

# B.M.R. COMMENT



BUREAU OF  
MUNICIPAL  
RESEARCH

BETTER GOVERNMENT THROUGH RESEARCH

Suite 406, 4 Richmond St. E., Toronto 1, phone 363-9265

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## QUESTIONS FOR ELECTORS, 1972

In this COMMENT, the Bureau of Municipal Research draws attention to important issues facing voters in the 1972 municipal elections. The Bureau believes that all candidates ought to have informed opinions on these subjects and ought to be able to express their views to the electorate. The Bureau also believes that these issues and the candidates' responses to them ought to assist voters in choosing their representatives.

### PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- (1) Should Metro adopt an Official Plan? If so, what should it contain and who should be consulted as it is drawn up?
- (2) Should complete details of large developments be made available to public decision-makers before the projects are approved?
- (3) To what extent should the redevelopment process include the preservation of the existing character of a neighbourhood as a goal?
- (4) To what extent should citizens be formally included in the planning for redevelopment of their neighbourhood?
- (5) What guidelines, if any, should be established for an optimal housing mix in large-scale residential developments?
- (6) What provisions, if any, should be made for relocation of residents disturbed by redevelopment of their neighbourhood?
- (7) Should detailed planning studies be required for all areas designated for major changes in the Part I Official Plan?
- (8) Are public hearings held at the proper stage of the approval processes for rezoning applications, official plan amendments, and so on?
- (9) Should regulations governing the issuance of demolition permits require that they be considered in the light of comprehensive neighbourhood planning?
- (10) Under what conditions can spot-zoning (the rezoning of small pockets of land in an otherwise uniformly settled area) be justified?

- (11) Where an area is to be developed or redeveloped, should the municipality leave the entire project to private enterprise or expropriate the land in order to
  - sell it to private developers?
  - rent it to private developers?
  - develop or redevelop the land itself?
- (12) Should municipalities try to help stabilize rising land costs by judicious use of their land assembly powers?
- (13) Is the present bonus policy satisfactory?

#### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

- (1) What does citizen participation mean?
  - voting at elections?
  - providing advice and information to elected officials
  - actively participating in decision-making?
- (2) To what extent should elected representatives vote in accordance with the views of their constituents?
- (3) Should guidelines be established to distinguish between those government decisions which should be confidential and those which should be public?

#### GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

- (1) Should the City and Boroughs be reorganized and/or amalgamated
- (2) Which is preferable, an Executive Committee or a Board of Control?
- (3) Should municipalities in Metro adopt a "strong mayor" form of government by granting that official wider authority and responsibility than the other members of Council possess?
- (4) Should steps be taken to better co-ordinate the collective bargaining agreements negotiated separately for Metro, the City and the Boroughs?
- (5) Should the Metro Chairman and the members of Metro Council be elected directly by the people?
- (6) Should precise definitions of civic conflict of interest be established? Should penalties be specified? And should requirements for listing of assets be set?
- (7) Should the privilege of voting or of standing as a candidate in a district be restricted to residents of that district?

- (8) Should all municipal candidates be required to publish details of donations to their campaigns?
- (9) Should Planning Boards be independent of Council, have some political representation, or be replaced by a Committee of Council responsible for planning?
- (10) Should school boards be replaced by a Committee of Council responsible for education?
- (11) Should the Toronto Transit Commission be replaced by an integrated Metro transportation department?
- (12) What roles and functions should the Ontario Municipal Board perform?
- (13) How can Metro's growth and the goals of the Toronto-Centred Region be coordinated?

#### TRANSPORTATION

- (1) What are the priorities for a transportation system in Metro Toronto?
- (2) What steps should be taken to ease the problems of congestion on public transit?
- (3) What steps should be taken to ease the problems of automobile traffic congestion?
- (4) Should the provision of subway parking and downtown parking controls be used to divert passenger traffic from private cars to public transit?
- (5) Is an expanded bus system suitable or desirable in suburban areas primarily served by private cars?

#### OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES

- (1) What municipal services are inadequate and what should be done to improve them?
- (2) Are Metro and the area municipalities providing enough public parks and open spaces?
- (3) What role should municipalities play in providing day care?
- (4) Should any of the services currently shared by Metro and the Boroughs be amalgamated under Metro?

TAXATION AND FINANCE

- (1) To relieve the burden of the property tax, what combination of alternative sources of revenue should be utilized?
- (2) Is revenue-sharing or are grants-in-aid from provincial or federal sources good ideas?
- (3) Can specific needs for grants-in-aid be identified?
- (4) Should municipalities in Metro Toronto pool their resources to form a common tax base from which all can draw?
- (5) How can assessment on improved properties be adjusted to encourage improvement?
- (6) Should tax-exempt properties (such as education, religious, charitable and municipally-owned public utility properties) remain tax exempt?
- (7) To what extent should municipal councils control school budgets?
- (8) What effect will the province's elimination of the basic shelter exemption have on the tax burden of individuals?

MUNICIPAL GOALS

- (1) Has sufficient attention been given to the impact of new development on the street scene and skyline?
- (2) How can a proper balance between economic growth and quality of life be achieved?
- (3) How can a proper balance between administrative efficiency and citizen participation be achieved?
- (4) What action should be taken by local government to combat noise, air, and water pollution in Metro?
- (5) What should be done to ensure that there is a sufficient variety of housing at a reasonable price?
- (6) Is continued growth desirable?

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