

Connected Community March 31, 2023



Dear Neighbour!

I write this letter to you from Taipei, Taiwan where I have been the representative from Toronto attending the [Smart City Expo](#). The past few days have been a whirlwind of attending the conference while attending overnight sessions of Toronto City Council. It has been incredible to see the ingenuity and innovation of different municipalities which I look forward to summarizing and sharing when I return. In particular, it is amazing to see a city that has full support from higher levels of government towards building transit and social housing.

The City of Toronto does not enjoy a similar level of investment and support from higher levels of government which is why our transit and many other parts of our infrastructure are suffering. We contribute 20% of Canada's GDP. A Strong Toronto means a Strong Ontario and a Strong Canada. Our fiscal framework must be a key election issue for the upcoming Mayoral By-Election, Provincial and Federal Elections. We must elect people who understand the distinct needs of the City of Toronto and have a vision for a strong fiscal future for Toronto that does not require our mayor to beg for money from higher orders of government on an annual basis - which is currently a regular and necessary occurrence.

Here are some of the motions I passed during overnight sessions from Taipei of Toronto City Council. A full summary of all motions that were passed and not passed can be found [here](#).

Motion Passed: City Council request the City Manager to establish a program where Members of Council form delegations to meet with Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament to advocate for our budget issues.

The lack of acknowledgement by the Provincial and Federal government of the many contributions the City is making towards social supports for those experiencing homelessness as well as how we support newcomers and refugees - both of which are costs that should be coming from these other levels of government. Councillor Pasternak also points out that unlike any other municipality, the province has downloaded the cost of maintenance of the DVP and Gardiner Expressway - whereas all other highways are paid for by the province. [Click Here](#) to read the [bleak 10 year financial outlook](#) that was presented by Ernst and Young. I look forward to the opportunity to approach MPs and MPPs across the country about our challenges.

Motion Passed: City Council request the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, in consultation with Toronto Transit Commission, to provide a summary of data collected relating to the unhoused on the Toronto Transit Commission over the past three years and report to City Council by the third quarter of 2023.

Like many people across Toronto, it has been distressing to hear about the tragic murder of 16 year old Gabriel Magalhaes by a stranger on a TTC platform. We passed several motions towards improving safety on the TTC. My motion is focused on looking at the data that is being collected so we can make better informed decisions. Once the report is shared, I will be looking at whether or not we are collecting sufficient data and examining how this data can be shared more widely on a regular basis. The Toronto Star published an article about the lack of data about this. [Outside researchers feel we are not collecting enough data.](#)

Motion Passed: City Council communicate to the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario that Toronto City Council strongly objects to the plan to reduce the number of ridings in the City of Toronto as it will potentially reduce the representation of all Torontonians at all three levels of government, even though Toronto residents are already the most under-represented in Canada on a per capita basis.

This is an amended version of a motion I passed at North York Community Council. The current Federal Electoral Districts Distribution iteration removes one of the 25 ridings in Toronto. As the fastest growing city in North America, we should not be losing one seat at the table at the Federal level which could eventually impact our Provincial and Municipal ridings/wards. Given the gap in understanding by higher levels of government towards our current fiscal framework, it is clear we need more not less representation.

Motion Passed (unanimously): City Council request the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, in consultation with the local Councillor's office, to engage with community organizations in Willowdale to explore designating Yonge Street, between Steeles Avenue and Drewry Avenue, as a Cultural District in recognition of the area's vibrant Iranian culture, following City Council's consideration of objectives and criteria for the Cultural Districts Program.

The Yonge Corridor in the northern part of Willowdale has long been known as a landing place for Iranians in Canada. The contributions to the community can be seen in the arts, food and businesses that have been established in our community. Most recently many Iranian artists contributed their talents to share the joy of Nowruz with Willowdale.

I move this motion in recognition of their contributions to our community and also in acknowledgement that this has been a very difficult time for the Iranian community. Since the murder of Mahsa Amini the Iranian community has gone through wave after wave of grief and anger as protesters, many young students, have been arrested and killed as they fight for Women, Life and Freedom. It is meaningful for this community to know that Toronto stands with them and commits to working towards establishing a place in Toronto where Iranians can celebrate their culture within a free and democratic society.

Thank you David Mousavi who helped with this motion as well as the many community members including Medi Shams and Dr. Reza Mordji who attended this vote.

Motion Passed: Completion of City-owned site at 5200 Yonge Street to allow for successful launch of City-initiated Food Incubator Program. [Click Here](#) for full motion.

Many residents of Willowdale have enjoyed the food at [FLIP Kitchens](#) at 5200 Yonge St. One of the restaurants - Teta's Kitchen, was even highlighted in a recent New York Times article. Established during the pandemic, this food incubator is a rare opportunity for entrepreneurs from equity seeking groups to establish their food business ideas.

Due to the pandemic, changeover during election and some surprise challenges, the current cohort has experienced difficulties towards sustainability. This motion gives these business owners a small extension and opportunity to be successful. If you haven't done so yet, please enjoy [Teta's Kitchen - Lebanese and Indonesian Fusion Restaurant](#), [Da Endz - Jamaican Restaurant](#), and [Chic Peas Vegan Restaurant](#) (Eritrean/Ethiopian cuisine). Each of them adds to the palette of flavours available in Willowdale!

Lastly, I want to thank my incredible staff team who are working hard to advocate for residents in Willowdale. From parks to development to handling a wide range of complaints about city services, we are working hard to ensure Willowdale residents are heard and improvements are made. Most recently an [abandoned Willowdale house](#). [hit the news](#). We are currently exploring all possible avenues to make sure our constituent gets the service and action that is needed.

Hope to see everyone at our first [Willowdale Environment Day with Seed Exchange on April 15](#) where you can drop off hazardous and electronic items for recycling while picking up some compost for your garden! (scroll down for details)

Warmest regards,

 陳伶利

Councillor Lily Cheng
Ward 18 Willowdale / Councillor.Cheng@toronto.ca / 416-392-0210



I enjoyed meeting leaders from around the world, including Mayor Brad Friedland of Port Coquitlam from British Columbia.

Scroll down to find out more about:

- ~ COUNCILLOR UPDATES
 - Mitchell Field Community Centre Grand Re-Opening - Fri, Apr 14
 - [Community Enhancement Day](#) - Sat, Apr 15
 - Willowdale BIA Celebrates Earth Day - Fri, Apr 21
 - [OLT Hearing - 5051-5061 Yonge St](#)
 - [Community Consultation - 120-128 Sheppard Ave. W.](#)
 - [Pothole Repair Blitz - Sun, Apr 2](#)
 - Deployment of CCTV in the Yonge Street Corridor
 - NEW! Park Update - 21 Holmes Ave.
 - Construction Updates
- ~ CITY OF TORONTO UPDATES
 - Vaccination Options
- ~ COMMUNITY EVENTS ACROSS WILLOWDALE
 - North York Central Library April Calendars

Thank you for subscribing to our weekly e-newsletter! Invite your friends and family to sign up at lilycheng.ca. Please also send us any updates of local community news and events that we can share.

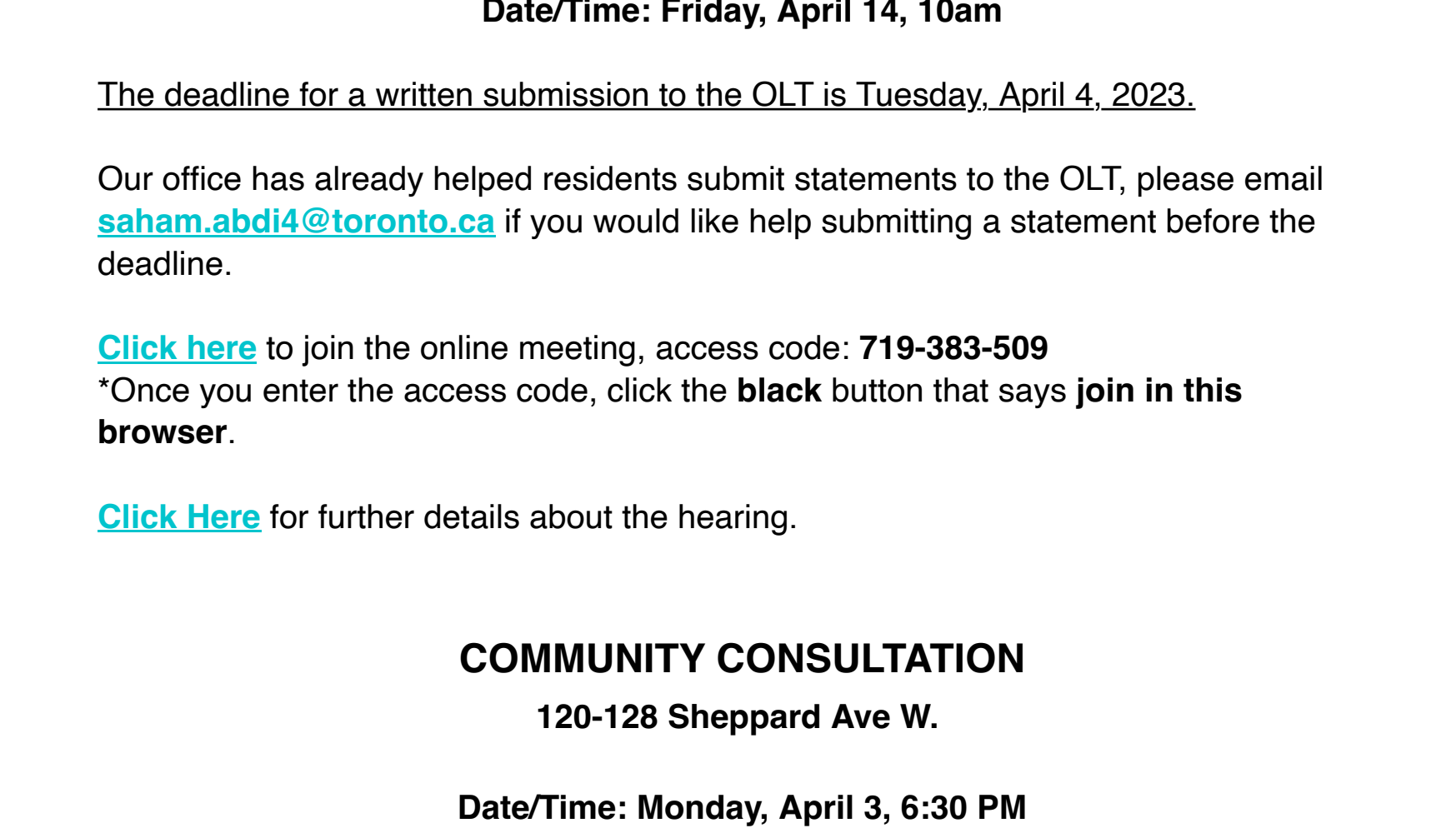
COUNCILLOR UPDATES

MITCHELL FIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE GRAND RE-OPENING

Join us on April 14 from 10:30 AM to 11 PM to celebrate the reopening of the centre with a fun-filled day of activities.

- 10:30-11:30 a.m. | Circle Time with Councillor Cheng (0-5 yrs)
- 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Line Dance Workshop (18+)
- 3-4 p.m. | Zumba Workshop (18+)
- 4:30-6 p.m. | Open Gym with Family (6+)
- 6-7p.m. | Print Making Workshop (12+)
- 8 p.m. start | Movie Night (all ages)

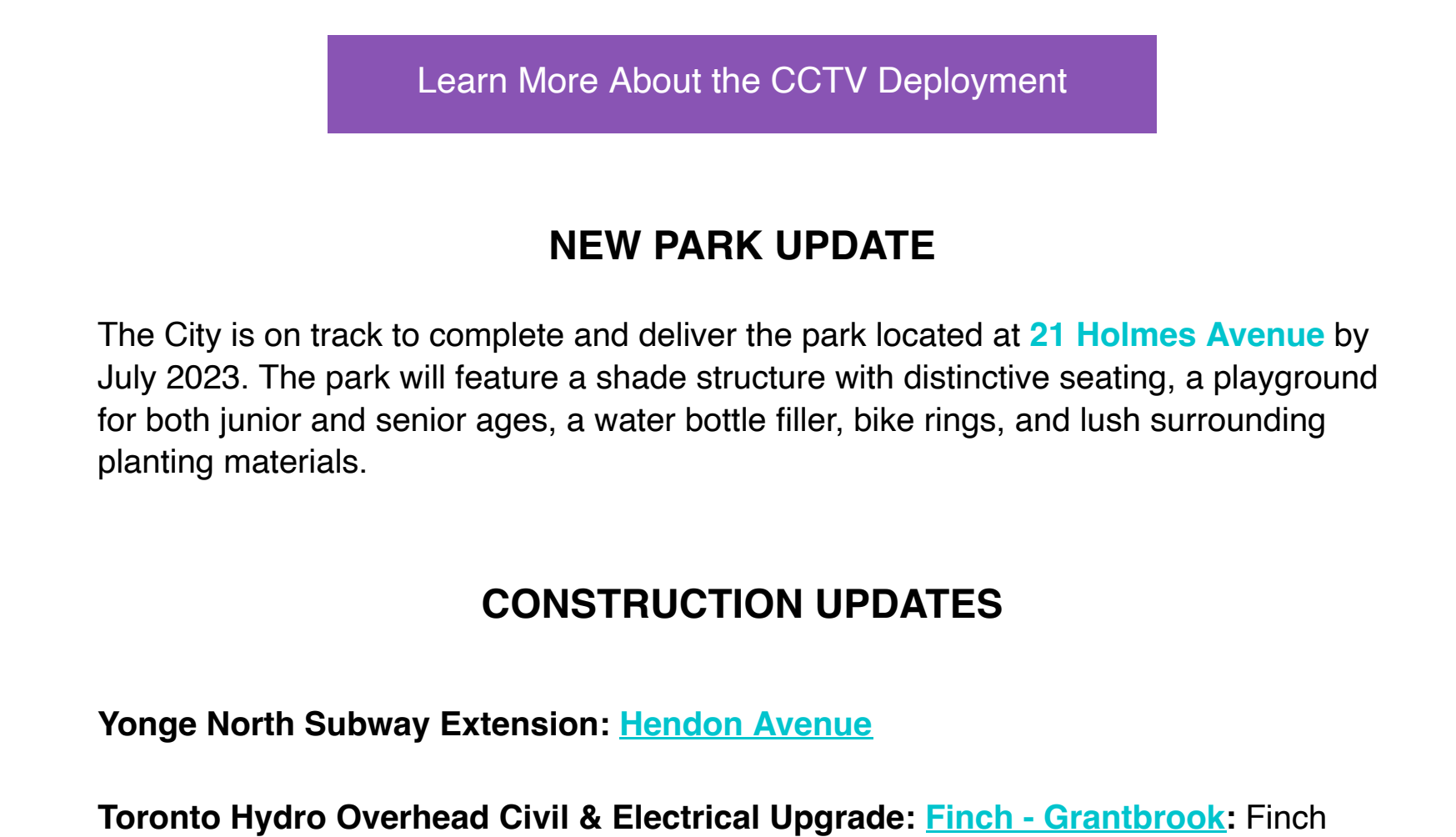
Explore our spaces, participate in activities, contribute to our community mural and enjoy some snacks while you visit. Staff will be available to answer your questions. Sign up for workshops by emailing MitchellField@toronto.ca. For more information, please call 416-395-0265.



Our office in partnership with City Staff from Solid Waste Management Services are organizing two Environment Days in Willowdale. These Community Environment Days aim to reduce the amount of reusable or recyclable waste going to landfills and provide a safe disposal option for household hazardous waste. You can pick up free compost or bring your unwanted items, household hazardous waste or electronic waste for donation, safe disposal or recycling.

We will also be hosting a local **seed exchange!** Gardeners can save seeds they have saved from their own plants, excess seeds from their stash, or even seeds from another region. Don't miss out on a chance to connect with fellow plant lovers!

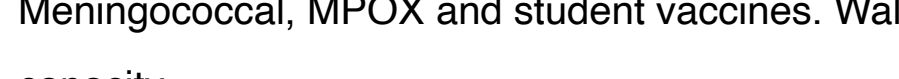
Please also consider contributing a non-perishable food item for a food bank in Willowdale!
RSVP: willowdalegreenday1.eventbrite.ca
You can learn more at: www.toronto.ca/environment_days



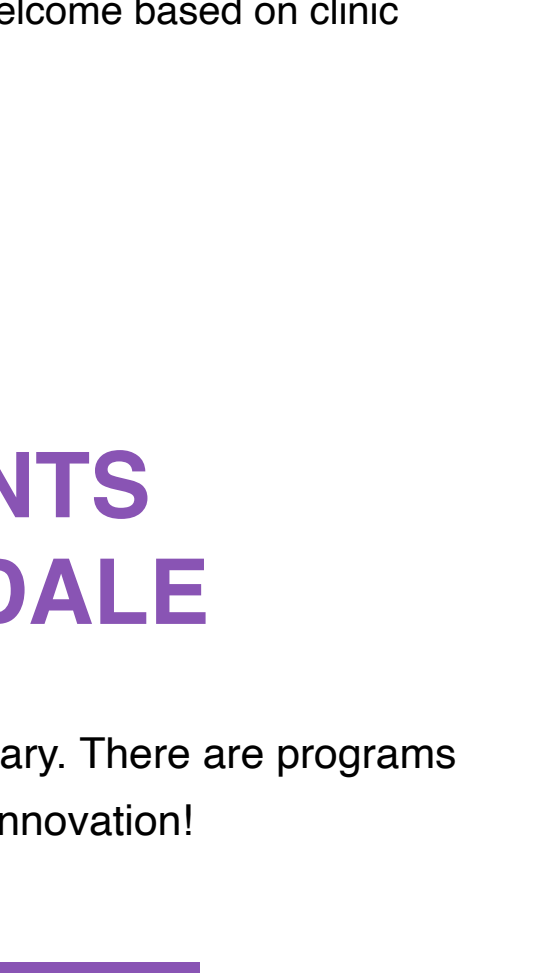
REGISTER YOUR TEAM TODAY!
FIRST 50 PARTICIPANTS TO ARRIVE ON-SITE
WILL RECEIVE A \$5.00 STARBUCKS GIFT CARD

1. Scan the QR code or call 416.432.6998 ext.0
2. Fill-out our registration form
3. Register by April 17, 2023 to reserve your team experience

We thank our generous event partners



Clean Toronto Together is a City of Toronto initiative that brings more than 200,000 Toronto residents, community groups, schools and businesses together to help clean sites from public spaces.
www.willowdalebia.com
Willowdale BIA, 4711 Yonge Street, 10th Floor, Toronto, ON M2N 6K8



CITY OF TORONTO UPDATES

VACCINATION OPTIONS

Vaccines help build and strengthen our immune system, protecting us against diseases. Toronto Public Health continues to add new vaccine appointments at City immunization clinics across Toronto for residents to receive their COVID-19, Novavax, Meningococcal, MPOX and student vaccines. Walk-ins are welcome based on clinic capacity.
Learn more & book a vaccine: www.TPHBookings.ca

COMMUNITY EVENTS ACROSS WILLOWDALE

Check out the [April](#) calendars for North York Central Library. There are programs for children, youth, adults and fans of digital innovation!

[Get Calendars & More Community Events!](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

[Live Talks Series: Lessons From My Bipolar Journey](#)
Thursdays, 12pm @ Zoom

[Tai Chi Brush Work: A Meditative and Creative Practice](#)
Apr 15, 11am @ Room 101, North York Central Library

[Nate Hendley on The Beetle Bandit](#)
Apr 19, 6:30pm @ Room 11, North York Central Library

[Open House](#)
Apr 21 & Apr 22 @ Chartwell Lansing (10 Seniac Rd)

[Mini Market](#)
Apr 22, 11am @ Chartwell Lansing (10 Seniac Rd)

[Willowdale Welcome Tea for Newcomers from Ukraine](#)
Apr 26, 4-6pm @ Spring Garden Church

[Let's Move Willowdale Move-a-thon & Community BBQ](#)
Supporting [Neighbourhood North York & North York Seniors Centre](#)
May 6, 11am-2pm @ Hendon Park

Let's Connect on Social

If this email was forwarded to you and you'd like to sign up for future newsletters, you can do so at www.lilycheng.ca.

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Building a Connected Community in Willowdale.