



**MORE NEIGHBOURS
TORONTO**

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

RE: PH34.10 - Ready, Set, Midtown: Zoning Review - Final Report and Zoning By-law Amendment for Midtown 'Villages'

About More Neighbours Toronto

[More Neighbours Toronto](#) is a volunteer-only organization of housing advocates that believe in building more multi-family homes of all kinds for those who dream of building their lives in Toronto. We advocate for reforms to increase our city's ability to build more homes in every neighbourhood. We are a big-tent organization with members across the political spectrum who are committed to counterbalancing the anti-housing agenda that has dominated Toronto's politics, created an affordability crisis, and has cost burdened a new generation of aspiring residents. We are firmly committed to the principle that housing is a human right and believe Toronto should be inclusive and welcoming to all.

Position

More Neighbours Toronto generally supports these changes to the zoning by-law in the midtown 'villages' area (Item PH34.10). Some areas covered by the Yonge and Eglinton Secondary Plan have seen increased growth in recent years, while other areas remain unchanged or even declined in population as a result of the City's policies on stable Neighbourhoods. The proposed by-law preserves the ground floor retail and welcoming streetscapes that residents need, while allowing mixed use mid-rise structures for continued growth in the area. This area will remain an important transit hub with the completion of the Eglinton LRT and it is good to see this accounted for in the plans.

In particular, we were pleased to see:

- An attempt to simplify the by-law, changing properties still covered under old North York by-laws over to a City of Toronto by-law, as well as the replacement of many site-specific exceptions with more consistent rules.
- (However, we very much appreciate the overall summary and explanatory notes that staff provided since even the simpler zoning by-law remains challenging for the public to understand).
- Maximum heights that will allow mid-rise buildings.
- The replacement of floor space index with form-based regulations.

However,

- The areas now zoned for mid-rise will be subject to the mid-rise guidelines, which prioritize shadows and fears about overlook over homes for people with features like angular planes and maximum floor areas. We continue to hope that the City will revisit these policies given the housing crisis.
- Many of the buildings in the 'villages' were part of a large batch submitted to the heritage registry. Five years later, they remain listed with no further study or information released to the public. Given the large workload of the Preservation Board, these seem unlikely to undergo further study until developments are proposed. This creates an inefficient process and councillors should consider how these large listings contribute to the backlog and affect public trust in the heritage process.

Nevertheless, these issues seem to be beyond the scope of the zoning review so **More Neighbours encourages you to support the staff recommendations for PH34.10.**

Sincerely,

Colleen Bailey
More Neighbours Toronto Volunteer, Ward 15