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Hi Neighbour!

Happy Hanukkah to all those who began lighting your menorahs candles. Now more than ever we need the hope that light will prevail over darkness, that love will win over hate. It can be overwhelming with recent global conflicts, but we can do our part by showing love and compassion to those around us. The annual Menorah lighting at Mel Lastman Square that happened last night was especially emotional as we considered the difficult time experienced by many in this world.

Thank you to all who attended the Avondale Neighbourhood Association discussion. Many beautiful ideas were shared, and most importantly, a group of volunteers put their hands up to help lead the next steps. We look forward to the emergence of a new association that can bring the Avondale community together.

Holiday Fair in the Square

If you haven't visited Mel Lastman Square yet, please come out some time before it wraps up on December 23. It was truly magical this past weekend with roving singers, delicious food options (tacos, Chinese stuffed naan, pizza, empanadas, funnel cakes, and more!), outdoor fires to warm up beside, spiked apple cider, and beautiful gifts you can buy for the holiday season. All of this is in support of the Epilepsy Foundation! Hope to see you there.

Other Markets to Shop:

[Lansing Holiday Market](#) - Lansing United Church - Sat. Dec. 9, 12-5pm

[Peoples Church Fair Trade Market](#) - Peoples Church - Sun. Dec. 10, 9am-2pm

Safety at Finch Station

Many people have reached out to our office and via social media to alert us to an escalating situation at Finch station with an increase in open drug use, broken glass and other behaviours that result in people avoiding the station. 32 Division is aware of the situation and has requested additional supports be considered in a collaborative meeting with several essential stakeholders. Our office is working on convening a meeting including Toronto Police, TTC, and SSHA Streets to Homes to determine best next steps towards resolving this situation in such a way that the vulnerable are well supported in the process. We will keep the community posted as this work develops, which we hope will happen expediently.

Exploring Funding Sources for \$70 Million for Cummer Station Headwalls

I am thrilled that we are one step closer to a significant investment of transit infrastructure in North York! Tuesday, members of the Executive Committee voted in favour of requesting the Chief Planner and Executive Director of Transit Expansion to return to council meeting next week with potential funding sources for \$70 million to cover the cost of designing the construction of headwalls and the necessary utility relocations to protect for a future Cummer Station, while continuing to advocate for the province to fund the full implementation. The full cost of the single build is \$445-470 million. However, protecting for the station was the strategy used to eventually build North York Centre Station which now serves a busy North York city centre. Let's repeat our beautiful history.

THERE'S STILL TIME to submit a letter to Council in support of Cummer Station before Dec 13! to submit. Thank you to all who deputed and sent letters of support for Cummer Station to the Executive Committee.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Here is a summary of the [Business Case for Cummer Station](#) submitted by the Transit Expansion Team that was received at Executive Committee:

- **23,000 boardings and alightings during typical weekday in 2051** (similar to Wilson, Eglinton West, Wellesley, Keele, or Main Street stations)
- **Forecast to meet population and employment density** generally accepted to support higher-order transit and prescribed by the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe for Major Transit Station Areas.
- **Land use planning framework** in the Official Plan supports the intensification
- Official Plan Amendment 615 recently increased the amount of land designated **Mixed Use Areas around Cummer Station**, and the Yonge North Secondary Plan provides a framework for developing a **node of tall and mid-rise buildings** at Yonge and Cummer
- **Already 7,900 residential units and 27,000 metres square of non-residential** Gross Floor Area at various stages of the development pipeline across 17 applications around Cummer Station
- **Population** within 500m of Cummer Station is projected to increase from **4,800** people in 2021 to **13,800** people by 2051, while employment for the same area and timeframe is projected to increase **from 4,500 to 5,700 jobs**

Some may wonder why we are asking to spend money on this considering the many competing priorities. The city is designating \$63.6 million for the Waterfront East LRT and the province has given Metrolinx an infrastructure budget of \$5.6 billion for the Yonge North Subway Extension project. Money is being invested for future generations of Torontonians but I am advocating that this investment be made in Willowdale also. This will not be an immediate expenditure as the RFP process for the Advance Tunneling Contract is expected to last throughout 2024. In addition, the \$70 million for headwalls will not be an operating budget pressure.

The tunnel boring machines will ultimately make their way through Willowdale and the disruption will be felt whether Cummer Station is built or not. Even without an immediate Cummer Station land must be acquired for an Emergency Exit Building which will be conceptually proposed on the main entrance site and would be designed and located in a manner that would allow for future integration with a main entrance building delivered through a Phased Build.

We will not regret this investment in Willowdale for our shared future and for future generations!

Civic Appointments

This past week we interviewed and selected candidates for the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. It was difficult to select our chosen candidates due to the incredible amount of passion and expertise of all those we interviewed. I am deeply moved to see so many people who want to contribute to good governance of our city - in particular to protect our environment. Next week we will spend a full day interviewing 26 candidates for the new Housing Rights Advisory Committee to include people with lived experience of being unhoused. We are spending extra time and consideration in how we set up the interview room to ensure all vulnerable interviewees will feel at ease with us.

[Click Here](#) to learn more about civic appointments and upcoming opportunities.

General Government Committee

[8.9 Emergency Non-Competitive Contract with Toronto Drydock Limited for Dry Docking Ship Repair Services for the Ongjara Vessel](#)

I have spent more of my life discussing the ferries of Toronto than I ever imagined since joining city council. The only boat we have that can operate in the winter needed \$5,350,656 in emergency fixes to be operational for this winter season. We are mandated by law to provide this transportation to island dwellers of which there are 700 plus the 200 students who go to school on the island. It turns out each winter ride that costs approximately \$9 per ride to the user is subsidized by the city for an additional \$10 per ride. The cost is easily covered by revenue from summer operations of ferries. That being said, I asked for this calculation because I think it's important to know how much the city subsidizes residents to ensure equity in the city and accountability of our finances. These should not be circumstantial decisions, as I often feel they are. Rather, they should be intentional decisions based on weighing priorities. "Every yes is a no," I like to say. When we prioritize one thing, we inevitably are saying no to an investment somewhere else in the city.

[8.20 Revisions to the Fair Wage Policy and Updating the Fair Wage Schedule to Include 2022-2024 Wage Rates](#)

Every year a new schedule of wage increases is released to match rates of pay set by unions to ensure good wages for those hired by city contractors, regardless if they are unionized or not. To be clear, this is not about setting minimum wage for city workers. It is about ensuring a payment environment that is aligned with union wages. This prevents contractors from underpaying their staff to outbid unions on city contracts. Some feel this disadvantages smaller contractors who cannot match the conditions of larger unionized companies.

While the motion contained information about percentage increases to be applied across different contracted job categories, it did not include a projected economic impact. Every decision made by committees and council should have clarity on the cost impacts of that policy. We shouldn't make policy choices without this information. We need to line up all the expenses of the city with its \$1.5 billion operational budget pressure and weigh them against each other. I voted in favour of a report back on a more detailed financial analysis and

estimated budget dollar impact. I will be working with the City's Chief Financial Officer, Stephen Conforti, to see if a report back on fair wages can happen during the city's budget process so an informed decision can be made expediently so as to minimize impact on workers awaiting clarity on their wages.

Between November 2018 and March 2019, the Government of Canada consulted with members of the public, unions and labour organizations, suppliers and supplier organizations, experts and advocates to listen to their ideas on whether a modern fair wages policy is needed and what it should look like. [Click Here](#) to read a summary of the study's findings.

What's Up Next Week

Monday - We will be interviewing 26 candidates for Civic Appointments

Tuesday - We will be reviewing the Toronto Police Budget as a member of the Toronto Police Service Budget Committee. We expect many community deputations. [Click Here](#) if you would like more information or to register to make a deputation.

Wednesday onwards - We will spend 2-3 days discussing the business of the city! [Click Here](#) to see the agenda.

Never a Dull Moment

This past week saw my team scrambling to try to prevent the eviction of a family and supporting a group of refugees that arrived at my office with their heartbreaking stories. I am grateful for the compassion and perseverance of my team to help support community members in difficult situations. Navigating the system is challenging and we are also learning as we seek to help those who reach out to us.

It is wonderful to see Mel Lastman skating rink get great usage every day. I confess the only time I skated outdoors every day was during Covid when skating slots were highly coveted as the only winter activity available during lockdowns. Seeing so many people, young and old enjoying the rink inspires me to give it another go!

Hope you have an enjoyable weekend!

Warmest Regards,

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Lily Cheng 陈伶俐

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THANK YOU to everyone that came out to our first discussion on **Avondale's Neighbourhood Association** formation this past Tuesday! It was very exciting to see the heart of the community for the betterment of Avondale, and there is great potential for the visions and goals shared during the meeting to come true through a dedicated team.

If you are interested in joining the group chat for the starting members of the Avondale Neighbourhood Association, please [CLICK HERE](#) and join the ***Association Starting Members*** WhatsApp Community Group.

Click On The Links Below or Scroll Down To Learn More About:

~ COUNCILLOR UPDATES

- [Eight For Cummer Station](#)

~ CITY OF TORONTO UPDATES

- [Yonge North Subway Extension Announcement](#)
- [EHON- Major Street Study Consultation Survey](#)
- [Cycling Network 2025-2027 Public Input](#)
- [City of Toronto Warming Centres](#)
- [Douglas Snow Aquatic Centre Scheduled Improvements](#)
- [Vacant Home Tax](#)

~ COMMUNITY EVENTS ACROSS WILLOWDALE

- [Danish Lutheran Church Christmas Bazaar](#)
- [Holiday Fair Supporting Epilepsy Toronto](#)
- [Lansing Holiday Market](#)
- [Willowdale Youth Band's Riposo](#)

COUNCILLOR UPDATES



FIGHT FOR CUMMER STATION!

10,400+ PEOPLE COMING*
... AND MANY MORE EXPECTED

5,000+ PEOPLE CURRENTLY LIVE THERE*

ACT NOW!

*0.8km radius surrounding Yonge and Cummer

Existing Apartment Buildings
Proposed/Approved/Under-construction Developments

THERE'S STILL TIME to submit a letter to Council in support of Cummer Station before Dec 13! [CLICK HERE](#) to submit. Thank you to all who deputed and sent letters of support for Cummer Station to the Executive Committee. Dec 5th the Executive Committee voted in favour of the city exploring potential funding sources for \$70 million to cover the cost of headwalls and utility relocations to protect for a future Cummer Station while continuing to advocate for the province to fund the full implementation. Significant density and developments are in the pipeline for Yonge and Cummer/Drewry, and 23,000 people are expected to board and alight at Cummer Station in 2051. [Let's invest in the future of Willowdale!](#)

[Email Now!](#)

CITY OF TORONTO UPDATES

YONGE NORTH SUBWAY EXTENSION ANNOUNCEMENT

The extension is moving forward with 5 new stations (Steeles Station, Clark Station, Royal Orchard Station, Bridge Station and High Tech Station) along an approximately 8 km route. The YNSE is one of the largest and most ambitious infrastructure projects in Canada and will put thousands of people and jobs in Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill and Toronto closer to rapid transit.

Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario evaluated submissions received through last spring's request for qualifications and shortlisted 3 teams to submit proposals for delivering the advance tunnel contract. CrossTransit Group, North End Connectors, and Toronto-York Tunnel Connectors have been selected. Within their proposals, teams will submit their plans for tunnel design and

construction, financing, as well as tunnel boring machine delivery and underground station support works.

We are targeting to award the contract to the successful team in late 2024. Tunnelling work will begin after a detailed schedule is finalized, however construction of this project is already underway at Finch Station, where early upgrades to accommodate future subway service are nearing completion.

[Learn More](#)



EHON Major Streets

The public consultation period for 'The Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Major Streets Study' has been **extended to December 14, 2023**. [Click here](#) to participate in the **online survey** or [Click here](#) to participate in a citywide **virtual consultation** event on December 6, 2023, from 6 to 7:30pm.

Details on the Major Streets Study:

The report proposes official plan and zoning by-law amendments to permit townhouses and small-scale apartment buildings citywide, in Neighbourhoods, along Map 3 Major Streets. The amendments propose to permit townhouses and small-scale apartment buildings on all properties, along major streets, designated Neighbourhoods across the city and set out built form criteria in policy and zoning. The proposals contribute to the 2023 Housing Action Plan goals to remove exclusionary zoning and to increase housing opportunities in a range of housing forms.

CYCLING NETWORK 2025-2027 PUBLIC INPUT

The City wants to hear from you to help make recommendations on which bikeways to build, upgrade and study in 2025 to 2027. [CLICK HERE](#) to read about why the City encourages cycling, what are the different kinds of bikeways, how we prioritize new projects, and other details.

Online Survey ends on December 10, 2023. [CLICK HERE](#) to take the survey.

CITY OF TORONTO WARMING CENTRE

WARD 18 WILLOWDALE

WILLOWDALE BAPTIST CHURCH
15 Olive Ave, North York

NOV 15, 2023 - APR 15, 2024

COUNCILLOR CHENG

[Learn More](#)

DOUGLAS SNOW AQUATIC CENTRE PLANNED CLOSURE

The Douglas Snow Aquatic Centre will be **CLOSED** for maintenance and repairs from **Monday, December 4th, 2023 to Sunday, January 7th, 2024**. Pool will re-open on **Monday, January 8th, 2024**. Visit toronto.ca/swim for schedules at nearby locations.

Scheduled Improvements Include:

- Installation of new mirrors, benches, countertops, bathroom partitions, sinks, and faucets in both change room areas.
- Grout-work completion in the pool basin, therapeutic pool, deck, and throughout change room areas.
- Painting and maintenance in shower areas, as well as the second-floor viewing gallery.
- Replacement of lighting in the pool and accompanying areas.
- Repair of the slide in the main pool.
- Enhanced cleaning of all areas.
- Our team is eager to embark on these projects and create an upgraded and refreshed space for our valued members!

Closure Information:

Signs have been posted in the facility to notify clients of the temporary closure. During this period, members have the option to:

- Utilize their membership at alternate facilities.
- Suspend their membership, with the expiry date extended accordingly.

VACANT HOME TAX

In Toronto, owners of residential properties must declare their occupancy status annually, even if they live there. The Vacant Home Tax (VHT) applies to properties not serving as the principal residence, occupied by tenants, or eligible for exemptions for six months or more in a calendar year. Access the online portal for declarations now; the deadline is **February 29, 2024**.

[Learn More](#)

COMMUNITY UPDATES

WASHROOM ACCOMMODATIONS FOR MLS RINK

Skating Season is **OPEN** at Mel Lastman Square!

The outdoor skating rink at Mel Lastman Square is now open for leisure skating from **09:00 to 22:00** daily. All ages are welcome.

In regards to washroom access, a recent flood at the Civic Centre caused damage to the east entrance bathroom that was set to reopen this season that was closed last year for accessibility upgrades. Due to the repairs the bathroom will remain closed for public safety until the restoration work is complete.

In late December, the indoor washroom facilities adjacent to the stage will be available to the public. Until that time, temporary portable washrooms are available, outside, within the Square in the upper area near the garden.

SURVEY OF ARTS AND CULTURE IN THE COMMUNITY

On behalf of our friends at **North York Arts** who are eager to hear what you have to say on Arts and Culture in the community, we invite you to share your thoughts in a brief survey! Help North York Arts create a more vibrant arts & culture experience in North York by sharing your feedback on the **types of events you'd like to see** and attend in your neighbourhood, **how you attend** arts and culture events, and **a little bit about you!** Upon participating, you qualify for a chance to win a \$100 gift card (contest closes midnight on December 21st, winners announced via email on December 22nd).

Click [HERE](#) for Survey.



Order your Danish Candy, food and more on their webshop, and you can pick it up at the Church in Toronto at their upcoming planned activities/events ([Click here](#) to see the Calendar). They can also ship your order to you via Canada Post.

[Order Now!](#)

JOIN US FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

HOLIDAY FAIR
mel lastman
SQUARE
 Supporting Epilepsy Toronto

DEC 1 - DEC 23

🔍 Fairinthesquare.ca

The most wonderful time of the year is just around the corner, and Epilepsy Toronto is thrilled to invite you to the spectacular Holiday Fair in The Square, right here in our community! The event promises to be the most enchanting holiday event in North York.

What to Expect: Winter Wonderland, Santa's Village, 65+ Artisans, Polar Point Bar, Holiday Midway, Roaming Performers, Fireside Lounge.

[Learn More!](#)

LANSING HOLIDAY MARKET

DECEMBER 9, 2023, 12-5PM
 LOCAL VENDORS | PRIZES AND GIVEAWAYS | BAKE SALE
 INDOORS AT 49 BOGERT AVE. NORTH YORK

spaces united
 Connecting spaces to the community

[Register Now!](#)

WILLOWDALE YOUTH BAND PRESENTS

Riposo

Danish Lutheran Church of Toronto
 72 Finch Avenue West, North York

Saturday December 9, 2023
 7:00 PM
 Admission: \$15

TICKETS AT WILLOWDALEYOUTHBAND.COM

[Buy Tickets!](#)



CALL OUT FOR COATS...AND HATS AND SWEATERS AND WARM BOOTS- ESPECIALLY LARGER SIZES FOR MEN

Every Wednesday, Cummer Avenue United Church Drop Inn offers a hot meal, a shower, and when possible, fresh clothing to a significant number of our un-housed neighbours, many of whom are from already under-served, marginalized, or vulnerable populations.



These friends need our help to stay warm this winter, so we're asking Willowdale to donate clean, warm clothing, blankets, and sleeping bags in good condition for distribution through the Drop Inn. Sweaters, hats, scarves, ski pants, and gloves/mitts are also welcome. **New unwrapped socks and underwear** are also in very high demand, as are hand-warmers.

Items can be dropped off at Cummer Avenue United Church (53 Cummer Avenue) any Wednesday between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Parking is available on the west side of the building and a sign will guide you to the Drop Inn. 😊

LET'S CONNECT ON SOCIAL



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