

HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Box 68522, 360A Bloor St. W.
Toronto, ON M5S 1X1



To Mayor Tory and Members of Council:
Re: Item CC1.1

Nov. 30, 2018.

Harbord Village Residents' Association, in company with the Annex Residents Association, welcome many elements of the Staff recommendations on changes to City Council's governance system.

First, it is clear Staff recognizes the change will be significant and recommends a full public process before any permanent structural change is adopted. We trust the Special Committee on Governance will embark on a full, City-wide and transparent process to ensure residents will be consulted. Time taken now will save trouble later.

Second, we note Staff explicitly acknowledges that the core problem of the reduction from 47 to 25 Councillors is how to lessen the load on Council members without damaging governance. We appreciate Staff's description of changes to Council Committee Structure as transitional, since, over time, adjustments are almost certain to be needed.

Third, we support the Community Council boundaries outlined in the report.

Fourth, the replacement of Councillors by residents on Boards, Agencies and Commissions is necessary but is sufficiently significant, it should be subject to review.

We are, however, deeply troubled by the recommendations on the selection process for members of the public to serve in place of Councillors. The report does not explain how the new Civic Appointments and Mayors Corporations Nominating Panels are to be chosen.

We see no compelling rationale for operating outside the normal screening of public appointments by the Clerk's department (as is recommended for the Tribunals Panel). The peril in assigning the population of the two new screening committees to the Mayor—or any group of Councillors—is that it leaves the entire process open to the perception of cronyism or bias and can lead to the appointment of just plain pals. The ultimate decision by Council is not an adequate corrective. This task should be given to the Clerk.

Overall, we believe this Staff report represents a responsible beginning, with much work remaining. We would welcome the opportunity to assist.

We will comment separately on the staffing allocation for Councillor's offices.

Respectfully,

Gail Misra, Chair
Sue Dexter, Board
Harbord Village Residents' Association

David Harrison, Chair
Henry Wiercinski, Vice-Chair
Annex Residents' Association