



December 4, 2024

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Nancy Martins

RE: PH17.2 - Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods - Neighbourhood Retail and Services Study- Phase Two Final Report (Ward All)

Dear Councillor Gord Perks, Chair, and Members of Planning and Housing Committee,

The Federation of North Toronto Residents Associations (FoNTRA) supported the introduction of the Major Streets category in residential areas. We did not participate in the consultations regarding neighbourhood retail and service uses.

We support in principle the permission for a wide range of businesses that may be useful to community residents, helping to build “complete communities”. The proposed bylaw amendments would permit small businesses, including home occupations, but with restrictions in size and other factors that can affect nearby homes. The major location for these uses is to be on the Major Streets and the Major Streets corner lots with local streets. Such uses were envisaged with the approval of the Major Streets official plan and zoning bylaw amendments. More limited uses are proposed to be permitted adjacent to schools and parks. We do not understand this rationale, except that the sites may be more isolated from homes. Entertainment uses are limited to special zones.

We defer to the comments from residents that live in the affected neighbourhoods.

When this project was first at PHC in July 2022, we were skeptical about its feasibility and practicality. Home offices can work. In a retail universe that satisfies consumers' desires for both shopping convenience (via on-line and next day (or less) delivery), and bulk shopping at megastores like COSTCO, what local businesses (except home offices) will work and where? It is questionable whether there is any longer a

sufficient desire, and consequently an adequate market, for new local neighbourhood services, or whether this is a planners' dream or throwback to a simpler time?

We note that there is considerable concern being expressed that the proposal has not been adequately consulted upon, and consequently there are several requests for deferral to allow for further community consultation. We believe this is part of a wider concern about the pace of change in planning policy, but there is also a lack of discussion of the interrelationship of the various EHON and other City initiatives. There appears to be the potential for significant overlap between the various initiatives, and therefore confusion as to what is being proposed. While overlap is not necessarily a bad thing, it needs to be understood and communicated. For example, the Major Streets policies expand some commercial uses into areas designated Neighbourhoods. After all, locations deep in the Neighbourhoods designated lands (such as minor roads, and cul de sacs) are unlikely to be suitable for neighbourhood retail and services.

As such we request:

- That there be further consultation on the Neighbourhood Retail and Services proposals,
- That PHC recommend to City Council that City Planning be directed to report back on the overlaps and interrelationships of the EHON and related initiatives (such as Neighbourhood Retail and Services, Avenues, Major Streets, Mid-Rise) both at a policy level, and by application in the geography of the City, and the status of each.

Respectfully submitted,

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cathie Macdonald
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cc: Kyle Knoeck, Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
Caroline Samuel, Director (Acting), Zoning and Secretary Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment, City Planning Division
Michael Noble, Project Manager, Waterfront Secretariat, City Planning Division,
Candace Safonovs, Planner, Planning Research and Analytics, City Planning Division,
FoSTRA

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 170,000 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.