

# HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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June 5, 2019.

This morning, without notice, the Provincial Government threatened to upend Toronto development processes, putting at risk the liveable city and ignoring the advice of thousands of residents who participated in the formulation of their local planning rules.

The Harbord Village Residents' Association requests today's Ministerial decision to amend the TOCore official plan be withheld until consultation and review by the City of Toronto and its residents can take place.

By way of an interview with the Globe and Mail, the Minister of Municipal Affairs announced transit hubs are now to be the site of increased development. This and other changes could prove to be destructive to TOCore, the new vision for the downtown area of Toronto.

The TOCore plan was a balanced vision, allowing for intensification, and covering everything from parks, to sunshine, to increases in building heights and density, to power, water and sewer capacity, commercial uses, and infrastructure needs. It allowed for doubling the population in the next 25 years while creating a liveable city.

It was seven years in the making. Its balance now threatened by the stroke of a ministerial pen.

Thousands of residents participated in its creation through public meetings, websites, electronic contacts, lectures, design review panels.

As an example, in a single phase alone, in addition to public and sector meetings, lectures and panels there were

- 15,327 website visits from 10,813 visitors
- 2,086 survey responses
- 2,419 tweets with 9.3 million views
- Most popular tweet: "TOcore workshop will consider sunlight and how it shapes the quality of life on downtown parks and streets"

People listened. People responded. People cared. TOCore had unprecedented public response.

Most significant, the participants in the survey were 48% renters and 44% owners. And

39% of the respondents were between 29 and 34-- the demographic that may be most affected by the scarcity of rental and affordable housing. If news reports are accurate, today's rule change, could hit the quality of life of young families hardest, by reducing the minimum floor size for a unit, among other changes.

The official plan, approved by council, encountered just one objector: the minister.

Once again, with no metrics to prove his case, the minister justifies increasing density, reducing liveability by favouring development over parks, sunshine, schools, daycares, with a claim he will be creating affordable housing units with no mechanism for providing it. This is a blunt instrument with no certainty of result, and the potential for negative impacts on liveability centred on parts of the city with transit hubs.

He also falsely argues renters and low-income residents do not live in the Downtown. We are easily the most diverse populations in the City, with a variety of housing types including apartments, co-ops, affordable housing, TCHC units, as well as low rise, mostly semi-detached, row housing and tower developments. And we are not averse to more residents—but developments should fit.

As happened with Bill 108, the minister also ignores the fact that since 2002, 242,000 housing units have been built within the City. There are 144,000 units approved but not yet built—representing more than 200,000 people. TOCore opened the door to more development.

We strenuously object to the actions of the Provincial Government. It is a sad day when years of work by residents to create a liveable City can be dismissed without consultation or evidence to justify such changes or mitigate the damage they might do.

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