

A World of Delays

Residents often inquire why projects seem to take so long. I thought I would share some insight with one small example.

In March, I was approached about adding lighting to a 400-metre stretch of the Moccasin Trail Path. This poorly lit path is heavily used by pedestrians as it connects hundreds of folks to transit and shopping.

Within a month, our City Parks department provided a cost estimate and by June, I had Council approval. So far so good.

The cost to install LED lights was low enough (\$76,500) that we could choose from an approved list of vendors and save the 6 to 12 months it would take to go out to tender.

We had to wait in line, but by September work began. In less than two weeks construction appeared complete. It was very exciting!

But then nothing. The lights never came on. Although the eight new LED lights use less energy than one of the existing lights, Toronto Hydro demanded we upsize the amperage at a cost of thousands of dollars. Fortunately, our staff pushed back.

By the end of October, we had our approvals but now we were put back in the vendor's queue for the power connection.

Nine months later and still waiting....

Did You Know?

50% of all traffic infractions captured electronically are spoiled.

11% are spoiled due to intentional licence plate obstructions.

COUNCILLOR BURNSIDE'S IN-PERSON TOWN HALL MEETING

Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025	Monday, Mar. 3, 2025
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Grenoble Public School	Don Mills C.I.
9 Grenoble Dr.	15 The Donway E.

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JON BURNSIDE

City Councillor, Don Valley East - Ward 16

No Ward Boundary Changes!

On Thursday, August 1, Premier Ford held a press conference regarding police helicopter funding. In response to a reporter's question, the Premier stated that he **would not be changing** the provincial (and therefore municipal) boundaries before the next election cycle. This is great news for Don Valley East residents (and hopefully, me!). So, while the riding of Don Valley East has been eliminated federally, no changes will be made either provincially or municipally.

Ontario Science Centre

The closing of the Ontario Science Centre (OSC) has left a hole in the community and the City. Countless children and students have been affected and have lost wonderful learning opportunities. Having read the engineering report, I believe the provincial government overreacted by immediately closing the OSC and I have concerns about the sincerity of this action.

As part of the "new deal" that Mayor Chow signed with the Province, it was stated that "The Province and City will also discuss future partnership opportunities to maintain public, community-oriented science programming at the legacy OSC location." Unfortunately, this wording is unclear and has no mechanism to bind either party.

Mayor Chow agreed to my suggestion last June that I form a committee of local residents, interested parties, and industry professionals to identify opportunities for maintaining programming at the OSC. I felt we must present a vision for the OSC as opposed to just complaining about its closure.

Sadly, this committee has been delayed due to "ongoing negotiations" between the City and the Province, and I am now questioning the commitment of both.

Given the massive development proposals in Wynford Heights and Flemingdon Park which will result in an additional 34,000 residents (including four large Housing Now affordable housing buildings), it is essential that we build complete communities. Complete communities are those that provide places to work, play and learn.

To that end, I was heartened that City Council overwhelmingly supported my October motion that "City-owned lands at OSC . . . remain solely for recreational and educational purposes". Stay tuned!

Vacant Home Tax

It's time to submit your declaration!

Property owners are required to declare occupancy status of their property **every year**. The deadline to submit your Vacant Home Tax declaration is **April 30**. Visit toronto.ca/VacantHomeTax or call my office for assistance.



At my Flemingdon Park town hall with Yusuf Matadar and Ismail Bobat.



Happy Holidays from Team Burnside.



Every #FridayInTheCommunity I enjoy knocking on doors and chatting with residents.

Keep in Touch

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Sign Up for My e-Updates!

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Basement Flooding

The increased frequency and severity of rainstorms has led to thousands of flooded basements throughout the City. The latest “100-year weather event” which occurred in July -- only 14 years after the previous “event” -- resulted in numerous flooded basements in our Ward.

Many residents reached out to my office, and I visited with Toronto Water staff to try to determine the exact cause, take action when possible, and offer advice for the future (such as backflow valve installation with the City rebate program).

Although the City is doing extensive sewer upgrades, the work is extremely expensive, disruptive and time consuming.

The City introduced the Basement Flooding Program in 2006. Each area of the City was studied and prioritized to protect the greatest number of properties within approved budgets. The original threshold was \$25,000 per benefitting property. Costs per property greater than that amount were deferred.

The threshold was recently increased to \$68,000 per benefitting property which has been beneficial to some extent, yet still fails to address all the needs of Ward 16 residents. Fortunately, extensive projects in Victoria Village and Fenside have been completed but many projects remain – mostly in the Don Mills corridor. To date, 31,000 properties throughout the City have benefited from the basement flooding program at cost of \$655 million.

Under certain circumstances residents can sue the City: for instance, if the City has not maintained infrastructure properly by not cleaning sewers.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance. I'm always eager to come and see you and do whatever I can to help.

Wrong Direction

When our property taxes were increased by 9.5% this year, it was with the promise that funds would be used to continue and restore the services “we all depend on.” In the case of animal cadaver removal, this promise has been hollow.

Prior to 2024, the removal target was 90% of animals within 48 hours. However, this year the City was falling short -- very short -- so instead of fixing the service they changed the timeline to five days. This has left residents across the City concerned and frustrated. Apparently so much so that a council colleague had a dead raccoon left in a bag outside their constituency office.

One issue is that the same highly trained staff who investigate aggressive dog complaints and enforce bylaws have been tasked with animal removal. I have been advocating that this task be returned to our Transportation Services department who have far more staff on the roads and could make this just part of their daily routine.

I will keep pressing for these changes.

Quick Updates

TRANSPORTATION

Donway Speed Limit – This ring road had various speed limits which was both illogical and confusing. I had the entire ring road changed to the lower limit of 40 km/h.

Additional Community Safety (CS) Zones – In order to use Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE), the Province requires the stretch of road in question meet strict parameters and first be designated a CS Zone by Council. I was able to successfully add two new CS Zones: the Donway in its entirety and Don Mills Road one block north and south of Lawrence Avenue.

Speed Humps on Eccleston & Sweeney – As the result of a resident petition and my own efforts to speak to those affected, the installation of speed humps has been approved.

Automated Speed Enforcement Cameras – Until now each of the 25 wards in the City has had three mobile cameras which are relocated every 90 days. Provincial regulations stipulate that “warning” signs must be erected 90 days prior to installation so the ability to move the cameras around more quickly is limited. However, a permanent speed camera on Don Mills Road near Lawrence Avenue will be installed soon.

PARK UPDATES

Dr. Daniel Hill Park – A new splash pad is coming to Underhill. Design and community consultation will take place in 2025 with construction in 2026.

Don Mills Civitan Arena – The use of “duct tape” to keep the Arena operational until the twin pads are built at the Celestica site was no longer possible. **A new roof** has been installed at a cost of \$369,000.

Flemingdon Park Northeast Playground – Over \$1,000,000 of development benefit funds will be used for a long overdue revamp. Almost 650 residents responded to the design options survey for the most used playground in the Ward. To help ensure fun for all, rubber matting will replace sand and a special swing for small children with disabilities will be included. I hope to name the playground after a worthy community volunteer so please feel free to submit suggestions.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

123 Wynford Drive (former Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre) – Regretfully this was approved at the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) with an Interim Decision. **I opposed this application at every step.**

7 and 11 Rochefort Drive – This application has been appealed to OLT. The proposal: residential apartment towers at heights of 46, 41, and 30 storeys containing a combined total of 1,322 apartment units, including the replacement of all 128 existing rental units.



Twice a year I host a coffee morning at my constituency office - it's a great chance to chat with residents.



Community Share Food Bank celebrated its 20th anniversary. Special thanks to Ken Rippon, Bill Hullah and Ross Anderson.



My cotton candy machine was popular at the St. John XXII Catholic School Fun Fair.



On Environment Day we were busy picking up items from residents' homes.



At the Aga Khan Museum Anniversary event with Sadruddin Gilani and Zohra Gilani.



Chatting with Klaudian Shehu about potential speed humps on Fenelon Dr.