



# Michael Walker

**North Toronto, Councillor**  
City Hall, 2nd Floor, Suite 15  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

**Tel:** 416 392-7906  
**Fax:** 416 392-0124  
councillor\_walker@city.toronto.on.ca

March 29, 2000

Mr. Paul Bedford  
Executive Director and Chief Planner  
City Planning Division – Urban Planning and Development Services  
22nd Floor  
Metro Hall

**Re: Official Plan Submission #2**

Dear Mr. Bedford,

I am forwarding you the attached submission as a follow-up to my earlier submission of November 15, 1999 regarding the new Official Plan.

As you know, I have serious concerns as to the direction in which certain aspects of the new Official Plan appear to be heading. That I have received no response to my earlier submission, nor heard any comments that might allay the concerns expressed in that letter serve only to deepen my apprehension and uneasiness relative to the new Official Plan and its effects on low-density residential neighbourhoods.

In the interim since my last correspondence, I have discussed this issue with a number of tenant associations, resident & ratepayer associations; individual residents and outside planners. To varying degrees, all see the blanket policy of "intensification" as a major threat to the stability of our local neighbourhoods. I share their concern.

The new Official Plan seems to be heading in a direction that is out of sync with the priorities of this City and the greatness of this City. While I appreciate that it recognizes the existence of stable neighbourhoods and announces an intent to protect them through its first lens, my concern is that the scope of those protections are limited and thus insufficient.

Already, it is becoming increasingly difficult for individual residents, tenants, respective associations and local politicians to defend against developers intent on "cashing in" on the amenities, sense of community and quality of life we have built in our residential neighbourhoods. Even now, limits on heights and densities in our Zoning By-law function more as a starting point in negotiating for additional heights and densities, rather than the maximum restrictions they are supposed to represent.

If the primary thrust of the new Official Plan is intensification; if it is to speak in generalities that are wide-open to interpretation; if our Zoning By-law continues to be weakened, then in my

*Councillor Michael Walker  
Official Plan Submission II  
Page 2*

opinion, it will not be long before signs of urban decay become visible in Toronto's neighbourhoods .

Great cities are defined by how they work for people – individual citizens and larger communities. The quality of life that we enjoy here in Toronto has come about in large part due to the vigilance of ordinary citizens in addition to some visionary planners and politicians who had fundamental beliefs in the strength of local democracy. However, that quality of life is vulnerable.

People are active and involved in their community when they sense that they have some kind of control over its destiny. The new Official Plan should reaffirm our commitment to those ideals that have made this City what it is today. It should strengthen current restrictions on development in stable residential neighbourhoods and provide residents with the limits and controls that they need to safeguard them.

The creation of a new Official Plan provides us with an opportunity to do something visionary - an opportunity to formally protect the neighbourhoods that have made this city so successful. The attached submission provides an overview of a "Stable Neighbourhoods Policy" which must, in my opinion, be included as part of the new Official Plan. This policy would formally protect stable residential neighbourhoods and provide residents with the tools to effectively shape, maintain and defend their neighbourhoods without diminishing the overall objectives of the new Official Plan.

Please carefully consider the attached submission carefully. I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Walker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Michael Walker  
Councillor – Ward 22

NAC/nc

Encl/