





② @LilyChengTO

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Hi Neighbour!

It has been a whirlwind of a week, making the holidays a distant memory. Every committee meeting is a universe - and this week I entered 4 different universes, which I will tell you about in a moment. But first, I will say that my team and I are very excited to see everyone THIS SUNDAY at our 2nd annual Willowdale Skate Party. We are grateful for the DJ who will be spinning tunes, the figure skaters who will be performing and the many people who have come together to make this happen including Yonge North York BIA, Tim Hortons, NeighbourLink North York, MP Ali Ehsassi, and Desjardins. Come on out to enjoy:

- FREE skate rentals FREE hot chocolate
- FREE cookies

chill. But with the right winter gear, we can be warm and toasty while enjoying a wonderful time with our neighbours! You can RSVP here: www.lilycheng.ca/events

Please join us if you can. Please dress warmly as there will be an expected wind

Toronto Budget 2024

Many people are shocked at the proposed 10.5% tax increase which includes both the property tax and city building fund. (Click Here for the 2024 BudgetTO Presentation slide deck). There are three key challenges the city faces:

challenges and responsibilities result in higher operational costs. Some unique aspects about Toronto include: International conflicts impact our city on a larger scale, requiring

• The City of Toronto is provincial in size and complexity. These unique

- additional policing resources, We have a significantly larger unhoused population,
- A large number of asylum claimants who come to Canada land in
- Toronto. We run the largest social housing organization in Canada
- The lingering impacts of COVID have a compounding impact as our
- city budget struggles to adapt to the new normal. The City of Toronto budget has a structural deficit. This means that our
- income based on property taxes does not grow with our population or economy. While more people are moving to Toronto, our revenue tools do not reflect this responsibility. To be the economic driver of Canada as the contributor of 20% of the GDP, we need to have stable revenue that matches the size and complexity of our city. Many major cities around the world have far more diverse revenue tools including New York, Madrid, and Tokyo. Click Here to read a 2016 report on different revenue tools used by these cities.
- inflation while the cost of running the city has continued to increase. This has created internal pressure including a ballooning State of Good Repair backlog. Considering the many services that have been downloaded to the city over the

years – including social housing – it is not sustainable for our city to depend

For many years the city has kept the property tax increase rate below

solely on property taxes. The city needs long-term sustainable funding. Even with a significant increase in property taxes, there remains a huge \$10.6 billion state of good repair backlog that is set to grow to \$22.7 billion by 2033. This budget addresses current pressures, but a visionary city needs a visionary fiscal framework. While we will not achieve this for 2024 - it is something I believe we all need to work towards. It's the only way we don't end up wrestling for scraps every budget season. We want to hear from you! The current budget is not yet final and your

feedback could help shape the outcome. There are many opportunities to learn about the 2024 Budget and provide your feedback. I am committed to listening

to our community voices as I discern a path forward with this budget! Here is how you can help me better represent you: 1. URGENT! Fill out our Willowdale City Budget Survey! We want to hear your thoughts! **Click Here** to fill out a short survey!

2. NEXT MONDAY, Jan. 15, 7:30-9pm - Virtual Willowdale 'Our City Budget' Town Hall: An exclusive opportunity for Willowdalers to learn about the City Budget and where we are heading as a city financially. Budget Chief and

neighbouring Councillor Shelley Carroll will be joining us as well as Andrew Ng, Interim ED of the Financial Planning Division. This is our money and our city. I hope you will join me for this important informative session. Click Here to register! 3. NEXT TUESDAY, Jan. 23, 1:30 to 4:30pm and 6 to 9pm. Speak to the Budget Committee (of which I am a member): North York Civic Centre, Council Chambers, 5100 Yonge St. Tuesday. To register to speak, email buc@toronto.ca or call 416-392-4666. Please choose a preferred day and

timeslot and register to speak before 4:30pm, January 19. Registered speakers

will be provided with instructions about how to join the meeting in person or online. Other times and locations are available across the city. Click Here for other dates and locations. Thank you for your active engagement with our collective 2024 City of Toronto Budget! **General Government Committee** <u>Click Here</u> to see the video and notes.

expropriation of houses on Greenview Ave. There was a deputation from the Oulahens who are requesting a partial expropriation. This is something staff will continue to discuss with them.

Great news for Willowdale! - the **Beecroft Extension** is moving forward with an

Two other items of note to me were <u>GG9.2</u> for the purchase of chlorine and

GG9.8 for the Supply and Delivery of Sodium Hypochlorite. Both of these purchases are for Toronto Water. Cost pressures for water treatment chemicals have increased due to global instability (last year an item mentioned Ukraine and Russia as primary sources that have destabilized). This is a vulnerability as most chemicals used by Canadian municipalities do not come from Canada.

Further, if you read across all the GGC agendas from last year, you will see

contract after contract that is being adjusted for increased costs. All this to say, there are so many factors impacting the City of Toronto Budget, that it is difficult to rein in costs the way you would for your own personal household budget. There are few vendors that can service a client as large as the City of Toronto, which also plays a role in the prices we pay. **Toronto Police Services** <u>Click Here</u> to read the agenda. <u>Click Here</u> to see the video. Chief Myron Demkiw gave an update on Project Resolute - a large-scale operation to address the escalating tensions arising from demonstrations across

the city. Since October 7, there have been over 308 demonstrations along with a

made during this time. The police have worked hard to strike a balance between

significant spike in hate crimes. 117 charges have been laid and 54 arrests

protecting the Charter protected right for peaceful protests while also ensuring communities feel safe. Demonstrations are dynamic situations that sometimes present a risk to public safety. The city continues to have an ongoing presence and dialogue with Jewish and Muslim communities who have been targeted during this time. In order to address issues that have arisen on Avenue Road, the Chief announced that demonstrations would no longer be allowed at the Avenue Road bridge over the 401. **Al Policy** The police service has adopted a board policy on the use of AI. This will be an evolving policy as technology outpaces our policy implementation. One deputation pointed to the risk of deep fake technology that is already victimizing women. The necessity of this policy to protect privacy as well as counter crime

shows us that our methods of fighting crime and crime prevention are ever changing which means we need to continually invest in the technology and human resources to adapt to an ever-changing landscape. A terrible thing happened... While many agenda items are administrative, such as the receipt of a donation for a horse to replace one scheduled to retire next year from our mounted unit, there are difficult cases that come up from time to time that weigh on us as board and community members. One such case happened on February 27, 2023. A man was seen in a parkette with a knife near 12 Division. Officers responded to the call and what transpired resulted in a critical injury sustained

by the man with the knife. Click Here to read more about the situation as reported by CP24. At issue is how the officer who has been charged failed to use de-escalation methods required by the service. While this case awaits criminal proceedings, the victim requires significant supports which are difficult to access when unhoused. I am hopeful some supports can be identified to

support this victim. During the board meeting I asked about data on the

effectiveness of current de-escalation training. While it is difficult to track, I believe it is important to understand if the policies and training that have been implemented are effective.

Civic Appointment

I ended this week with chairing the Civic Appointments Committee. We interviewed and appointed candidates for Yonge/Dundas Square Board, Toronto Parking Authority Board, Toronto Preservation Board and shortlisted interview candidates for TOLive Board. Every time we get to interview people for the city's many boards, I am amazed at the incredible talent and commitment of community members to participate and give back. I would like to see more diverse candidates join the many boards that govern our city. Click Here to learn about upcoming opportunities. My hope as chair is to make joining a board more accessible to diverse communities in our city. One hurdle that we face is the necessity for daytime meetings. It is difficult for boards to have ongoing evening meetings due to the staff required to participate and/or run these meetings. This means we will never have a teacher as a board member or anyone working a day job that they are unable to step away from. This is one of many questions I am pondering with the Clerks to envision a process that invites more voices to the table.

What's Next? Next week is budget week. If you want a fast-forward dive into the nuts and bolts

of the city, you can join me online January 16, 17 and 18 as agencies and divisions across our city present their budgets. Click Here to see the link to view as it is made available.

And while my brain is close to jello for the hundreds of pages I have read and

hours of meetings that ate up my week, my weekend awaits with the skate party and a box that contains all the briefing notes for the budget. The job can feel daunting at times as I try to carve out time to have meals with my family. My word for 2024 is "sustainable." The work of a City Councillor is a marathon and not a sprint. I often have to remind myself to pace myself as I have big dreams and big passion that are hard to contain! I look forward to seeing many of you at our Skate Party and/or Budget Town

Hall. I look forward to the many mountains we will climb together in 2024! Hopefully we'll see some peaks! Warmest Regards,

Councillor Lily Cheng

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

~ COUNCILLOR UPDATES

• 2024 T.O. BUDGET SURVEY

- Virtual Willowdale City Budget Town Hall
- Skate Party 2024 • Reporting Power Outages
- Winter Bus Stop Update
- ~ CITY OF TORONTO UPDATES

Vacant Home Tax Douglas Snow Aquatic Centre Reopening

- ~ COMMUNITY EVENTS ACROSS WILLOWDALE

Avoid Frozen Pipes

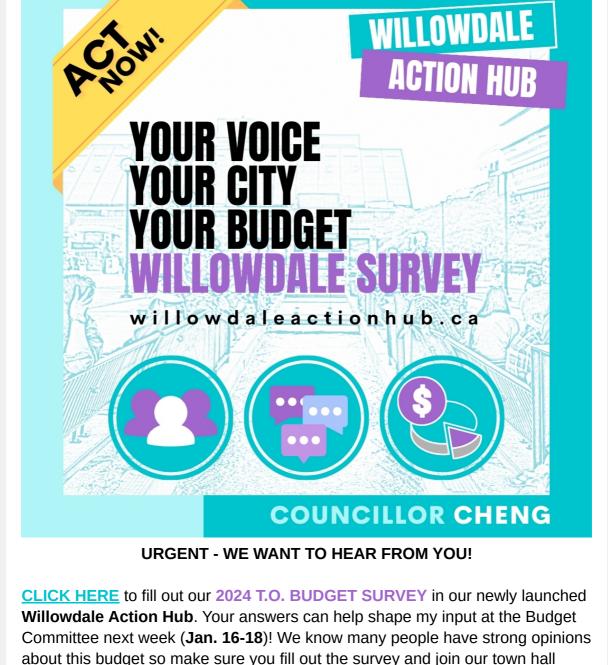
<u>Legend of Huli</u>

- "Mud Covered City" Viewing
- Robbie Burns Tea

• TD Park People Grants Program

- **COUNCILLOR UPDATES**

NEXT MONDAY night!



Important links to 2024 BudgetTO launch reading material: **Presentation deck: Click Here Presentation appendices: Click Here** Learn more & get involved: Click Here Please note: This is the city staff and Budget Chief proposed version of the

Take the Survey Now!

VIRTUA

budget. The budget is not finalized until February 2024.



Budget Chief and Councillor Shelley Carroll, alongside the Interim ED of Financial Planning Division, this exclusive session is a unique opportunity for Willowdalers to understand and engage with our city's financial landscape. Let's come together virtually to discuss OUR money and OUR city. Don't miss this chance to be informed, ask questions, and actively participate in shaping

the future of Willowdale.

CLICK HERE to register and be a part of this important conversation! **RSVP**



The time has come for our 2nd Annual Willowdale Skate Party at Mel Lastman Square! Join us for a wonderful time of experiencing community on and off the rink on Sunday January 14, 2024 from 1PM - 4PM.

Kick off 2024 with us as we skate with family, friends, and neighbours, enjoy

jaw-opening ice skating performances and a fun interactive DJ, and warm up with hot chocolate and cup noodles in support of NeighbourLink North York. This is a free event sponsored by Tim Hortons and Yonge North York BIA,

and brought to you by Councillor Lily Cheng and MP Ali Ehsassi. Free rentals made available by the Skate Lending Library.

See you at the rink!

RSVP

REPORTING POWER OUTAGES

For residents experiencing power outages, reach out directly to Toronto Hydro at power_quality@torontohydro.com and provide them with your address so that they are able to determine the feeder that your home is serviced from to better address the issue. You can also call 416-542-8000 (press 6) from Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to report the outage.

WINTER BUS STOP UPDATE

As winter approaches, we would like to provide you with an update on our Severe Winter Weather plan.

Fifty-six bus stops are being updated in various locations across the city with new permanent winter weather information signs indicating that the stop may be taken out of service during snow and freezing rain storms. These stops are located in known trouble spots such as hills or areas that make it difficult for a bus to travel during heavy snow and freezing rain. Here is the list of stops that will be affected in our ward:

Route	Stop #	Location	
42 Cummer	Stop #1803	Cummer Ave at Bayview Ave	
53 Steeles East	Stop #8225	Steeles Ave East at Henderson Ave	
353 Steeles East Night Bus	Stop #8225	Steeles Ave East at Henderson Ave	
L earn More			

CITY OF TORONTO UPDATES

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**

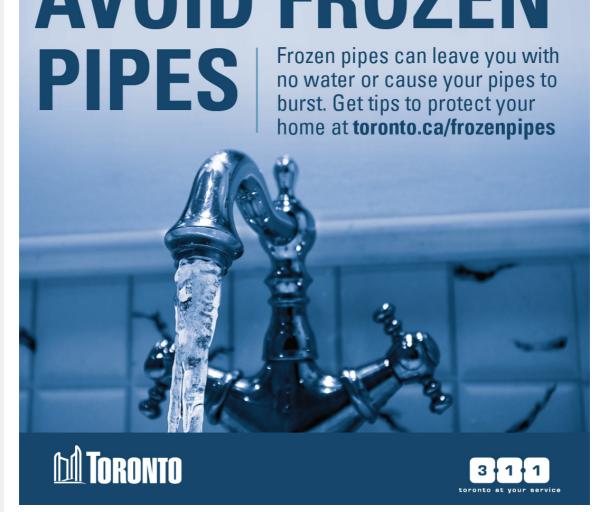


ongoing efforts to promptly address and resolve the heating issues in the change room areas. Updated information has been posted on the centre's webpage, and signs have been displayed within the facility to inform the public about these developments.

Learn More

expected that the slide inspection will take place in the coming week, with

AVOID FROZEN



AVOID FROZEN PIPES As winter continues, ensure your pipes are protected from freezing! Did you know that during winter, the City receives regular calls of "no water" due to frozen pipes on residents' private property? Take steps to protect your pipes from freezing and learn what to do if they freeze by visiting the City's Prevent or

Thaw Frozen Pipes webpage.

Learn More



'The Legend of Huli' (狐狸的传说) is coming to the Meridian Arts Centre on January 20 and 21! Willowdaler and producer Nina Zaslavsky and Artistic Director Roman Smirnov presents a mythical story of the east-asian celestial fox portrayed by world class performers from China and Ukraine. Experience a fusion of contemporary dance, light show and music ranging from baroque to flamenco, jazz, world and modern classics.

Get Tickets



TD PARK PEOPLE GRANTS PROGRAM

TD Park People Grants Program launched on January 10th, and the application deadline is Tuesday, February 27, 2024!

This year, the \$2,000 grants will support 70 groups hosting park events in 21 urban areas across Canada (see eligible cities here). Successful applicants will use the grant to host two events supporting the ongoing care and protection of green spaces through environmental education, sustainability and stewardship initiatives.

Learn More

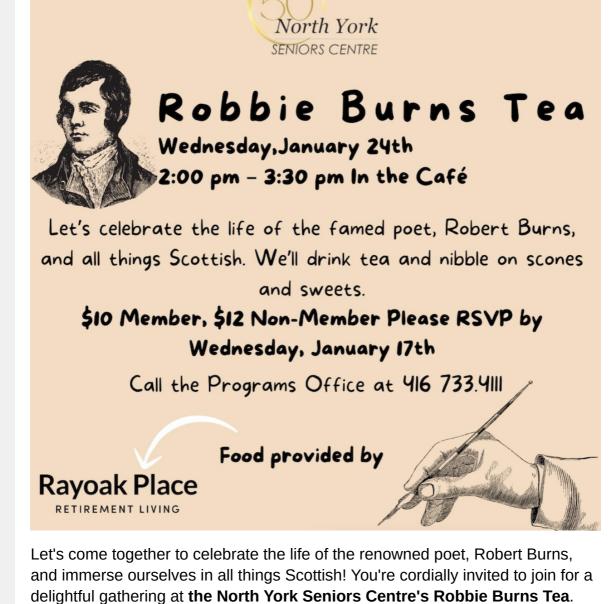


invited to a special screening of the Venice IFF short film winner, "Mud Covered City" This cinematic gem is a testament to Václav Táborský's directorial skills in crafting short satirical documentaries. Join on either January 24th or 27th, from 7-9 pm at the iconic John Mckenzie House for an unforgettable experience. **Secure Your Spot:** RSVP for January 24th: <u>CLICK HERE</u> RSVP for January 27th: <u>CLICK HERE</u>

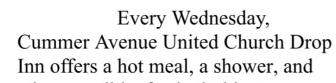
Discover an Evening of Art and Cinema with WCRA Arts Collective! You are

- Immerse yourself in the magic of cinema and become part of the WCRA Arts
- Collective's mission to foster and celebrate the arts in Willowdale. An enchanting

evening awaits you!



Time: 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm Indulge in a cozy afternoon filled with piping hot tea, delectable treats, and the joy of shared moments. To ensure your spot, please RSVP by calling the Programs Office at 416-733-4111.



Date: January 24th

Inn offers a hot meal, a shower, and when possible, fresh clothing to a

CALL OUT FOR COATS...AND

HATS AND SWEATERS AND WARM BOOTS-

ESPECIALLY LARGER SIZES FOR MEN

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









