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The Honourable Liz Sandals, MPP
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2

February 6, 2015

Re: Consideration of Joint-Proposal to Purchase TDSB Lands at Bloor and Dufferin

Dear Minister Sandals,

I am contacting you with an urgent request to consider, and ultimately approve, a joint-proposal between the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) and the City of Toronto to purchase the surplus Bloor-Dufferin School Lands. The urgency of this time-sensitive proposal continues to escalate in light of the current discussion of possible school closures and I request your assistance in addressing this issue as soon as possible.

As you are aware, on January 17th, 2014, the Toronto lands Company issued a circulation notice - *Proposal for Sale, Pursuant to Ontario Regulation 444/98: Bloor-Dufferin Redevelopment Site*, acting on behalf of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB).

Upon receiving notice of this proposal, I immediately coordinated City divisions to determine available resources toward purchasing this site. These efforts resulted in a letter from the City's Real Estate Services Division on March 4th, 2014, where formal interest was expressed on behalf of our Parks, Forestry & Recreation and Economic Development & Culture Divisions.

The Toronto Lands Corporation's response letter, dated March 11th, 2014, stated that the School Board and the Toronto Lands Corporation were unwilling to entertain any expressions of interest less than the entire 7.3 acre site.

The City of Toronto was not, and is not, in a position to submit an offer for the entire property; however, due to the significant needs of this community (in particular for park lands, sports fields and cultural and social services) and the potential loss of community space through a private redevelopment, an alternative was required.

I therefore coordinated a meeting to spearhead a joint proposal with City staff and members of TCDSB. As a result of this work, the City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department confirmed its interest in working with the TCDSB as a partner to create a vibrant "community hub" of

services at this location. This joint proposal was finalized on April 13, 2014, and subsequently forwarded to your office for consideration and approval. As of the writing of this letter, no response has been received.

The difficult financial situation of our school system is of great concern both to me and the residents I represent. I recognize that to properly address this situation, many long-term efforts will be required. The joint-proposal of the Bloor-Dufferin school redevelopment, however, is precisely the coordinated community and government effort I believe we wish to encourage. Such innovative and multi-faceted partnerships provide a diversity of education and community services while maximizing our public assets and bolstering local social services.

As you will understand, what is eventually built at the corner of Bloor and Dufferin will significantly impact the daily lives of local residents and TDSB students for generations to come. As a result, we are presented with a unique opportunity to deliver on a central tenet of your mandate letter as Minister: the development of a community hubs policy. As the pilot for such a policy, this landmark site presents the ideal combination of facilities, location and community support to become a shining example of city-building partnership between the City, the school board, social service agencies and local residents.

In order to capitalize on this novel and time-sensitive proposal, I kindly request the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience and work cooperatively to seize this opportunity – one which would otherwise evaporate should this land be offered for sale on the open market.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this request and I look forward to discussing this proposal with you in person. Should you require any additional information, and to coordinate this meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me at anytime.

Sincerely,



Ana Bailão
Toronto City Councillor
Ward 18, Davenport

Cc: Daryl Sage, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Lands Corporation
Cc: Joe Pennachetti, City Manager, City of Toronto
Cc: Cristina Martins, Member of Provincial Parliament, Davenport
Cc: Marit Stiles, Toronto District School Trustee, Ward 9
Cc: Barbara Poplawski, Toronto Catholic District School Board, Ward 10
Cc: Interested Residents