



May 6, 2025

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

**RE: IE21.4 - Transitioning Towards Zero-Emission Outdoor Power Equipment**

**Dear Chair, and Members of Infrastructure and Environment Committee,**

The Federation of North Toronto Residents Associations supports a ban of two-stroke engine small equipment, including gas-powered leaf blowers and related garden equipment, and as such recommends that the Committee and Council approve **Option B - Pursue a ban on the use of two-stroke engine equipment.** We are also in support of the amendments suggested by several individuals and organizations:

- **that the effective date of the ban on gas-powered leaf blowers be January 1, 2027, and that a seasonal exemption from October 1 to November 30 apply only until that date, after which no use of gas leaf blowers would be permitted.**

The revised date would provide industry participants with sufficient time to adapt to the use of existing zero emission alternate equipment, and encouragement to manufacturers to continue their efforts to refine technology which can accommodate more demanding conditions during periods of heavy leaf accumulation.

Our support for Option B is based on the following:

1. Gas leaf blowers and related garden equipment represent significant health hazards to operators and bystanders alike. These are caused by excessive noise and harmful emissions that include carcinogens.
2. City Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, and a ban on two-stroke equipment and its polluting effects is consistent with the aims of the City's TransformTO Climate Action Strategy.
3. Zero emission alternate equipment is readily available and is constantly being improved to be effective during all seasons.

4. The City's survey of business stakeholders indicates that some landscape businesses have already begun the transition to zero emission equipment, and that approximately two-thirds of respondents would support a phased-in ban. Furthermore, those businesses that have converted to battery-powered equipment have reported benefits to their operations and staff. The Committee and City should reward the progressive!

However we note that a ban as contemplated by Option B would have enforcement implications. As such we strongly recommend that Option B be amended to require:

- **that staff be directed to report back on enforcement implications and needs, including a schedule of fines for non-compliance**

It is vital that the City take leadership in helping us to veer away from a climate crisis, and reduce unnecessary and unhealthy noise, and that the Committee begin that initiative by supporting a ban on two-stroke small engine equipment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel  
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cathie Macdonald  
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cc: James Nowlan, Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry Division  
Alice Xu, Director, Policy, Planning & Outreach, Environment, Climate and Forestry 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.