

# Adam Vaughan

Toronto City Councillor: Ward 20 ~Trinity-Spadina

## e-newsletter

July 31, 2007



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## City Council Update

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### Revenue Tools: TAX DEBATE DEFERRED

City Council has put off the debate over the proposed Land Transfer Tax and the new Vehicle Registration fee until October.

The decision on the proposed taxes will now wait until the provincial election is over. I was one of 22 Councillors who voted against the motion.

The land transfer tax in particular is an important way to diversify and shield downtown homeowners from the volatile and regressive impacts of Toronto's Market Value Assessment based property tax system.

As a result of the delay new revenue streams will not be available to the City. With a \$575 million budget shortfall already predicted for next year, and with difficulties any new government at Queen's Park will have responding to a now delayed and uncertain decision by council, cuts for now and next year are already being considered.

The TTC has been asked to cut \$30 million from this year's budget and an additional \$100 million from next year's budget. All other departments have had the discretionary budgets frozen. Travel has been cancelled and a host of other programs including new by-law inspectors and enforcement officers have been affected as a hiring freeze has been imposed.

Next year's property tax increase is already being predicted at 18% even with significant budget cuts. I have already decided to cut my office expenses by 10% in anticipation of council debate on the issue.

I will be sending out a comprehensive explanation, that puts forth the city's very serious situation shortly.

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## City Council Update: Ward 20

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Despite the bad news on the budget for the city, the recent City Council meeting also brought major victories for virtually every neighbourhood in the ward:

### Waterfront: Eireann Quay sidewalks

Earlier this year, I reported that City Council had decided to install new sidewalks for increased community safety on the west side of Éireann Quay. Shortly thereafter, the Toronto Port

Authority and Porter Airlines commenced court action seeking an injunction against the city to stop the construction of the sidewalks.

At the City Council meeting last week, Council voted to have the City Solicitor defend the City's position and rights to build the sidewalks in court this fall. I will keep you posted as this matter unfolds through my e-newsletter.

### **Waterfront: Rail Lands transfer to Toronto Community Housing**

City Council approved the transfer of lands and funding to the City's Toronto Community Housing Corporation to develop an estimated 442 units of affordable rental and home ownership housing on Blocks 32 and 36 of the Railway lands. These new units of housing will be an asset to the City's stock of affordable housing and will make an important contribution to the vibrancy of this new community.

### **Entertainment District: Sidewalk Regulations approved**

As one of many recent initiatives to manage the impact of nightclubs in the King-Spadina area City Council approved a proposal to develop new controls to regulate sidewalk queues for "entertainment facilities" specifically nightclubs. The City currently has a separate business category for clubs, and has placed zoning limits on the number and size of clubs west of Spadina.

The sidewalk licensing proposal was inspired by a request from the King-Spadina Residents Association (KSRA) to require all clubs to provide a substantial "holding area" within their premises and prohibit them from using City sidewalks as an extension of their business. My proposal is intended to apply the same rules to sidewalk line-ups as are currently applied to sidewalk patios to achieve the result the community is seeking – calmer, safer sidewalks.

The vote at City Council on this proposal was overwhelmingly supportive, with 32 Councillors in favour and only 1 opposed. It was Councillor Rob Ford, Etobicoke North, who did not support the proposal.

City staff will now work on a policy and implementation plan and report back to Council later this year. Public consultations on the policy will be planned in the fall and we will keep you apprised of opportunities to participate.

### **Queen West: First Commercial Heritage Conservation District Approved**

City Council approved the first Commercial Heritage Conservation District in the City on Queen Street West from University Avenue to Bathurst Street.

This strip of Queen Street West has made a significant contribution to the Toronto's cultural, economic and architectural heritage. The history and identity of Queen Street comes from its role as a main street, its connection to adjacent neighbourhoods, the welcoming quality of the street to pedestrians, along with the scale and composition of the buildings along Queen Street West.

The Queen Street Heritage HCD Study was initiated in 2004 with funding from Section 37 Community Benefits originating from the Canada Life development. The Study notes that this area was established in the early nineteenth century as a street of modest houses with small shops serving the surrounding residential areas. By the late 1800s, Queen Street had become the principal east-west artery of Toronto, and its original residential character gradually evolved into the more familiar commercial "main street".

This Study will act as a model for commercial streets and for the rest of Queen Street which is one of the City's most important heritage streets with many strips of concentration of heritage buildings. Areas to the east and west of the Queen West HCD have similar characteristics.

Approval of Guidelines as part of this designation will guide all future development in the Queen Street West HCD. The Guidelines note that buildings that contribute to the unique heritage character of the district should not be demolished and they should not be any higher than 16 metres.

### **Queen West: Theatre Passe Muraille to be protected**

City Council agreed to purchase Theatre Passe Muraille at 16 Ryerson Avenue. This one-time special acquisition was approved to support the ongoing viability of Theatre Passe Muraille and protect this affordable and sustainable cultural space in the City. As a result, the building will be retained as a City-owned performing arts centre without any ongoing capital or operating costs to the City.

Theatre Passe Muraille (TPM), Canada's oldest alternative theatre devoted to the development and production of original Canadian works, has recently faced financial difficulties that are seriously compromising its ability to produce plays. The theatre company is housed in a 105-year old designated heritage building which TPM has owned since 1975.

In addition to being a home to Theatre Passe Muraille, this building has acted as an incubator for many other theatre companies and projects that includes work by Michael Ondaatje as well as plays such as the Drowsy Chaperone (first professional production at TPM of the musical and is currently playing on Broadway); The Drawer Boy (the most widely produced play in North America last year); Da Kink in My Hair; and the AfriCanadian Playwrights Festival.

### **Alexandra Park: Stricter regulations on fireworks sales approved**

City Council took action to increase permit fees for the sale of fireworks and recommended that City staff seek the maximum fines under the Provincial Offences Act for offences under the Fireworks By-law. This will help to address some concerns in Alexandra Park where fireworks have been used as weapons and have led to a house fire.

The increased permit fees will be:

- \$1,500.00 per year for permits to Temporary Fireworks Vendors, Temporary Lease Fireworks Vendors and Mobile Fireworks Vendors to sell only Family Fireworks only on Canada Day and the seven-day period before Canada Day and on Victoria Day and the seven-day period before Victoria Day;
- \$25.00 fee for a Special Occasions Discharge Permit
- \$2,500.00 annual fee for Permanent Fireworks Vendor's Permit
- \$1,500.00 annual fee for a Temporary Mobile Fireworks Vendor's Permit
- \$1,500.00 annual fee for a Temporary Lease Fireworks Vendor's Permit
- \$1,500.00 for a Temporary Fireworks Vendor's Permit
- \$100.00 fee for an amendment to an existing Temporary Mobile Fireworks Vendor's Permit or a Temporary Lease Fireworks Vendor's Permit to reflect a new location for the temporary sale of Family Fireworks; and

Council also recommended that the maximum fine of \$5,000.00 be sought for the following offences:

- sale of fireworks without a valid permit;
- sale of fireworks to any person under age 18; and
- sale of firecrackers (types of fireworks whose primary purpose is creating noise)

A report back from staff on the implementation of these changes will be submitted to the September 11, 2007 meeting of the Licensing and Standards Committee.

City staff, including the Executive Director of Municipal Licensing and Standards and the Fire Chief, Toronto Fire Services, will convene an inter-agency working group with representatives of the Toronto Police Service, the Security Division of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation and the Security Divisions of both the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board, to gather a full range of incidence data for the annual review to be held one year after the new Fireworks By-law comes into force.

### **Annex: Secondary studies**

City Council approved the development of a new secondary plan and new zoning by-laws to be considered for approval upon the completion of the Bloor Corridor visioning study in response to a request from the Annex Residents Association and a motion that I presented.

With the approval of the new Official Plan, the previous Annex secondary plan (Annex Part II Plan) was eliminated. In anticipation of greater intensification in the Annex, residents, associations and neighbouring stakeholder groups have been working with city planning in the Bloor Corridor visioning study, as a first step towards a new Secondary Plan for the Annex.

### **Seaton Village: Water fountain repaired**

After many months the water fountain in Vermont Square Park has been repaired.

Many park fountains are damaged every year by people dumping sand into fountain basins, usually while filling buckets and building sand castles! **Please remember to keep sand away from fountains.**

### **Update on the Roundhouse**

You may have heard recent reports that the John Street Roundhouse will be the new home for a Leon's furniture store.

As a spectacular heritage building with amazing potential, I feel that the Roundhouse is an inappropriate location for a big box furniture retailer. The site is nestled among the City's top tourist attractions including the CN Tower, the Rogers Centre and the waterfront. Many residents contacted our office in support of this historical asset becoming a train museum with the hope that the site could become a repository for memorabilia and stories about the Transcontinental Railway which linked our country. Among these are countless stories of immigrants who, after arriving by ship, worked to build the railway and later took the train to settle all across Canada. A museum would serve to recognize an important time in the history of the country and this city.

In 2001, under former Mayor Mel Lastman, the City issued a "request for proposals" (RFP) for private partners to lease and maintain the Roundhouse and development part of the site as a rail museum.

Olympia & York were the successful proponents in 2001, with a proposal to redevelop the Roundhouse as a television studio. In September 2006, the Olympia & York lease was

transferred to State Development along with all of the permissive zoning and conditions to allow sub-leasing at the sole discretion of State Development.

State has now signed a lease with Leon's. Despite the public outcry from heritage activists rail workers, railway enthusiasts and the Chinese community there was no legal way for the City to back out of the agreement.

Heritage is an integral part of a cultural city. Toronto must recognize the importance of our heritage and history. Council must act to stop the pattern of neglect towards heritage properties, such as the recent tragic example of Walnut Hall on Shuter Street, where heritage rowhouses had to be demolished after years of neglect. These buildings which are disappearing are the physical manifestation of our past and our stories and should be celebrated.

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## Planning & Development

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### Update on Development Meeting

On the evening of Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, approximately 60 people attended a meeting at Metro Hall and developers presented future projects intended for Ward 20. In total, presentations were made for 7 separate projects:

- The Toronto International Festival Centre at King St.W. and John St.
- 215 Queen St.W., 456 Wellington St.W. and 620 King St.W. (same developer)
- 400 Wellington St.W.
- 478 King St.W.
- 650 King St.W.

With the exception of the Festival Centre, where the foundation has been dug, all of the proposals are in their early stages and have yet to begin the formal application process with the City's planning department. This initiative to have developers present their initial concepts to residents allows everybody to preview the designs and provide feedback to the developer as well as my office. These meetings, I hope, will encourage open and productive discussions between developers and the residents of Trinity-Spadina.

The evening began with a look at the **Festival Centre** at King St.W. and John St. This development does have zoning approval and as many of you have may have noticed is currently a very large pit. Should Council approve the site plan, the foundation will likely be poured by late summer or early fall. The design is for a 42 storey condominium and festival centre for the Toronto International Film Festival which will occupy the first 6 floors.

The next project that was presented was **215 Queen St.W.**, just west of Simcoe Ave. Here, the proposal calls for an 18 storey office tower that will feature retail space on both the ground and second floors and 4.5 to 5 levels of underground parking. The design is predominantly glass and the developers are planning to achieve LEED gold or platinum certification on a site that is currently a surface parking lot. Some questions from the audience concerned the height of the building and the modern design amidst the heritage character of Queen St. W. and the potential impacts of the building on the neighbouring residential building at 168 Simcoe St.

Following this was **620 King St.W.**, the design for which is a 12 storey condominium that would sit atop the existing older brick building of 2.5 storeys. The character of the older base would be maintained and the addition would feature two set-backs. The building will have large family-sized units ranging in size from 2200 to 4800 square feet.

Due to the deep but narrow lot, the condominium proposed at **456 Wellington St.W.** would see the construction of a building at the front of the lot and a building towards the back of the property with a courtyard separating the two. At each floor, the buildings would be connected by a walkway. With a garden in front, the street-facing section would conform to the height of neighbouring buildings at 8 storeys, while the building at the rear would rise to 11 or 12 floors. At-grade parking would be located at the side of the property; unit size ranges from 1600 to 2200 square feet. Some concerns were raised by area residents about the possibility of a plain brick wall on one face of the building.

The condominium proposed at **400 Wellington St.W.** is an 'L' shaped building that would sit east of the laneway that runs between King St. and Wellington Ave. where Brassai Restaurant is located. The 8 storey frontage would step back twice to an eventual height of 12 storeys. Both Wellington Ave. and the laneway will feature at-grade commercial space. On average, the units will be 900 square feet, 55% of which will be two-bedrooms. 15% of the proposed units will have knock-out panels to allow for future conversion to 3 bedroom units.

**478 King St. W.** also involves an 'L' shaped, 12 storey condominium to be located next to, and in behind, the Mini Cooper dealership. The building will feature both private and common roof-top terraces as well as at-grade commercial space in the laneway behind the Mini dealership. Again, questions from the audience addressed the potential impact of the height of the building and its modern design amidst the heritage look of the area.

The developer's proposal at **650 King St. W.** consists of two condominium buildings, one facing onto King St. at 10 storeys, and the other onto Adelaide St. at 15 storeys; the main entrance would be off of King. These glass buildings are marked by an asymmetrical, stacked design. Parking would be underground and there would be commercial space at street level. The average unit size is 800 square feet with some 3 bedroom units available ranging between 1200-1500 square feet.

## **Proposed developments in the Annex**

I am aware of a number of upcoming development projects being proposed in the Annex. Although none of these projects are ready to file a formal application, they are still in the pre-approval stage. It is important for the community to be aware of these proposals.

- **Remenyi Music, 210 Bloor St. West**
- **10-14 Prince Arthur**  
The Ontario Municipal Board has already approved townhouses on this site however, the property was then sold and the current developer is proposing an 18 story tower.
- **North West corner of Spadina & Dupont**  
The developer is considering two options at this site which include a big box retail outlet or 2 small towers.

Our office will be working with the Annex Residents Association to plan a formal community consultation to discuss the proposals in early September.

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## Ward 20 Updates

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### 505 Dundas Streetcar Reconstruction

The 505 Dundas Streetcar reconstruction is continuing, and is gradually moving out of the ward. As of July 23, streetcar service is scheduled to resume on Dundas Street West between Bathurst and Bay Streets, as the track work east of Bathurst Street nears completion.

For full details, see here: [http://www.toronto.ca/ttc/pdf/dundas\\_track\\_project\\_2007.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/ttc/pdf/dundas_track_project_2007.pdf)

### Problem Property Updates

There are a number of problem properties throughout the ward that many of you have been in touch with our office about. Collaborative efforts have been initiated by our staff team with city staff, police and local residents to resolve numerous issues at each these sites which include a rooming house on Borden, drug dealing on Howland and Croft, a number of establishments at Brunswick and Bloor and others.

The problem properties and some of the associated issues include:

- Excessive noise from speakers, patio patrons and smokers
- Drunk and disorderly behaviour
- Drug dealing
- Violence
- Property standards violations (rats, waste, etc.)
- Drunk driving
- Vandalism, graffiti and harassment

As result of the action taken over the last month a number of charges were laid by the police and Municipal Licensing and Standards staff. In some of these cases, other solutions have been negotiated which are improving situations, such as hiring or private security and landscaping changes.

We appreciate your support as we continue to work closely with local residents, neighbourhood associations, community agencies, city staff and the police to resolve the issues.

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## Summer Events and Fun!

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### Toronto Caribbean Carnival presented by Caribana Festival

The Caribana Festival is an exciting two-week cultural explosion of Caribbean music, cuisine, revelry as well as visual and performing arts. In its 40th year, Caribana has become a major international event and the largest cultural festival of its kind in North America. Caribana events take place at Exhibition Place, Centre Island and other venues.

The annual **Caribana Parade** takes place on **August 4<sup>th</sup> from 10 am – 6 pm**. This showcase event features an incredible display of colours and pageantry along a 3.6 kilometre parade route on Lakeshore Boulevard. The parade begins at Exhibition Place and moves west along Lakeshore Blvd. to just east of the Boulevard Club. For more information about Caribana you can contact:

<http://www.caribanafestival.com> email: [info@caribanafestival.com](mailto:info@caribanafestival.com) Phone: 416-391-5608

## 2007 Chinatown Festival

Chinatown BIA will be hosting the 2007 Chinatown Festival on the weekend of August 11 and 12. During the Festival weekend a section of Spadina Avenue's south bound lanes near Dundas St. W. will be converted into a pedestrian mall with various types of live entertainments on stage, which will be provided by the Chinese Community free of charge.

## A Celebration of Ed Mirvish's Life and Contributions

Ed Mirvish passed away just shy of his 93rd birthday on July 11, 2007. His funeral, on July 13, 2007, was attended by thousands from all walks of life.

While it was a sad time for the Mirvish family, they were consoled by the public outpouring of condolences. Honest Ed, as everyone called him, was beloved in Toronto. The media was filled with stories of how much he did for the city, and in particular, for the theatre community.



David Mirvish wishes to invite one and all to a public celebration of the life of his father on **Sunday, August 12, 2007, 11 am to 7 pm**, on the street outside Honest Ed's world-famous discount emporium (Bloor Street, between Bathurst and Markham). Mayor David Miller will also proclaim August 12th as "ED MIRVISH DAY".

There will be hours of free entertainment and refreshments.

## Councillor Vaughan's Ward 20 Barbeque

You are invited to attend Councillor Adam Vaughan's first community barbeque on **Wednesday August 29th, starting at 5:00 pm at Alexandra Park**. Please come out to meet your neighbours and get acquainted with your City service providers like Toronto Fire and Emergency Services.

Children will enjoy many fun activities including face painting, jumping in a bouncy tent and a touch and learn display from the Toronto Zoo. Thank you to Enbridge Gas who will be helping us to barbeque hot dogs - free to our first 500 guests. Halal and vegetarian hot dogs will be available. Please mark this date on your calendar and we are looking forward to seeing you and your family on August 29th.

## Pedestrian Sundays

Promoting community, culture and ecology Pedestrian Sundays are continuing throughout the ward, with dates scheduled in Kensington, Baldwin Village and Mirvish Village:

<b>August 19</b>	<b>Baldwin Village</b>
<b>August 26</b>	<b>Kensington</b>
<b>September 9</b>	<b>Mirvish Village</b>
<b>September 16</b>	<b>Baldwin Village</b>
<b>September 30</b>	<b>Kensington</b>
<b>October 28</b>	<b>Kensington</b>

For more information check out [www.pskensington.ca](http://www.pskensington.ca)

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## Ward 20 Goes Green

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### Green\$aver Wants to Help You Save On Your Energy Bills for Free

Green\$aver, in cooperation with the Ontario Power Authority and Enbridge, are offering free home energy efficiency assessments and upgrades for Toronto residents with limited incomes. The program will consist of an energy audit and basic retrofits for all residents that qualify. In many cases, more extensive retrofits, worth several thousand dollars, will be implemented for homes with higher energy savings potential.

Whether the home is owned or rented, this program will benefit those who qualify by saving them money on their utility bills, improving their home comfort levels and their indoor air quality. With the rising cost of utilities, reducing these bills will help residents stretch their often limited funds for other necessities.

Green\$aver is a **non-profit** organization dedicated to providing energy efficiency services to homes, businesses and faith buildings in order to contribute to a cleaner environment and the world we live in. Green\$aver strives to make energy efficiency accessible, affordable and cost effective. For more information, please contact Agatha at Green\$aver by phone at 416 203-3106 ext. 230 or check out their website [www.greensaver.org](http://www.greensaver.org)



### More Trees Please!

Toronto's trees are one of its most important natural features. In our parks, along our streets and even in our own backyards, trees beautify our city and make it a better place to live.

If you have space in your backyard to plant a tree, there's a non-profit organization that can help. LEAF (Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests) can help you get the right tree in the right place. Cost to property owners ranges from \$95 to \$160 and includes a 40 minute backyard consultation, 5 to 7 foot tree, and full planting service. Native shrubs are also available. Learn more by calling 416-413-9244 or visit [www.leaf.toronto.org/backyard\\_tree\\_planting\\_program](http://www.leaf.toronto.org/backyard_tree_planting_program)

If you would like a free street tree planted in front of your home, contact City of Toronto's Urban Forestry Services at 416-338-TREE or visit [www.toronto.ca/trees/tree\\_planting.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/trees/tree_planting.htm)

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## City Service Updates

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### Temporary On-street Parking Permits Now Available On-line

Provided space is available, a temporary parking permit may be purchased by residents and their visitors to park a motor vehicle on a street designated under the permit parking program, at a cost of \$15.38 (incl. GST) a week.

Temporary permits are now available on-line by going to [www.toronto.ca/transportation](http://www.toronto.ca/transportation).

You can also call customer service staff for assistance at 416-392-7873, Monday to Friday, between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Or contact them by email at [pparking@toronto.ca](mailto:pparking@toronto.ca).

## Noise Complaints

Many residents contact our office with noise complaints and questions about what type of noise is allowed when. We appreciate noise issues being brought to our attention and we wanted to share some information from Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) that we hope will help facilitate prompt and effective enforcement.

Noise in itself is **not** illegal. For example, noise created by someone mowing a lawn, playing music, constructing a house or having a party, etc., is not an offence.

Recognizing that there are times when noise may be unusually loud and of such a duration, that action is necessary to try and alleviate the problem, the City of Toronto has a by-law in place to help citizens deal with unusual noise. Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) staff must witness and document (to the satisfaction of the Courts, if necessary), that the noise they are trying to regulate is in fact excessive.

This is a very difficult process because there are many different noises that we hear from time to time and furthermore, tolerance to noise will vary considerably from person to person. Therefore, in order to assist you with your complaint, MLS needs detailed information (written notes) that will allow them to demonstrate to the offender (and possibly the Courts) that the noise is in fact excessive.

In order to investigate a noise complaint, it is essential that MLS have a full understanding of how you are personally affected by the noise you are concerned about. Although making noise is not illegal, if the noise being made is excessive, it may be possible to resolve the problem with your help.

When assessing whether or not the noise you hear is excessive, it may help to ask yourself the following questions:

- Can I identify the noise and where it is coming from?
- What is the likelihood of the noise continuing or is the noise necessary due to an unusual set of circumstances and therefore not likely to re-occur?
- Is it possible that the person responsible for the noise does not realise I am being disturbed? Should I first speak to the person and give them an opportunity to correct the problem before I involve the authorities?
- What time(s) of day does the noise occur? How often is the noise occurring and how long does it continue?
- How is the noise bothering me; is it interfering with my day-to-day lifestyle? How?
- Is the noise disturbing other people in my neighbourhood to the point where they are prepared to come forward and give evidence in Court, if necessary?

If you decide that you would like MLS to investigate your complaint, **please send an email to [mlsnoisetey@toronto.ca](mailto:mlsnoisetey@toronto.ca) with a copy to [councillor\\_vaughan@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_vaughan@toronto.ca).**

Noise complaints can also be called in to **416.338.0800** during regular business hours.

If the noise continues and charges are laid, MLS will ask you and your witnesses to attend Court.

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## Contact us:

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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](mailto:Councillor_Vaughan@toronto.ca)**