

Recommendation

- MPPs should initiate a community planning process in the six months leading up to the October 2011 election.

Education

Background

- Toronto Centre is one of many ridings in Ontario that is implementing daylong learning in our elementary schools for the fall of 2011. Daylong learning will improve our education system by focusing on children's strengths and weaknesses at an early age, eventually leading to an increase in graduation rates at both the secondary and postsecondary level.
- Our Lady of Lourdes and Market Lane School will be amongst the first elementary schools in Toronto Centre to implement daylong learning. In 2010, the provincial government invested approximately \$50,000 in these schools to execute the daylong learning initiative.
- Parents in Toronto Centre have also expressed significant concern regarding the current state of some of the schools in our riding. This year, the province invested approximately \$3,000,000 in Jarvis Collegiate Institute in order to make the school more energy efficient.

Recommendations

- Toronto Centre recommends that daylong learning be maintained, as it is as an effective learning tool for our children.
- Continue to expand on after school programs and other initiatives already in place for the youth in our riding.
- Continue to work with Parents for Better Beginnings and Pathways to Education and look for ways to expand each program.
- Toronto Centre wants the provincial government to continue assisting students to access post-secondary education through grants and loans.

Health Care

Background

- A number of constituents in Toronto Centre have come forward with concerns pertaining to mental health issues in the riding. Since 2009, approximately \$1.3 billion has been invested in four major hospitals in our riding, including St. Michael's Hospital, Grace Hospital, the University Health Network and Sherbourne Health Centre.
- Toronto Centre is home to a number of facilities that are catered to patients suffering from HIV/Aids. The Ontario government has invested approximately \$2.6 million in centres such as Fife House and Casey House.

Recommendations

- Our riding wants to increase supports for those living with challenging health conditions.
- We are currently working on a community health care plan with the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). This initiative is a collaborative effort that will seek to provide constituents with better quality and easier access to health care in Toronto Centre.
- Toronto Centre wishes to have more funding available from the LHIN for community health planning so that we can develop neighbourhood strategies.
- Toronto Centre supports more resources for homecare, aging at home strategies and support for the HIV/AIDS community.
- Toronto Centre supports a review of Ontario Works and ODSP to ensure that those on social assistance have the means to remain physically and mentally healthy.

Diversity

Background

- Toronto Centre is one of the most culturally diverse ridings in Canada. We are home to a number of immigrants who are of different ethnicities and mother tongues.
- Since 2005, for example, the provincial government has invested over \$160,000 in the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre and Anishnawbe Health Toronto to help integrate Aboriginal peoples with the local community.

Recommendations

- Toronto Centre wants provincial programs to continue to support the work with ethno cultural groups in the riding in order to meet their unique needs.
- Toronto Centre strongly supports programs and services to assist new Canadians find employment, gain accreditation and have ESL services available.

- Another one of our top priorities is to overcome the large language barrier we currently face. We are in the process of recruiting facilitators who will be able to translate our documents for families whose first language is other than English.

Housing

Background

- There has been significant concern from the community surrounding the status of the buildings at 200 Wellesley. Residents in and around the area have brought up issues surrounding the state of the building prior to the fire and how the relocation and reconstruction has occurred. It has been recommended that the province work more closely to assist in locally grown solutions to many of these issues.
- In multiple neighbourhoods, residents have brought up concerns over large condominiums being constructed. These issues have surrounded how these buildings fit into their neighbourhoods and how a lack family oriented units are incorporated into their communities. Inclusionary zoning and by providing for increased community consultation in the land development process.

Recommendations

- With so many new developments occurring in Toronto Centre, there have been concerns surrounding the maintenance and expansion of the affordable housing stock. Toronto Centre recommends that provincial acts be modified to encourage developers to include affordable housing and use provincial assets to create more units.
- Addressing affordable housing challenges do not necessarily require project funding projects. Instead, Toronto Centre recommends more efforts and funds are needed in terms of affordable housing plans and neighbourhood assessments to identify local issues. These plans can specifically lay out strategies for public, non-profit and private investments to leverage and produce more resources.
- Partnerships between the public/private sectors have the potential to attract progressive developers. Organizations such as the Wellesley Institute can be used to provide research and assistance.
- Study potential reforms to improve the OMB to ensure that communities can afford to represent themselves and to ensure community concerns are heard.

Specific Housing Recommendations: See Appendix A

The Environment and Energy

Background

- Rising energy prices and supply issues have been a common theme from a number of stakeholders. While cost for supply may not be controllable, residents have discussed the high costs of home retrofits to more environmentally sustainable heating/cooling/energy options. There is also potential to fund green projects such as community gardens if the province pulls their funding.
- There is great interest from both the business and residential community to create local solutions to the region's power supply issues. It has been recognized that more support is needed at a local level to encourage this type of energy production and to stabilize the power supply in Toronto Centre.
- Local examples such as the Laurier Street geothermal project are a great example of this. There is also potential for district energy plants in the West Don Lands to be created to produce locally generated power. Organizations such as the Clean Air Alliance can be looked to for guidance on new power generation.

Recommendations

- Green retrofit projects such as Tower Renewal should be protected in the case that the City of Toronto pulls funding from it.
- Toronto Centre supports local efforts to map out energy consumption and needs, and where retrofit opportunities exist, the Province should provide funding. This will highlight where energy can be saved and where more energy can be produced.
- Local water technology companies such as those used in Sherbourne Common should be continued to be highlighted in the area to improve local water quality and highlight local innovation.
- All proposed investments should be evaluated to ensure that environmentally friendly aspects are included and that for example, public transit is a focus rather than vehicle parking.
- Continue to promote green technologies including district heating and deep-water cooling.
- Show-case Ontario water technologies through the use of pilot projects and specifically display and demonstrate how Ontario technologies are being used.

The Economy

Background

- Residents wonder how Toronto Centre will fit into the changing economy of Ontario. A significant portion of the population in Toronto Centre is very young and there are concerns that this group could be left behind and we know that there is a high rate of youth unemployment.

Recommendations

- Underemployed or previously employed individuals should be supported through efforts such as second career so that they can continue within the work force.
- Promote innovation in the economy through grants, tax credits, and more venture capital.
- Track economic and cultural indicators in a way that is useful to residents and businesses to support economic growth and entrepreneurship.

Appendix A: Additional Affordable

Below are a few specific recommendations for affordable housing and suggested amendments to the Planning Act.

1. We recommend that the underlying principal for the development of land in Ontario should be to expand the tax base;
2. Consider incorporating the neighbourhood planning process into the Planning Act and make having a neighbourhood housing plan a requirement for accessing the Ontario Housing Tool Kit, and establish a pre-qualification process to certify developers who wish to create mixed housing projects;
3. Consider inclusionary housing being defined in the Planning Act, 1990;
4. Consider amending section 2(j) of the Planning Act, 1990 to include the requirement to make considerations for the provision of affordable housing;
5. Consider amending section 37 of the Planning Act, 1990 to allow municipalities to require developers to include affordable housing units in return for exemptions to height and density regulations;
6. Consider amending the Planning Act, 1990 to establish an Ontario land bank or municipal land banks to catalogue the land owned by the Province of Ontario and to provide advice on possible development opportunities;

7. Consider amending section 28 of the Planning Act, 1990 to incent the development of buildings that include a specified proportion of affordable housing units;
8. Consider mechanisms to sell parcels of land to private sector developers with conditions of sale requiring a certain percentage of units be developed as affordable housing; and,
9. Consider that the public sector has an obligation to provide affordable housing to the most high-need members of our communities and that therefore any capital raised from the sale of provincial land must be reinvested in developing new affordable housing or upgrading infrastructure that will lead to better social outcomes for target populations.