parking tax for commercial properties, a vehicle registration tax, property taxes supplement for ultra high value homes, and variable rate development charges to encourage development in lagging areas. And a "climate lens" should be applied on all revenue measures to ensure that the City building implications are positive.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cc: Chris Murray, City Manager  
Dr. David Mowat, TORR  
Saad Rafi, TORR  
Gregg Lintern, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division  
Gil Penalosa  
Dianne Saxe

**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.

<sup>3</sup> City Manager Preliminary Analysis, page 6

<sup>4</sup> City Manager Preliminary Analysis, page 15-16