

December 1, 2022

TO: Premier Doug Ford, Minister Steve Clark, MPP Laurie Scott (Chair)

RE: Bill 39 Better Municipal Governance Act 2022; Schedule 1, Amendment to the City of Toronto Act, 2006

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Schedule 1 Amendment to the City of Toronto Act 2006 – the power for the Mayor of Toronto to introduce a by-law and pass it with more than one-third in favour (the so-called '*proactive veto*') – be struck from Bill 39

Dear Mr. Premier, Mr. Minister and Madame Chair,

Please see the letter to Mayor Tory from the Board of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association, attached (pages 3, 4). The Board encourages you to disregard the request from the Mayor for such powers as an unacceptable and unnecessary assault on our democracy.

More homes are needed in Toronto and beyond; there is no debate about that. However, for the Province to contemplate sacrificing the most central tenet of our democracy – majority rule – believing it is necessary in order to accomplish that objective is misguided, short sighted and completely unacceptable. It is an admission of failure – of comprehension, of inventiveness, of persuasiveness. It misreads the electorate. It is unnecessary. Further, the downstream risks to civic governance cannot be anticipated and are entirely negative.

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA), incorporated in 1983, represents over 35,000 residents living in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood of Toronto. The neighbourhood – bounded by Yonge St., Queen St. E., Parliament St. and the rail corridor to the south – is a mixed-income, ethnically diverse residential and commercial community adjoining the Central Business District. It contains the oldest neighbourhood in the (now) City of Toronto, the *original ten blocks* of the Town of York (dating from 1793). It, like much of downtown Toronto is under intense development pressure. SLNA is a full participant in the development process, advocating for *responsible* development.

Development supported by only eight of twenty-five Councillors is not *responsible*! It encourages rather than discourages NIMBYism. It is much easier to foresee backroom trade-offs that would prove to be a detriment to the City as a whole – which are more difficult (although not impossible) in the current situation, where majority support is required.



All in all, this is an unprecedented, overreaching, anti-democratic proposal. It cannot be included in the final draft of Bill 39. The SLNA Board fully supports the unanimous voices of Toronto's City Councillors and strongly requests its removal.

Thank you for your attention to this input

Sincerely

p.p.
Board of Directors
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association

cc: Mayor John Tory

Members of City Council

Councillors:

Paul Ainslie	Brad Bradford	Alejandra Bravo
Jon Burnside	Shelley Carroll	Lily Cheng
Mike Colle	Gary Crawford	Vincent Crisanti
Paula Fletcher	Stephen Holyday	Ausma Malik
Nick Mantas	Josh Matlow	Jennifer McKelvie
Chris Moise	Amber Morley	Jamaal Myers
Frances Nunziata	James Pasternak	Gord Perks
Anthony Perruzza	Jaye Robinson	Dianne Saxe
Michael Thompson		

Councillor's Staff:

Edward LaRusic
Bushra Mir, Tom Davidson

Members of Provincial Parliament:

Chris Glover
Kristyn Wong-Tam

SLNA Board of Directors:

Ms. V. Ilgacs	Mr. S. Linton	Ms. S. McMillan
Ms. D. Patterson	Ms. T. Tenenbaum	Ms. R. Tilson



– COPY –

November 26, 2022

TO: Mayor John Tory

RE: Bill 39 Better Municipal Governance Act, 2022; Schedule 1, Amendment to the City of Toronto Act, 2006

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Mayor reject the undemocratic strong mayor powers introduced by the provincial government, in particular the power to introduce a by-law and pass it with more than one-third in favour (the so-called '*proactive veto*').

Dear Mr. Mayor,

The Board of Directors of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA) is both surprised and extremely disappointed to learn that you requested the “strong mayor” '*proactive veto*' power from the Province.

The Board completely agrees with the pressing need for housing. However, to assert that the only way to accomplish the provincial objective is to eviscerate our democracy demonstrates a lack of confidence in your ability to govern effectively through the democratic process that – to this point – has not been characteristic of your time in the mayor's office. Very disappointing.

Secondly, your request that we “trust you” is short sighted on two fronts. It presumes that all of your successors will also be *trustworthy*, and while that is the expectation of every voter, it is not a pillar on which to build an effective, democratic government 'of the people'. It also ignores the risk that a future mayor could be pressured by the Province to do its bidding, against the will of elected representatives.

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA), incorporated in 1983, represents over 35,000 residents living in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood of Toronto. The neighbourhood – bounded by Yonge St., Queen St. E., Parliament St. and the rail corridor to the south – is a mixed-income, ethnically diverse residential and commercial community adjoining the Central Business District. It contains the oldest neighbourhood in the (now) City of Toronto, the *original ten blocks* of the Town of York (dating from 1793).

This neighbourhood is experiencing an extraordinary period of intensification from new (principally) residential development. By evidence, developers now have the ear of the Province through the Ontario Land Tribunal, which most frequently rules in their favour over the objections of City planning. What is not needed to tip the scale further is a non-democratic '*proactive veto*' power in the Mayor's office disguised under the false premise that it is the only way to build more homes faster.



The SLNA Board joins your predecessors in the Mayor's chair in objecting to this overreaching power and urges that you reject it and request that it be removed from proposed legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Sincerely,

p.p.
Board of Directors
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association

cc: Mayor John Tory

Members of City Council

Councillors:

Paul Ainslie	Brad Bradford	Alejandra Bravo
Jon Burnside	Shelley Carroll	Lily Cheng
Mike Colle	Gary Crawford	Vincent Crisanti
Paula Fletcher	Stephen Holyday	Ausma Malik
Nick Mantas	Josh Matlow	Jennifer McKelvie
Chris Moise	Amber Morley	Jamaal Myers
Frances Nunziata	James Pasternak	Gord Perks
Anthony Perruzza	Jaye Robinson	Dianne Saxe
Michael Thompson		

Councillor's Staff:

Edward LaRusic
Bushra Mir, Tom Davidson

City Manager:

Tracy Cook

Members of Provincial Parliament:

Chris Glover
Kristyn Wong-Tam

SLMNBIA:

George Milbrandt
Al Smith

SLNA Board of Directors:

Ms. V. Ilgacs	Mr. S. Linton	Ms. S. McMillan
Ms. D. Patterson	Ms. T. Tenenbaum	Ms. R. Tilson

FoSTRA:

Rick Green – Chair