



July 29, 2026

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2PHC
Attention: Sylwia Przewdziecki

MM43.63 - Improving the Development Review Process for Faster Housing Delivery - by Councillor Josh Matlow, seconded by Councillor Jamaal Myers

Dear Chair Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of City Council,

This is to express our **support - but with reservations** for the Member Motion that seeks to address current processes and practices which impact the timely delivery and cost of housing, and including the following specific matters: acquisition or conveyance of public laneways, the negotiation and execution of tieback and crane swing agreements, road occupancy approvals, servicing reviews, and construction staging on lands designated for future parks.

We are advised that the Motion is primarily intended to address issues with affordable and not for profit housing projects, which encounter many challenging issues in the review process. It is not primarily about market housing. Resolving inter-departmental bottlenecks (like Transportation, Parks, and Real Estate) to help non-profit and affordable housing projects move forward without administrative delays is a laudable effort. The Motion mentions that statutory review times have improved by over 80 percent. We residents, however, are experiencing a reduction of meaningful community consultation and public transparency.

Many residents and community groups would challenge the claim that the recent changes to the review process represent purely positive "progress". In fact, when we look at the Development Review Implementation Status Update and Accomplishments Report (July 2025¹) the gap in priorities is clear. The report measures success almost entirely by tracking processing velocity and internal workflow metrics for applicants—it offers zero data or evaluation on public

¹ <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX25.2>

consultation outcomes, on community feedback, or on whether residents are getting adequate time to digest complex proposals. Speeding up internal processes is a one-sided metric if it leaves the public in the dark.

When review timelines are compressed to hit those metrics, the public side of the equation gets squeezed out:

- **Loss of Early Education (Preliminary Planning Reports):** The elimination of Preliminary Planning Reports removed the plain-language summaries, Official Plan policy contexts, and preliminary issue lists that used to educate communities. Without this early baseline, residents can no longer prepare intelligent feedback or participate effectively in early meetings.
- **Lip Service to the Planning Act:** Today, complex planning reports are released to the public just 7 to 10 days before a statutory Community Council vote. After months of behind-the-scenes negotiations between staff and applicants, residents are given a week to digest hundreds of pages. That isn't genuine consultation—it turns statutory meetings into a rubber-stamping exercise.

We request that the Motion be amended to include **community consultation** as an essential component of service delivery. *Specifically, we request that Recommendation 1 be amended as follows:*

- *to direct staff to present recommendations to re-integrate public service standards respecting public engagement—including early, plain-language reporting mechanisms -- into the compressed review timeline.*

Yours truly,

Geoff Kettel

Geoff Kettel
Co-Chair, FoNTRA

Cc: Jason Thorne, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning
Oren Tamir, Interim Executive Director, Development Review

The Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations (FoNTRA) is a non-profit, volunteer organization comprised of over 35 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.