



June 24, 2024

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Sylwia Przewdziecki

RE: MM19.26 - Towards a Beautiful City - by Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Parthi Kandavel

We strongly support the above noted Motion, being aspirational, yet also practical and timely.

To quote Tom Cohen, Eglinton Park Residents Assn, recently returned from a visit to Spain:

“We have one Calatrava galleria (Brookfield Place). Valencia, population 800,000 has a Calatrava opera house with palm trees growing from a mezzanine, and a Calatrava science museum, and a cinema-sphere, and parking structure, and two Calatrava bridges, and a semi-Calatrava mega-aquarium. Now, he’s a native son, but, hey!”

Councillor John Matlow’s rationale for his motion is “Toronto can be beautiful if we choose to make it so”. Amen.

The motion lists a litany of woes that exist in today’s Toronto, but to be fair, the woes cannot fairly all be laid at the feet of the City alone, but also with the Province with its moves to reduce the number of wards, override City-adopted area plans (e.g. OPAs 405,406), and starve, close, and privatize Provincial assets in the City (Ontario Place, Ontario Science Centre).

Neither is this initiative a new one for the City – twenty years ago, former Mayor David Miller’s Clean and Beautiful City initiative planned for the rejuvenation of parks and public spaces and revitalization of the waterfront. It laid out four steps to achieve beautiful city goals:

(i) enhancing urban design and architectural elements of all development;

- (ii) forging key partnerships and strategic alliances with public and private partners on public realm initiatives;
- (iii) working closely with the development industry to ensure new buildings met the City's urban design standards and provided a high level of public amenity;
- (iv) beautifying public parks, local parks, ravines and other civic open spaces through landscaping, parks design and public art.

And importantly, the initiative mandated a Roundtable on the Beautiful City with the establishment of a number of citizen advisory roundtables.

It is this last point that we once again emphasize - the importance of public consultation and broad involvement in such initiatives.

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cathie Macdonald
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cc: Kerri Voumvakis, Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
Howie Dayton, Acting General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation
Barbara Gray, General Manager, Transportation Services
Emelia Floro, Director, Urban Design, 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.