



February 28, 2024

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Cathrine Regan, Committee Administrator

RE: EX12.3 - Implementation of a Commercial Parking Levy

Dear Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of the Executive Committee,

The Federation of North Toronto Residents Assn (FoNTRA) strongly supports the efforts to address the longer term finances of the City, and expand the revenue tools available to improve its financial well-being. The proposed levy is estimated to generate around \$100 to \$150 million in new revenues, which will support the City in making critical investments in transit and social services. The levy should also encourage a modal shift towards transit and active transportation, thereby helping alleviate congestion, reduce carbon emissions, and improve air quality.

FoNTRA, in its annual Input to the City's Budget has always advocated that revenue measures under consideration be assessed not just from a financial perspective, or for their ease of administration, but also for their contribution (positive or negative) to "city building". In other words do they align with Official Plan objectives such as building a city that reduces the need for travel, that encourages true mixed use development, that supports public transit, that is active transportation-friendly, that is greener, and more equitable to its residents?

In that regard we feel that the Commercial Parking Levy makes a positive contribution. It is apparent that there is a blatant inequity with respect to parking spaces currently. Parking in public spaces such as those on main streets are charged for, yet private spaces such as big box parking lots and shopping malls are free. A parking levy on private spaces would start to rectify the inequity faced by small businesses and BIAs competing with shopping malls and big box stores.

However we note that those who park on main streets pay (directly) for their use of the space. This needs to occur with respect to private parking lots such as mall parking as well, otherwise the situation is still unfair as those who use parking space are being subsidized by those who do not. The City should encourage commercial landlords to convert free parking to paid parking rather than simply absorbing the cost and imposing higher prices. This way the levy can function as a method to encourage choosing alternative modes of transportation while raising the means to fund it.

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cathie Macdonald
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cc: Stephen Conforti, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer
Casey Brendon, Director, Revenue Services,
John Longarini, Manager, Operational Support, Revenue Services,
Lauren Birch, Director, Strategic Policy & Programs, Office of the Chief
Financial Officer and Treasurer,
Kerri Voumvakis, Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning
Division

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 250,000 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.