



**THE ANNEX
RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

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November 23, 2021

By email: phc@toronto.ca

RE: PH 29.2 Changing Lanes: The City of Toronto's Review of Laneway Suites – Monitoring Program and Zoning By-law Amendments

We write regarding proposed amendments to the zoning by-law pertaining to Laneway Suites. While we fully support alternative housing and expanding available options, this must be approached with care. In our view, sustainability and the resilience of neighbourhoods must be primary factors in the decision-making process, not principles to be abandoned.

We are particularly concerned by the proposed decrease in soft landscaping requirements, currently at 85%. The consequent loss of permeable surfaces and green spaces is simply unacceptable. In fact, rather than reducing the requirements, the City should make them apply even to walkways rather than pandering to old-fashioned construction techniques.

Equally important is the maintenance of a healthy tree canopy. As new developments creep increasingly high, shadows and reduction of light have an adverse impact on trees. Any new development under this Laneway Suites proposal should be required to submit to a shadow study. Without adequate assessment, shadowing will not only diminish land value, it will result in a loss of growing spaces.

Permanent losses of growing spaces, losses of permeable surfaces and increased shadowing will have deleterious effects on the environment.

Finally, your report states that there are no financial impacts involved in the approval of Laneway Suites. While admittedly there is no overt and immediate cost to the City in this proposal, we see this view as incredibly short sighted. There are hidden costs down the road, costs to be paid for having ignored environmental protection. Just look to the tribulations currently being experienced by our neighbours in British Columbia. The more we relax rather than strengthen environmental regulations, the more we are inviting natural disasters like flooding. And these bring very real financial costs.

In short, it is imperative that we proactively address the climate emergency and build properly for our future. We cannot be so quick to build any type of housing without fully appreciating its impact on the future residents, the environment, and the resilience of Toronto. We respectfully request that you do not allow any reductions to the soft landscaping requirement of 85% and look at height restrictions more holistically.

Yours sincerely,



Rita Bilerman
Chair, Annex Residents' Association

Cc:

Councillor Mike Layton

Chief Planner and Executive Director Gregg Lintern

Mayor John Tory

Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations

Confederation of Resident & Ratepayer Associations in Toronto