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December 7th, 2020

Economic and Community Development Committee

To the Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee:

Re: Request to Limit the Sale of Non-Essential Goods at Big-Box Stores to Level the Playing Field for Smaller Retailers

Summary:

Small retail stores have been instructed to close their doors for in-person shopping following the Province's announcement of a second COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. This mandate leaves small retailers vulnerable to losing business since they are unable to service more customers, pay their employees and afford rent. The request to limit the in-person sale of non-essential goods from big-box stores will provide an opportunity for our local neighborhood shops to remain open. This will help level out the playing field between big-box stores and smaller independently-owned small businesses.

Recommendations:

That the Economic and Community Development Committee recommends that:

1. City Council request the Provincial Government to consider limiting the in-person sale of non-essential goods at big-box retail stores in order to help smaller retailers keep their businesses open.
2. City Council request the City Manager and the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, to report on additional measures the City could employ to assist small business in facilitating the operation of their businesses to offset the impact of COVID-19 impacts and restrictions.
3. City Council request the City Manager to reach out to the Provincial and Federal Governments for additional support for small businesses in Toronto.

Best regards,

Councillor Mike Colle
Ward 8, Eglinton-Lawrence