



LILY'S WEEKDAY UPDATE

Issues • Policies • Committees

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Hi Neighbour!

Thanks to all who came out to Canada Day! It was wonderful to see Mel Lastman Square filled with community members enjoying the many free Kids Fun Zone activities along with the delicious food vendors and entertainment - all organized by the Yonge North York BIA with the support of funding from our Federal Government! The Mayor came out to visit and I reminded her of my motion to request equitable funding for Canada Day for 2025. Many people expressed disappointment about the lack of fireworks but were grateful for the incredible fire show that happened.

REMINDER OF UPCOMING EVENTS:

THIS WEEKEND, July 5-7 - Star Dance "Dance on Yonge". Enjoy delicious food and interactive dance performances all weekend!

Monday, July 8, 7-8:30pm - [Community Consultation for 7-17 Nipigon Ave](#)

Sunday, July 14, 9:45am-12pm - [BCNA Community Yard Sale at Wedgewood Park](#)

Saturday, July 20 10am-2pm - [Community Environment Day & Eco Fair - Centerpoint Mall with free Bike Tune Ups](#)

Tuesday, July 23, 5-10pm - [Goulding Block Party, Baseball & Movie Night](#)

Friday, July 26, 5-10pm - [Willowdale West and EYCA Sports, Picnic & Movie Night at Edithvale](#)

Wednesday, August 7, 3-10:30pm - [Avondale Block Party, Community Market & Movie Night](#)

[Click Here](#) to see more events happening including activities at Mel Lastman Square.

NEW! [Click Here](#) to add our Willowdale Community Events Google Calendar to your calendar.

No Place For Hate

It was very upsetting to hear about the attack on the [Pride of Israel Synagogue](#) in Willowdale this past weekend. Such hateful and violent acts have no place in our community or anywhere else. We stand united against hate and in support of our Jewish community members, many of whom are shaken by the rise in antisemitism across our city. It takes all of us to build an inclusive and safe community. Together with [Councillor James Pasternak](#), I visited the Pride of Israel Synagogue to meet with the chair and vice-chair of the board to see the damage to their worship space and listen to the impact this attack has had on their congregation. I support the efforts of the Toronto Police Service to locate and charge the perpetrators.

Goulding Encampment Update

We have been receiving ongoing email complaints about the encampments at Goulding Community Centre. City Staff had an intentional process focused on supporting individuals towards other shelter and housing opportunities. As a result of an intentional relationship-building process with City Staff, all encampments are no longer present at Goulding Community Centre and all garbage has been removed. Many parents have reached out in concern due to the number of children attending summer camp, swimming in the outdoor pool, and playing baseball every week. We would like to thank City Staff for their hard work and support.

There is a group of people who are regularly inebriated on the northeast corner of the park, right beside the children's playground. We are actively working with bylaw enforcement to resolve this situation. If you see concerning behaviours nearby, please file a report through 311 to ensure data is created about what is happening. The sofas have been removed and we are working on the removal of the BBQ.

A Place for Seniors

We want to thank the folks at Parks, Forestry and Recreation! For several years, seniors who meet several times a week to play ping-pong have been displaced by summer camps that use every square inch of our recreation centres. This was brought to my attention and beginning July 8, staff will now be setting up the ping-pong tables on the dry pads at [Mitchell Field ice rink](#) from **7:30-9am** before camp begins along with **Wednesdays** and **Fridays** from **1-3pm**. It is amazing to see 2 active groups of seniors who are passionate about ping-pong and the community they have grown. It is important to maintain continuity for their physical and social well-being! I may try to join them sometime, although I am pretty sure I will be beaten fairly easily by these mavericks!

Pollinator Garden

Volunteers and City Staff planted 500 plants of 12 different species in the wetland section of the Edithvale pollinator garden! This could not happen without the longstanding advocacy of the [Edithvale-Yonge Community Association](#), the broader network of [Willowdale community associations](#), [North York Garden Club](#), and the [many volunteers](#) who helped to make this happen. I am thrilled to see the realization of a dream that began years ago.

Many thanks to [Anne McConnell](#) who has spent years championing this idea and helped to see it come to fruition. We are also grateful to the many volunteers who have stepped up to take on the maintenance and further development of the garden! Special thanks to [Kin Seong](#) from my team who took this on with gusto and helped to make it happen.

Please contact Anne if you would like to join the crew of volunteers caring for the garden: a.mcconnell@pathcom.com.

Council Updates

[IE14.3 - Cycling Network Plan Update \(2025 - 2027\) and IE14.4 - Cycling Network Plan - 2024 Cycling Infrastructure and Missing Sidewalk Installation - Third Quarter Update](#)

These items were brought before the council concerning the future development of bike lanes from 2025 to 2027. The good news is Kenneth Ave. will be getting a sidewalk on the east side between Church and McKee. Other than this sidewalk, Willowdale is not expecting major changes aside from the planned Transform Yonge construction in 2028.

I believe our city should take more proactive steps to promote biking as a healthy activity and transportation option. Changing human behaviour is always a challenge. Since we are spending tremendous resources on implementing bike lanes citywide, we should also invest in programs and initiatives that encourage people to experience biking, particularly in neighbourhoods outside the downtown core. I successfully moved the following motion:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Environment and Climate, in partnership with the General Manager, Transportation Services, to report to Infrastructure and Environment Committee in the first quarter of 2025 on the City's existing education and engagement programs that encourage cycling lifestyle choices, and how these can be expanded upon to involve experiential public engagement and a focus on areas outside the downtown core, with proposed program costs and implementation for consideration in a future budget process.

[175 Cummer - PH13.5 - Modular Housing Initiative Phase 2: Update Report, and Amendments to Purchase Order Numbers 6052027 and 6052881 issued to NRB Inc. for Design-Build Services for Supportive Housing](#)

I wrote about this item when it came to the Planning and Housing Committee on June 13, 2024. The staff report provided an update on the modular housing projects at 175 Cummer Ave. and 39 Dundalk Dr. City Council authorized city divisions to restart and complete both projects by approving Purchase Order Amendments for each project to ensure funding is in place to complete the required work. Council also authorized the award of contracts to NRB Inc. under the Request for Proposal for modular housing design build at 175 Cummer Avenue and 39 Dundalk Drive.

The modular housing project at 39 Dundalk Dr. in Scarborough is nearing completion with only landscaping and a review of cost escalations remaining. The Confidential Attachments prepared included confidential information regarding the pricing for these projects under negotiation with the City's supplier, estimated costs to complete the projects, and confidential information related to delivery of the project at 175 Cummer Ave. Council authorized the release of these confidential attachments once the projects are complete.

Sankofa Square - Where We Landed

I must be completely honest, I was not entirely sure where I would land on this issue. I struggled because I knew the discourse had become quite divisive and moving forward without corrective actions could undermine trust in our democracy. To be clear, the vote to change the name of the square already happened. However, this motion was about the next steps which include what is most key - a plan for how to revitalize the square which has been lost in the debate.

Despite it not being on the agenda, council could have:

1. Undone its previous decision to rename
2. Embarked on a new re-naming journey
3. Moved forward with Sankofa and the motion for a plan to revitalize the square.

As I said in my previous newsletter, I can understand the discomfort with the word Sankofa. For many, it sounds foreign and not easily embraced because of how new it is. I too felt similarly when I first heard the name. However, the name, especially its meaning, has grown on me. Sankofa means to **retrieve things of value from our knowledge of the past**.

While many lament the lack of participation in choosing the name, it is not uncommon for naming decisions to be made through council that do not include a community-wide vote. This includes the naming of the Rob Ford Stadium that happened earlier this year. While the name Sankofa did come from a committee of community representatives, the Rob Ford Stadium was put forth by my colleagues and passed without a committee or consultation.

We must remember why this all began - it was a compromise to save money. Instead of \$13 million for renaming an entire street, a few assets, including Yonge-Dundas Square were chosen to be renamed for a much lower cost. If we continue to debate and engage in a new process more money will be spent and we will also lose a critical opportunity to revitalize the square.

Over the course of the questions and speeches, it became clear to me that moving forward with the name Sankofa and the corresponding revitalization plan was the practical thing to do and the right thing to do. The divisiveness of the debate has been hurtful to members of the Black community who feel the harm and history of slavery have not been acknowledged and the discussion itself has minimized their struggles. It has also been hurtful to family members of Henry Dundas who were once proud of the legacy of their ancestor. The best thing we can do is move forward, say yes to the invitation to learn from our past and bring these learnings into the future. The Square needs much more than a new name and a new sign. Moving forward allows the city to spend time and resources on bringing back the sparkle.

I was especially moved by a speech by Deputy Mayor Morley. [Click Here](#) to hear her impassioned support for Sankofa.

General Government Committee (GGC)

Yesterday we had General Government Committee. This is the committee tasked with monitoring and making recommendations on the procurement and management of City government assets and resources.

Electrification of Toronto Ferries

[GG14.18 Process for Award of Negotiable Request for Proposal Document Number 4053424337 for the Construction of Two New Fully Electric Ferry Vessels](#)

The city has 4 ferries that are aging and in need of replacement. In 2020, it was decided that we would replace them with fully electric ferries to support the city's Net Zero goals. Since that time, the cost of replacing the ferries has continued to grow. The city originally budgeted \$25 million for 2 diesel ferries. Over the course of the procurement process, amidst a context of inflation and labour shortages, the cost of 2 fully electric ferries is now \$92 million. This does not include the cost of upgrades needed to the drydock to support the maintenance of these electric ferries as well as the charging infrastructure. On Tuesday, we moved forward on a contract with Dutch company Damen Shipyards Galati to build the ferries in Romania. Several councillors were concerned about the lack of clarity on the projected maintenance costs of the ferries because it will be new technology for our city. It was amazing to hear these ferries will be able to fully recharge within 6 minutes! They will increase our capacity to move more passengers to the islands efficiently.

I am grateful to Councillor Holyday for moving the following amendment which received unanimous support:

1. *Request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, to report directly to the July 24, 25 and 26, 2024 meeting of City Council outlining the total life expectancy and lifecycle cost of the proposed ferry vessels including staffing, operations, fuel electricity, parts, maintenance, and other capital costs to both the vessels or shore-side.*

Social Media Aggregator for the City

[GG14.16 Non-Competitive Contract with Hootsuite Inc., for Enterprise Social Media Management Platform](#)

The city has chosen Hootsuite as the platform to be used across all city divisions and the 100+ social media accounts that actively share updates. This is a non-competitive contract because no platforms applied through a previous RFP. I moved an amendment to the motion to consider including councillors in this enterprise solution. While every councillor has an office budget, it does not make sense that we cannot leverage the tremendous buying power of the city to be included in technology platform purchases which many of us use. Including councillors in these purchases would result in savings for taxpayers. I hope this consideration can expand to other platforms including MailChimp. Here is my motion that received unanimous support:

1. *City Council request that the Chief Communications Officer, the City Clerk, and the Chief Technology Officer, to explore the feasibility of including access for Members of Council and their offices once a social media enterprise solution is in place.*

Political Nugget

Admittedly this is not the most exciting committee on council; however, it is where the nuts and bolts of what is happening across divisions occur, including contracts and procurements. I have heard this committee described by another councillor as the 'gulag' of committees. Interestingly, while most of my colleagues on this committee switched after the election of our new Mayor, Councillor Holyday and myself remain. Generally, people do not ask to be on GGC; hence, those on the committee tend to be those who are NOT in the inner circle of the mayor. That being said, I find it a great learning opportunity and feel it is helpful in my other role on Budget Committee.

I hope to see many of you this weekend at the [Star Dance "Dance on Yonge" Festival](#) which was a huge crowd-pleaser last year. I'm sure there will be plenty of K-Pop dancing, Salsa, and more to entertain us! It is likely I will get pulled on stage for another performance!

Warmest Regards,

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