

Adam Vaughan

Toronto City Councillor: Ward 20 ~ Trinity-Spadina

e-newsletter

December 2010



Dear Friends, Residents and Businesses of Ward 20,

Happy Holidays and best wishes for the New Year. It looks like it will be interesting, from the point of view an office at City Hall provides!

The last year has been a busy one. New parks projects are finally underway, others are getting close to construction, and still more are just beginning the process of community-led design. Talk about presents under the tree!

Development is continuing to deliver new neighbours, new businesses, and new opportunities for local cultural and community services to flourish and grow in every corner of the ward. Change is also on the way. City Hall's budget process this year will deliver challenges in the months ahead.

The new mayor has produced a budget schedule that is shorter and faster than any budget process in our city's life. There will be no public deputations, and none of the public consultations will be in or near downtown Toronto. The closest public forum will be on Wednesday January 19th at the East York Civic Centre starting at 6pm. More details are below.

The new term of council is underway. Three key items have been in the headlines. The new mayor ran on a platform of saying no to transit strikes, no to the Vehicle Registration Tax and no to Council office budgets at last year's level.

My voting record on these issues is highlighted on the next page of this newsletter.

Despite all of the challenges, it remains a privilege and an absolute joy to represent one of the biggest wards in the city whether measured by heart, health or sheer numbers. Every day I thank you for your support, your ideas, your criticism and your faith in Toronto, and every day I come to work, it is with pride.

On behalf of your Ward 20 team here at City Hall - best wishes and a Happy New Year!

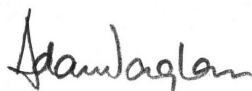


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City Council Updates

On the three items that have been in the headlines from the first City Council meeting, here is how I voted:

Transit Strikes

I have yet to meet anyone who likes transit strikes. The challenges are: how do you avoid them, and how much is the city willing to pay to prevent service interruptions due to labour disputes?

The motion presented by the Mayor asked Council to request that the TTC be declared an essential service. In the past I have opposed this with one condition. In the last term I worked to have Wheel Trans declared an essential service. Without provincial help, this has now been achieved through a negotiated settlement with the union.

As for general service, I too believe that a negotiated truce is possible. If the province imposes essential service status on the TTC, the city will be unable to design the arbitration process. Studies and experience indicate this will cause labour costs to rise significantly while limiting our ability to re-configure the work structure of the TTC. In other words, it will hardwire fare hikes and compromise service efficiencies. It may also fail to prevent illegal or wildcat strikes, or work-to-rule campaigns. I voted against the declaration and instead supported having TTC management, the Commission and the Union negotiate a no-strike agreement. The Mayor's motion won.

Vehicle Registration Tax (VRT)

I have campaigned on this issue in two elections. Both times I promised to support a program of tax reform. The issue is not whether government *should* tax. It must. It is not an issue of *how much* should government tax. That debate is held every year through the budget process and is more complex than saying yes or no to one form of generating revenue. The issue is *how we* tax.

I believe that the City cannot continue to rely on property tax alone. It is a volatile tax that punishes property owners who live in areas where real estate speculation and land values are running high. Taxes go up in some parts of the city, oblivious to people's ability to pay, and even when the city holds the line on spending. In fact, taxes can rise as service levels are cut. Inflationary budget pressures require tax hikes above and beyond the rate of inflation to balance the books. This is why new revenue sources are so critical, especially for residents and businesses in Ward 20.

Taxes are never popular but they should be fair. The Vehicle Registration Tax took pressure off the property tax base and its revenue to the City grew with the economy. Without touching the rate of the VRT, the tax was bringing in more dollars each year as the city grew. If there is a structural surplus in our budget I would support cutting property tax. As it stands, we have a structural deficit at the city and we were facing a \$500 million budget shortfall. As a result of Council's decision to scrap the VRT we are now facing a short fall of close to \$560 million dollars. The additional pressure is equal to a 3% property tax hike. Significant service cuts are now likely as the Mayor has promised a tax freeze.

Office Budgets

Our office budget has been cut by \$20,000. Last year Council cut its expenses from \$53,000 to \$50,000. I supported this reduction. It is obvious that the city is going to have to reduce spending substantially this year and it is important for council to provide leadership. Most of the Ward 20 office budget was spent on staff. We have eliminated a full time constituency assistant. We will also make other reductions to accommodate the change in funding; hopefully the service impact to residents and businesses will not be dramatic.

One point that was raised during the debate should be of interest to Ward 20 residents and businesses. Our ward is substantially bigger than other wards in the city. Ward 20 has more than 50,000 voters. Smaller wards have as little as 26,000 voters. When you add in non-voters (children, landed immigrants and many small business owners) plus the impact of large businesses, visitors, city-events and major institutions that also define the ward and draw on city services, it is clear that Ward 20 is under-resourced and under-represented both democratically and financially. If the 5 largest wards were broken down to average size they would have eight seats on council. If the 5 smallest seats were brought up to the same standard, they would only have 4 seats on council. It is interesting to note that most of the large wards are closer to the core, while the smaller wards are nearer to the city limits. This issue needs to be addressed.

2011 City Budget >> Get Involved!

The new Mayor has produced a budget schedule that is shorter and faster than any budget process in our City's life.

The new mayor has already reduced the City's revenue options by eliminating the Vehicle Registration Tax and promising to sustain last year's property tax rates. This will make for some tough choices regarding service delivery.

I believe that Council needs to hear from you – residents and business operators – about your priorities in order to make the best decisions. However, there will be no public deputations at Committee or Council. None of the public consultations planned will be in or near downtown Toronto.

Please come out to the closest public forum to have your say:

Date: Wednesday January 19, 2011
Time: 6:00 p.m
Location: East York Civic Centre, Council Chamber
850 Coxwell Ave, NW corner of Coxwell and Mortimer
Public Transit: Subway to Coxwell, then O'Connor bus #70 north on Coxwell.

If you wish to make a deputation, please notify the City Clerk, Budget Committee, by calling 416-392-1032 or 416-397-7768, or e-mail buc@toronto.ca no later than 12 p.m. on January 18, 2011, indicating your preferred date and location. There will be a 5 minute time limit for each presentation.

To submit written comments to the Budget Sub-Committees, please write to Merle MacDonald of the City Clerk's office. You can email buc@toronto.ca, fax 416-392-1879, or mail to:

Merle MacDonald, City Clerk's Office
Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West
10th floor, West Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Here are other budget consultation sessions that are being held in other parts of the city:

North York:

Date: Wednesday January 19, 2011
Time: 6:00 p.m
Location: North York Civic Centre, Council Chamber
5100 Yonge Street

York:

Date: Thursday January 20, 2011
Time: 6:00 p.m
Location: York Civic Centre, Council Chamber
2700 Eglinton Ave. West

Scarborough:

Date: Thursday January 20, 2011
Time: 6:00 p.m
Location: Scarborough Civic Centre, Council Chamber
150 Borough Drive

Lace up your skates!

Lace up your skates! Toronto's outdoor rink program is in full swing, offering a wide range of free leisure skate and shinny hockey programs for all ages. Weather permitting, the City's outdoor rink program will operate until February 27, with an extended season at a number of locations until March 13.

Toronto's 51 outdoor rinks are compressor-cooled, which makes it possible for them to operate in a range of weather conditions. Ice quality, however, may vary according to the outside temperature and precipitation, and closures during the skating season are sometimes necessary.

Don't forget to protect your head. All children under the age of six must wear a CSA-approved hockey helmet on the ice. Helmets are also mandatory for people of all ages participating in supervised shinny hockey and learn-to-skate programs.



More information about Toronto's outdoor artificial ice rinks, including a map of rink locations, schedules for each location, closures, learn-to-skate programs and helmet/equipment requirements, is available online here:

<http://www.toronto.ca/parks/skating/outdoor-rinks.htm>

The City of Toronto has also created a new Facebook page called "Outdoor Skating in Toronto."

In Ward 20, Harbourfront Centre also offers FREE skating, seven days a week, at two rinks. One rink is geared towards kids learning how to skate and practice before moving on to the other, bigger skating rink. More information about the hours of operation and facilities is available online here:

<http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/skating/index.cfm?ref=fp>

Snow

It's that time of the year again. Winter. And a Canadian winter means snow – sometimes a lot of snow. Here are a few things that you can expect as the City of Toronto gears up for another winter:

Ploughing expressways and roads: As soon as the snow begins, Transportation Services sends out its fleet of salt trucks to the expressways, main roads and local roads. If the City receives five centimetres of snow, the ploughs are sent to the expressways and main roads, and ploughing will take place for the duration of the storm.

When the snow stops, and if the snow accumulation reaches eight centimetres, plows will be sent to the local roads. Normally, local road plowing will be completed between 14 and 16 hours after the storm has ended.

Laneways: Public laneways are treated with salt within 1 to 2 days from the end of a major snowfall.



Sidewalks: The City will clear snow from sidewalks on local roads where it is mechanically possible to do so after 8cm (5cm in January and February) of snow has fallen. In the central core of the city, property owners are required to clear their sidewalks of snow 12 hours after a storm has taken place.

Sidewalk Snow Clearing for Seniors: In areas where mechanical sidewalk clearing is not feasible, the City of Toronto provides sidewalk snow clearing services for seniors after 8cm (5cm in January and February) of snow has fallen. Work is generally carried out by manual shoveling, assisted with light mechanical equipment, and is usually completed within 36 to 72 hours after the end of a storm. Here are the criteria for this free service:

- 1) Residents are 65 years of age or older, and where there are no members of the same household under 65;
- 2) Residents are 65 years of age or older and where a member of the same household under 65 is determined by a physician to be disabled;
- 3) Residents are under 65 years of age and are determined by a physician to be incapable of removing snow from the sidewalks adjacent to their home without endangering their health, without an able-bodied member of the same household under 65 residing on the premises.

An application form and supporting documents must be completed annually. For further details and to register for this service, call 416-392-7768.

Residents who have questions about snow clearing efforts in their area can call the City at 311. If you need more information about the City's plans for snow clearing, visit www.toronto.ca/transportation.

Toronto Hydro Contact Voltage Update

Toronto Hydro is providing updates to residents and pet owners about safety and contact voltage.

Toronto Hydro has discovered instances of contact voltage on streetlighting wire covers located on sidewalks. Contact voltage is electricity that may be present on the surface of outdoor structures like street lighting equipment, street signs and other energized fixtures, posing a serious shock hazard.

In Toronto, most cases of contact voltage occur during winter months. Toronto Hydro regularly surveys the City for contact voltage every night and immediately remediates any detected incidences.

Toronto Hydro committed additional resources to its contact voltage program, including a team of mobile voltage testing vehicles and service crews that are now in the process of "sweeping" city streets to identify any further contact voltage conditions. Toronto Hydro is also in the process of replacing handwells with a new non-conductive standard.

What can you do to protect your pet?

- 1) Avoid electrical equipment such as handwells on the sidewalk. If possible walk closer to the house or storefront.
- 2) Walk in green areas or parks as much as possible.
- 3) Always walk your pet on a leash so you can direct the animal around electrical equipment.
- 4) Use a leash that's made of non-conductive material, preferably nylon. Try to keep your leash as dry as possible.



What to do if your pet comes into contact with electricity?

Stop, Clear and Call. If your pet is incapacitated, do not touch the animal directly as you may also receive an electric shock. If you have a dry, non-conductive leash, remove your pet from the hazard by pulling the leash or use another non-conductive object.

The Toronto Hydro Contact Voltage Hotline is open 24/7 to report any incidents at 416-222-3773 or in an emergency situation call 911.

For more information visit: www.torontohydro.com/safety

Neighbourhood Updates and Upcoming Public Meetings

Alexandra Park

Scadding Court Redevelopment Public Meeting

Date: Wednesday January 26, 2011
Time: 6:00 pm
Location: Scadding Court Community Centre, 707 Dundas St W

Scadding Court Community Centre, the Sanderson Library and the Alexandra Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre are starting to plan for the future by exploring options for redeveloping the important community assets at Bathurst and Dundas.

Come and have your say about your Community Centre!

For more information, please visit: www.scaddingcourt.org/re_development

King-Spadina

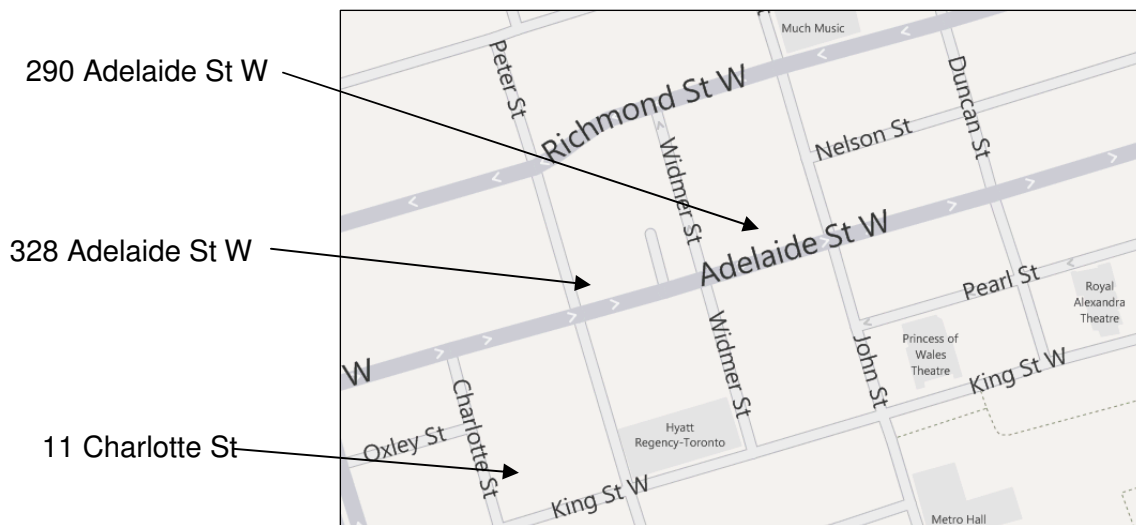
King-Spadina Planning Meeting

Join Councillor Vaughan to hear details about proposed developments in the King-Spadina area and provide your feedback.

Date: Monday January 10, 2011
Time: 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Location: Metro Hall, 55 John Street

There will be presentations about proposed developments at the following sites:

- 11 Charlotte Street (west side of Charlotte, just north of King St W)
- 328 Adelaide St W (north-east corner of Adelaide and Peter)
- 290 Adelaide St W (north side of Adelaide, between John and Widmer – Alice Fazooli's site)



John Street Transformation Update from the Entertainment District BIA

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for John Street is still underway. The Study is in Phase 3 of 4, which is exploring design options. Six design options were identified and reviewed earlier this year following a public meeting. The two preferred alternatives currently being studied are:

- 1) Shared Street for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians
- 2) Narrowed Street

The Consulting Team is currently exploring:

- 1) Designs that can accommodate functional requirements for the street and all modes of movement;
- 2) Meeting design objectives for a boldly designed, pedestrian priority corridor;
- 3) Accommodating arts and cultural installations and events.

Important Dates:

- 1) The next Public Meeting will be scheduled for February 2011;
- 2) Upon completion the EA Study will go before City Council (April 2011).

John Street Ideas Competition voting ends 3pm January 7, 2011. Winners will be announced at 10am January 19, 2011 at our LIVE Facebook event. Visit TorontoED.com/johnst for more info.

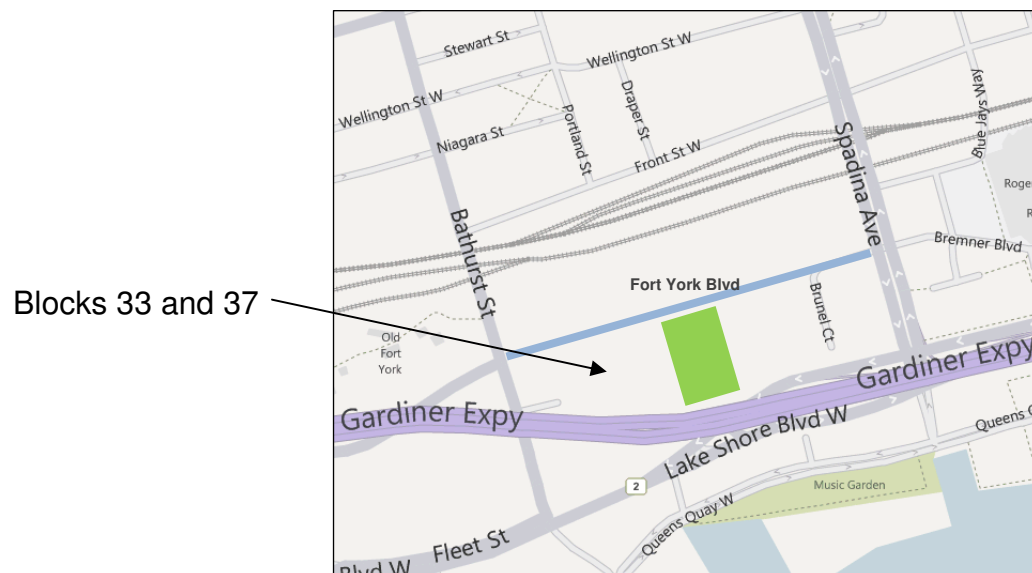
For further details, please contact Janice Solomon, Executive Director, at 416.926.1337 or isolomon@torontoed.com

Wellington Place, Fort York, CityPlace

CityPlace Planning Meeting

Date: Monday January 17, 2011
Time: 7:00pm
Location: Harbourfront Community Centre, 627 Queens Quay (at Bathurst)

Join Councillor Vaughan to hear details about proposed developments by Concord Adex at Blocks 33 and 37 in the Railway Lands West and provide your feedback. The proposed developments are located on the west side of Canoe Landing Park, south of Fort York Boulevard.



Bathurst-Front Planning Meeting

Date: Monday January 31, 2011
Time: 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Location: TBA

Join Councillor Vaughan to hear details about a proposed development at the north-east corner of Bathurst and Front St W and provide your feedback.

Check our website at www.ward20.ca or contact us (416-392-4044 or Councillor_Vaughan@toronto.ca) closer to the date for details about the meeting location.

Lieutenant Governor's New Year's Levee at Fort York

The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, will be hosting the Lieutenant Governor's New Year's Levee at Fort York National Historic Site on Saturday, January 1, 2011 from noon until 2 p.m.

A tradition in Canada since 1646, the Levee is a special opportunity for the public to meet The Queen's representative in Ontario, while enjoying family entertainment and refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

Date: Saturday, January 1, 2011
Time: Noon to 2 p.m.
Location: Fort York National Historic Site, 250 Fort York Blvd., Toronto

In anticipation of the bicentennial commemoration of the War of 1812, the 2011 Lieutenant Governor's Levee at Fort York will encourage the public to learn about the history of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario in the location where six Crown representatives resided - including Upper Canada's first Lieutenant Governor, Major-General John Graves Simcoe.

For this special occasion, admission is free to Fort York National Historic Site, which will be open from 11am to 3pm. Plans for the site during the City of Toronto's Bicentennial Commemoration of the War of 1812 will be on display, and the public will also be able to tour Fort York's historic buildings.

Fort York National Historic Site is one of 10 historic museums operated by City of Toronto Cultural Services. For more information, call 416-392-6907 or visit <http://www.toronto.ca/fortyork>.

Waterfront

Waterfront Toronto Drop-In Session on Queens Quay revitalization

Date: Wednesday January 19, 2011
Time: 5:00 – 8:00 pm (drop in session)
Location: Harbourfront Centre, Lakeside Terrace, 235 Queens Quay

Join Waterfront Toronto on Wednesday January 19 for a Public Drop-In Session for Queens Quay. This informal session will give community members an opportunity to learn more about the revitalization of Queens Quay by reviewing drawings, models and materials. Representatives from Waterfront Toronto and our design teams will also be available to answer questions attendees may have about how the project may impact their homes or businesses.

Members of the public may drop in at any time over the course of the evening. A 25-foot long detailed plan for the length of Queens Quay (Bathurst Street to Parliament Street) will be available for review and comment. The plan maps all of the residences and businesses along Queens Quay as well as each intersection and public space.

For more information, call (416) 214-1344 or email info@waterfrontoronto.ca

311 online form – Submit Service Requests Online



You can reach the City of Toronto's 311 service hotline via phone, e-mail, and through the web!

You can connect with 311 in three ways:

- Phone:** 311 from any phone (416-397-CITY/2489 outside of Toronto)
- E-mail:** 311@toronto.ca
- Web:** <http://www.toronto.ca/311/index.htm>

Through the website form, you can easily report issues such as missed garbage collection, potholes, pay for on-street parking permits, and more. You can also track service requests through the web.

You can also reach my office by phone at 416-392-4044 or by e-mail at councillor_vaughan@toronto.ca if you need further assistance.

Check out our website!

For up to date information on community events, news and developments, check out our website at <http://www.ward20.ca>. If you are interested in finding out about the latest developments in your area, be sure to check out the Development Map where you can find information about a specific project in Ward 20 and its status.

Contact us

If you have a concern about your community or the ward you would like to discuss with Councillor Vaughan or our staff team, please call the office at **416-392-4044** or contact us by email: councillor_vaughan@toronto.ca

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