



June 29, 2017

Mayor John Tory
Office of the Mayor
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West, 2nd Floor
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Delivered by Email: mayor_tory@toronto.ca

Dear Mayor Tory,

RE: NEW TORONTO COURTHOUSE

The Toronto Lawyers Association, the voice of Toronto lawyers for over one hundred years, is extremely concerned in regard to current plan for the new Courthouse to meet the needs of Torontonians.

We request the opportunity discuss with you issues around the new Courthouse, and three specific areas which are of great concern to the citizens of Toronto:

1. INCONVENIENCE/TRAFFIC/PARKING

The centralization, at the Dundas and University new Courthouse, of all Ontario Court criminal matters, much of which are currently dealt with in satellite courts in Etobicoke, Scarborough and North York, is inconvenient for all citizens outside the downtown core. The traffic chaos of bringing accused and their families/supporters downtown, as well as defence counsel, witnesses, police officers, translators etc. – who currently access the Ontario Court close to the communities in which they live, will be substantial.

The complete absence of planned public parking related to the new Courthouse will cause chaos – not just for those involved in court matters on any given day, but in the business of the city, which has depended on the main City Hall parking garage to accommodate those on city business, tourists and those with meetings in the downtown core.

2. BAIL COURT LOCATION

The planned bail court at Finch Avenue West is a location very difficult to reach for downtown residents and those in the east end of the city and will be another source of traffic chaos leading to delay. Additionally, it will separate under-privileged and mentally ill accused, who are often arrested at a time of crisis, from the core resources they rely on including shelters, hospices, safe injection sites and the like, most of which are located in the downtown core.

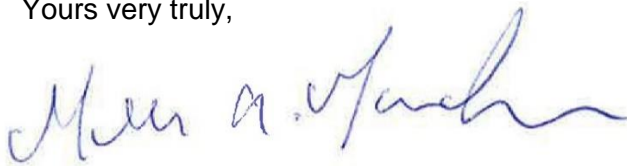
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3. YOUTH COURT

The court for those in the youth justice system has functioned well at 311 Jarvis Street. There is merit in keeping youth offenders in a separate location from adults, and to have judges who have crossover experience and jurisdiction in family matters and youth justice, as a family system issue underlies so many youths in conflict with the law. The sports complex created by Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment on Jarvis Street (MLSE Launch Pad) is an excellent facility and it would be most unfortunate for youth to lose the benefits of this site. Already, concurrent programming is being run through PeaceBuilders between the Youth Court at 311 Jarvis and the Launch Pad facility.

We look forward to hearing from you in regard to arranging a time to meet. Please contact me directly at (416) 972-0057 or by email at: melanie@melaniemanchee.com.

Yours very truly,



Melanie A. Manchee
President
Toronto Lawyers Association