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To: Mayor David Miller and Members of council  
Toronto City Council

From: Direct City Action

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<i>Policy + Finance Committee</i>	

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Subject: Governance Panel recommendations, the Muscular Mayor proposal

Date: December 6, 2005.

At its meeting last evening, Direct City Action discussed the recommendations of the Governance Panel and the decision of the Policy and Finance Committee to recommend that council adopt those recommendations rather than first inviting members of the public to make their views known. Council is being asked to adopt the proposals for a Muscular Mayor system, and then to ask the public for input in how the plan will be implemented. Sticking in the words 'in principle' doesn't disguise the fact that the proposal has been adopted by the Committee, which is probably the most unprincipled thing possible. It's a backwards way of doing things.

On page 26, the Panel's report states "Torontonians will have the power to choose the system that will deliver the city we want." But not if Council does what the Policy and Finance Committee is recommending.

Why the rush to judgment before the public can learn of the proposals and respond to them? There seems only one reasonable explanation: there is an unspoken tacit agreement between the mayor and the premier that council will adopt some kind of Muscular Mayor proposal before the City of Toronto Act legislation is introduced next week.

Senior members of the provincial government have been very interested in ensuring that Toronto has a system which gives the mayor more power

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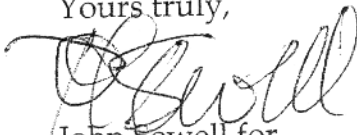
and councillors less. But there's a political problem with the provincial government dictating how Toronto will be governed - particularly when it is also saying that the city should have more powers of self government. So the deal seems to be that the mayor will arrange for city council itself to accept this arrangement before the public notices.

There's no question but that there will be widespread opposition when the public learns about it in coming months. Which members of the public want to see one quarter of the councillors - those who are friends with the mayor - to have access to the decision-making levers at city hall at the expense of the other three quarters of the councillors who are frozen out of the key decision-making positions? Which members of the public think that the mayor should personally choose the senior staff of the city - staff who will be loyal to the mayor rather than to the council or the citizens? The Muscular Mayor system being proposed is a serious step backwards for local democracy, particularly in a scenario where the mayor who has all this power is closely allied with powerful fundraisers and movers and shakers in the development industry. One can understand that the mayor is interested in having all this power - but it is not in the interests of members of council, or in the interests of the citizenry.

Council should reject the recommendations of the Policy and Finance Committee. It should decide that the proposals of the Governance Panel be subject to a two - three month program of public information, public discussion, and public debate, after which council will make an informed decision. We believe that if council decides to adopt the recommendations today, this will become the event which defines and distinguishes candidates during election year.

We urge you not to endorse the Muscular Mayor proposal. First listen to the public, then make a decision.

Yours truly,

  
John Sewell for  
Direct City Action.

[www.directcityaction.ca](http://www.directcityaction.ca)