



Council Member Motion

For the Governance and Priorities Meeting of January 22nd 2015

Date: January 16 2015 **From:** Lisa Helps and Marianne Alto
Subject: Councillor Neighbourhood Liaison Terms of Reference

Recommendation

That Council adopt the Terms of Reference for a Councillor Neighbourhood Liaison as detailed in Appendix A.

Summary

On December 18th 2014, Council held a special Governance and Priorities Committee meeting in the form of a workshop with the Neighbourhood Association Presidents with the following purpose, agenda, outcomes and questions.

Purpose

- a.) Hold a conversation with the neighbourhood associations and councillors to help better define the role of a councillor neighbourhood liaison
- b.) Ask each neighbourhood about the challenges and opportunities facing them in the next four years and get a list from them of the skill sets and areas of expertise they'd be looking for in a councillor liaison. This will help council in deciding who works with which neighbourhood and city staff in understanding the lay of the land for neighbourhoods.

Agenda

- 1.) Introduction to workshop purpose (5 minutes)
- 2.) Introduction of participants (20 minutes)
- 3.) Defining the role of the councillor neighbourhood liaison (60 minutes)
- 4.) Challenges and opportunities facing each neighbourhood - list of skills and experiences needed in a council liaison (15 minutes)
- 5.) Wrap up and thank you (10 minutes)

Outcomes

- 1. Agreed upon terms of reference for the role of councillor neighbourhood liaison
- 2. A sense of what each neighbourhood needs in a councillor liaison
- 3. A sense of how the City can better support neighbourhoods more generally

Questions

- 1. What are the opportunities facing your neighbourhood in the next four years?
- 2. What are the challenges facing your neighbourhood in the next four years?
- 3. What skills, experience and qualities you would like in a councilor liaison?
- 4. How can City Council and City Staff support and work with neighbourhoods more effectively?

During the meeting, the Neighbourhood Association presidents and the Councillors co-crafted a draft of the Terms of Reference (TOR) to guide the work of a Councillor Neighbourhood Liaison. After the workshop, the draft TOR were circulated to those in attendance to solicit feedback. Comments were received from two Neighbourhood Association presidents. This input is reflected in the final TOR presented in Appendix A.

In addition to the Terms of Reference and neighbourhood liaison appointments, those in attendance discussed a number of other items, which have been flagged and may be raised at or Council's Strategic Planning Session. This list was also circulated to those in attendance and is included here.

Issues arising from Special December 18th GPC with Neighbourhood Associations

Strategic

- Provide information and support to Neighbourhood Associations with regard to funding opportunities that are available to help move forward neighbourhood initiatives
- Help Neighbourhood Associations with strategic planning for their neighbourhoods.
- Provide ongoing capacity building for Neighbourhood Associations.
- Provide regular workshops for Neighbourhood Association board members.
- Review the delivery of city services in relation to neighbourhoods (with an eye to a 'one city' approach).

Administrative

- Create contact list for City Departments so that Neighbourhood Associations can go directly to staff for operational matters.
- Check city mailing lists and ensure the lists for neighbourhood association presidents are up to date.

Appendix A

Terms of Reference for a Councillor Neighbourhood Liaison

Council appoints a councillor to act as a liaison to each neighbourhood association. These appointments are made at the beginning of a new term of council and are for a minimum of two years. Council will review the appointments at the end of the two-year period with an option to renew the appointment or to adjust according to neighbourhood needs and council discretion.

In addition to 'walking the talk' and working with neighbourhoods to support them in advancing their priorities and building their capacity, the roles and responsibilities of a Councillor Liaison include:

Share Information About City Processes

1. Help inform the neighbourhood and Neighbourhood Association on Council and staff decision-making processes.
2. Inform the Neighbourhood Association of important City business and issues of relevance to the neighbourhood.
3. Provide information on city processes and initiatives of relevance to the neighbourhood.
4. Connect the Neighbourhood Association with staff in relevant departments.
5. Promote the Neighbourhood Association as a community organization with other potential partners, businesses and other community and industry organizations.

Be Informed

1. Take the time to learn about the neighbourhood including its values and history and about the emerging issues, concerns and opportunities.
2. Be knowledgeable about neighbourhood priorities and the neighbourhood's relationship with City Hall.
3. Be informed and aware of trends and issues in other neighbourhoods that are relevant to the neighbourhood and of issues that border on two or more neighbourhoods.

Be Available

1. Attend Neighbourhood Association and Landuse Committee meetings at the request of the Neighbourhood Association, and neighbourhood events as available, and:
 - Take feedback from the Neighbourhood Association to Council and City Staff
 - Find a replacement councillor when unable to attend regular association meetings
2. Be open, available and responsive as the initial point of contact for neighbourhood residents and direct them to the relevant City department to get the service they need.
3. Be available as an initial point of contact between the Neighbourhood Association and City Hall for points of conflict and complaints arising in the neighbourhood.

NB re 2 and 3: Feedback from two neighbourhoods that their understanding of the conversation was that residents should contact staff directly. I have added in 'be available as' to clarify that the councillor liaison can be available but not required as the initial point of contact.

Communicate

1. Communicate the interests and concerns of the Neighbourhood Association to Council.
2. Be proactive on issues that matter to the neighbourhood and on neighbourhood priorities.
3. Support the Neighbourhood Association in advocating for and representing their priorities to Council in order to help maximize the potential, and grow the capacity, of Neighbourhood Associations, and to help them be creative and proactive in addressing neighbourhood challenges and opportunities.
4. Give the Neighbourhood Association a sense of timing in terms of when a neighbourhood priority will be implemented and provide regular updates on the progress of issues and concern to the neighbourhood.
5. Close the loop on communication and action items with the neighbourhood.

Land Use

1. Recognize the Neighbourhood Association as the Land Use consultation body on land use planning matters including but not limited to building structures, environment, transportation/traffic, streets, sidewalks, greenways and parks.

Respectfully submitted



Mayor Helps



Councillor Alto