



# LILY'S WEEKDAY UPDATE

Issues • Policies • Committees

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## Hi Neighbour!

Thank you to all community members who joined **Let's Move, Willowdale** in support of **NeighbourLink North York** and **North York Seniors Centre**. After several days of rain, it was wonderful to see everyone enjoying our stretch of hydro corridor in the beautiful sunshine! I also want to congratulate the **Willowdale Lawn Bowling Club** on launching its 2024 season. I had the privilege and pressure of launching the first bowl. Luckily, I had a Canadian Champion coach who helped me prevent total embarrassment!

Congratulations to **Brebeuf College** on 60 years of raising boys to become men with compassion, excellence and faith. They held a special mass with a visiting Archbishop from Ottawa. I also saw their incredible robotics program in action!

Many thanks to the Property Managers and Condo Leaders' who attended our **Condo Leaders' Luncheon**. We discussed issues surrounding planning, safety and noise. Attendees also got to try their hand at Lawn Bowling! We concluded we will need a longer session in the form of a symposium in early winter.

**Happy Polish Heritage Month!** The story of Polish immigration to Canada dates back to 1752, when the first recorded Polish immigrant arrived on Canadian shores. Today, the Polish Canadian community boasts a population of over one million. They've made substantial and diverse contributions to agriculture, manufacturing, engineering, education, publishing, religion, mining, culture, professions, sports, military, research, business, government, and politics in Canada.

It's **Mental Health Awareness Week!** In a time of increased pressures and polarization, it's good to check in with yourself to see how you're doing and to reach out for help if you find yourself struggling. This year's Mental Health Week is centred on the healing power of compassion. In a world plagued by suffering, we emphasize that kindness is equally intrinsic to our humanity. [Click Here](#) for more information.

**SAVE THE DATE!** **32 Division** is hosting a **Community BBQ** on Saturday, May 18 from 4-8pm in front of their building. Officers often show their BBQing AND dance skills at the annual event.

### New Bike Share and Car Charging at 19 Glendora Ave.

We welcome the newly deployed Bike Share E-Station which is the first e-station in Toronto to be deployed in conjunction with an on-street EV charger. This is also the first e-station deployed in Willowdale and north of the 401!

### The Quest for a Seamless System

When I was first elected, many people asked me, "What is your primary goal during your first year of office?" "Developing good operational processes and digital infrastructure," was one of my answers. 1 ½ years in, the journey to build a seamless system continues. As my office has ramped up our presence in the community, so has our email volume and by extension the number of cases that need to be managed. Previously the city provided councillors with a CRM. This stopped because the software became outdated. Currently, councillors receive \$4000 per year towards a CRM and case management system. To best serve you, a councillor's office needs many tools depending on their goals and operational model. Here are the types of services my office uses:

- CRM
- Case Management
- Email delivery service
- Website/Domain Hosting
- Event Management/Ticketing
- Web conference tool (eg. Zoom)
- Survey tool
- Team Communications (Eg. Cliq)
- Civic engagement tool (Eg. Citizen Lab)
- Document signing application

Unlike other city divisions, councillors own our own data. This presents some challenges as our data infrastructure is locked outside of the city's infrastructure. Last week I had a meeting with City Clerks and the Technology Services division to discuss the difficulties my office faces as we try to organize our data and processes. It does not make sense that every councillor has to invent our own data infrastructure with many make-shift patches across systems because we do not have the budget to create the suite of tools we need. I think we could reduce costs and provide better service if the city worked with councillors on developing more integrated tools where the data could continue to be segmented for councillors to own, but points of intersection could be developed as needed - for example with 311 case information. We have already come a long way in optimizing our suite of tools, but there is much work that still needs to be done to be better at tracking data and closing the loop on the vast number of emails we receive. Stay tuned for our own online intake form for those requesting support from our office!

### There is hope in our future - Willowdale Youth Council Update!

On Monday, April 29, we held our second official Youth Council Meeting at St. Stephen's Newcomer Community House. Nine inspiring youths presented innovative solutions to over twenty-five other students in an election for the council's first-ever President and Vice-President. Each candidate wrote and presented an article focusing on three action areas identified at the council's last meeting: Community Connectivity, Mental Health Support, and Community Safety. Representatives from the North York Central Library also shared their plans for a brand-new Teen Zone for Willowdale, encouraging youth to envision how public spaces can be utilised for further connectivity.

The presentations offered a bright look into the diversity and creativity of Willowdale youth as they suggested solutions and ideas for the community such as:

- Community murals, outdoor art therapy workshops
- Willowdale Art Fair with art workshops, food, live music
- Guided cultural tours and community storytelling archive for newcomers and residents alike.
- Youth cultural story hub, cultural social gatherings
- Implementation of neighborhood-wide safety technology
- Gym-buddy matching service, outdoor community-wide active events
- Improving accessibility for the community's most vulnerable by creating a resource database for people with disabilities
- Improving services for the elderly through flyer drops, Shuttle bus services
- Career/Job Fairs for high school students, workshops inviting industry professionals

All members were thoroughly engaged in each others' proposals and participated eagerly in the Q&A at the end of each presentation, challenging and encouraging each other. We were incredibly impressed by the creativity and passion of these young leaders and are excited to see their visions materialize through the Youth Council.

After a full afternoon of speeches, Youth Council members cast votes to determine the council's first President and Vice-President. The Willowdale Youth Council elected **Brandon Woo, a Grade 10 student at Earl Haig Secondary School**, as its inaugural **President**, who proposed the idea of connecting our community through exercise. **Dahlia Zarrabian** was elected as **Vice-President**. The council will reconvene in a month at the May meeting to elect its remaining executive members and listen to more solutions for positive change in Willowdale. Congratulations to Brandon and Dahlia!

### Toronto Police Services Board - 12 Hours Later...

Unfortunately, this was not a Sponge Bob Meme, but the reality of the Toronto Police Services Board. We motored through a heavy agenda and somehow pressed into the night without a dinner break. The challenge with this committee is the breadth of work that needs to be covered. The Toronto Police Service is the fourth largest municipal police service in North America.

**5 Officers Injured Last Month.** During the board meeting we were informed of five officers injured in the line of duty - one of whom is a 32 Division officer who was injured in a carjacking arrest in our neighbourhood. We offer our sincere gratitude to all officers who put their lives at risk every day for the safety of our city - especially those who have endured injury as a part of the work!

**Improved Priority One Response Time.** Back in February, the Priority One (lives are endangered) response time was 22 minutes. The Chief reported that despite call volume rising by 1000 calls (year to date), the response time for the past 4 weeks has been 18 minutes on average. This is still long compared to the 12.8 minutes response time in 2010, but the improvement is much appreciated. The Chief attributes these improvements to the stability in the pipeline of

bringing onboard new recruits supported by the recent budget. We are hopeful as TPS puts together a multi-year hiring plan that the pipeline of new recruits will continue to strengthen our police service, especially as 25% of officers are currently eligible for retirement.

**An apology from the Chief.** Many were upset by Chief Demkiw's remarks made in response to the not-guilty verdict in the Umar Zameer trial. He apologized for his choice of words at the meeting. He said, "Closure can never come at the expense of justice. I should have been more clear in my support of the verdict," and committed to full transparency as the OPP investigates the review of the trial and the actions taken by the officers who participated in the trial.

**Building trust with Indigenous communities in the collection of Race-Based Data.** In its ongoing efforts to foster trust and transparency, TPS is actively working with community stakeholders to collect and analyze data towards improving equity and accountability. A representative from the Indigenous Community shared how most of their community has not felt safe to participate with the ongoing study due to ethical practices in research and lack of clarity in data ownership. If reconciliation is a priority, our efforts to engage Indigenous communities cannot be cursory but must be meaningful and intentional. We must cross the divide to build trust. As such, I moved the following motion with full support of the board. This motion is proof that making deputations can make a difference in the policies that are made.

*Direct the Executive Director, with the support of the Board's Advisor, Indigenous Engagement, consult with the Indigenous communities to be included in the current Race-Based Data Collection Policy review and includes an update that incorporates ethics in research and data ownership with a report back with the report from the review.*

**Community Safety and Policing Act.** An overhaul of Ontario's 34-year-old law governing policing in the province resulted in new legislation coming into effect on April 1. This Act was passed in 2019 and only being implemented now due to many consultations that had to happen before the Act was finalized. [Click Here](#) for some highlights of the changes. [Click Here](#) to read the Act.

Prior to attending the meeting last week, all board members had to take an online course, including quizzes, to ensure we are apprised of recent changes to provincial policing policy and how it relates to our role as board members.

Part of the Act states that board members cannot be former officers in the service they are governing. As such, we had to say farewell to **Councillor Jon Burnside**, who used to be a Toronto police officer. He has been replaced by **Councillor Shelley Carroll**, who brings a wealth of experience from previously serving on this board.

#### The Implications of Bill 185

In the previous month, the Government of Ontario brought forth Bill 185, known as the *Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act*. This comprehensive legislation encompasses modifications to various laws, including alterations to development charges and Ontario's land-use planning framework. The primary objective is to eliminate obstacles and facilitate the construction of 1.5 million homes by 2031.

While Bill 185 will make significant steps towards restoring municipalities' ability to fund growth-related infrastructure by:

- repealing the five-year phase-in of development charges introduced under Bill 23, and
- restoring studies as eligible development charge costs,

some advocates feel that Bill 185, the "*Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024*," if passed, will significantly undermine community engagement, dismiss ongoing appeals against inequitable developments, reduce municipal oversight, and threaten the sustainability of neighbourhoods.

I know many community members are already shocked to discover their input has very little impact on development proposals. Here are some key concerns highlighted by the Coalition for Equitable and Inclusive Development:

- **Reduced Community Engagement:** Bill 185 aims to eliminate public input on development projects and diminish our role in crucial planning decisions that adversely impact our livelihoods and our communities. Public participation in land use planning and development is essential and should be encouraged, not eliminated.
- **Dismissal of Existing Appeals:** Bill 185 proposes to disregard any current community appeals against developments, eroding our efforts to advocate for just and inclusive urban planning.
- **Limited Municipal Oversight:** The proposed legislation will strip local municipalities of their ability to consult on major planning applications, weakening the influence of community stakeholders in safeguarding community interests.
- **Encroachment on Green Spaces:** The enactment of this bill poses a risk to greenbelt areas and could undermine efforts to ensure that new developments include necessary community benefits and support affordable housing.

#### Here are some potential action steps you can take:

- **Written Comments:** If you prefer to submit written comments, the deadline is 5:00 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, May 15, 2024. Visit [ola.org/en/apply-committees](https://ola.org/en/apply-committees) to register or submit comments.
- **City Council Committee Meeting:** Attend the Toronto Planning and Housing Committee meeting on May 9, 2024, to stay informed and demonstrate your support.

#### Resources:

- Bill Details: For a detailed legal summary of Bill 185, visit McMillan LLP's analysis - (<https://mcmillan.ca/insights/publications/introducing-bill-185-the-cutting-red-tape-to-build-more-homes-act-and-an-update-on-the-new-provincial-planning-statement/>).
- Legislative Updates: [ola.org](https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-185/status) Bill 185 Status - (<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-185/status>)

Thanks again for reading my weekly update! Have a wonderful rest of your week!

Warmest Regards,

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