



**Federation of
South Toronto
RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATIONS**

18 October, 2022

City Clerk's Office
City of Toronto
City Hall, 2nd Floor, West Tower
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

clerk@toronto.ca

Dear Mr. Elvidge,

RE: First meeting of the new City Council, 23 November 2022 & The Strong Mayors Act

The Federation of South Toronto Residents Associations (FoSTRA) is a federation that currently represents 24 residents' associations (RAs) in the five downtown wards – Wards 4, 9, 10, 11 and 13 – and, through these RAs, thousands of Toronto's residents.

FoSTRA is very concerned about the Strong Mayors Act, and the attempt to centralize so much power in one person, the mayor. Unless care is taken as to the manner in which the legislation is used in Toronto, the result could offend three basic principles of municipal government in Ontario:

1. It could breach the principle that Council is supreme.
2. It could end the independence of City staff and their willingness to provide their independent professional advice.
3. It could offend the principle that, with only a few exceptions relating to negotiating agreements and individual privacy, Council will conduct its business and its deliberations in public.

These are important principles that should not be breached. This can be accomplished, within the legislation, by ensuring that the mayor never exercises powers given to him under this legislation, without first getting the consent of City Council by a majority vote. Thus, before the mayor approves a budget, he should put the budget to Council for discussion and vote, and only approve a budget that has the support of Council.



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This process should be used for organizational changes of Council (including wards), for staff appointments, and for directing staff. For the appointment of committee chairs, the mayor should agree to seek the advice of the particular committee, and only appoint chairs who have the majority support of the committee. The same process should be used for the appointment of chairs of agencies, boards, and commissions.

Similarly, the legislation requires the mayor to adhere to provincial priorities which have not been defined with precision in regulation – expected in early November – but will involve the approval of housing and the approval of infrastructure such as transit, roads, sewage and water, as well as development charges. The mayor should agree that any such actions on his part will only be taken with the approval of the City Council.

Adopting these procedures for the exercise of powers by the mayor under the legislation will ensure that the decisions made are in the best interests of the city as decided by the full City Council.

We ask that the Mayor and the Council deal with this letter and these proposals as a first order of business so that the new rules are set in place from day one.

Sincerely yours,

Chair

cc. John Tory, mayor_tory@toronto.ca
John Sewell, john@johnsewell.ca
Geoff Kettel, gkettel@gmail.com