



January 27, 2025

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

**RE: EX20.13 Toward Municipal Autonomy and Effective Local Governance
(Ward All)**

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Executive Committee,

This is to express our strong support for Councillor Josh Matlow's motion, seconded by Councillor Jamaal Myers, that:

- **City Council request the City Manager to establish a Program Advisory Body on Municipal Autonomy and Effective Local Governance.**

The body would research and report on ways to end the provincial government's suffocating dominance over and interference in City decision-making, including the potential value of a constitutionally-protected City Charter.

As a federation of residents associations we are well aware, and extremely troubled, by the overreach of the Province into municipal decision-making, and the City's inability to manage development. Residents are generally unaware of the extent of overreach of the Province on numerous land use planning matters, such as Official Plan Amendments (e.g. OPA 405 Yonge Eglinton Secondary Plan), Minister's Zoning orders (MZOs), elimination of heritage listing status after two years (Bill 23, Bill 185) etc, and most recently, the authority to remove bike lanes (Bill 212).

Let's not forget that this overreach began in 2018 when the newly elected government unilaterally overhauled the City's ward system in the middle of a municipal election. In the subsequent Court appeal, one of the FONTRA Co-Chair was an Intervenor.

We agree that "Toronto needs a new arrangement with senior levels of government that ensures we have the independence necessary for 21st century cities to thrive

and achieve results for residents”. Without this the City faces a slow decline, and a massive loss of democracy.

It is important that the City begin now to investigate and research the matter and involve residents fully in discussions.

We urge that Executive Committee support this important initiative.

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cathie Macdonald
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cc: Paul Johnson, City Manager
Jason Thorne, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
CORRA, FoSTRA, SUN

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.