

1. A Message from Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam

Dear Businesses, Friends, and Residents,

It has been a continued pleasure meeting residents and business operators in our communities since the last issue of Ward 27 News.

Thank you to all the participants in our Church and Wellesley Safety Walk! On a single Sunday afternoon, we explored many back alleys, parks and laneways in the area and we were able to identify public spaces that needed improved maintenance to ensure that our neighbourhoods remain safe and attractive for everyone. Watch for an upcoming report on the outcome.

Thank you as well to the [Rosedale Main Street BIA](#) for their support of [pedestrianizing the "split intersection" at Yonge and Roxborough](#). In addition, construction will begin this summer to replace the children's playground at Rosedale Park. Congratulations again to the North Rosedale Ratepayers' Association for its impressive fundraising initiative.

Yonge Street officially re-opened at Gould Street with a terrific skating party hosted by our friends at Ryerson University and sponsored by Salad King, now re-opened for business at 340 Yonge Street. I was thrilled to see so many people enjoying the pedestrian space on car-free Gould Street.

The eventual warm weather will enable us to install the necessary equipment to study the traffic impact at Davenport and Belmont; to determine whether or not to re-introduce the left-turn. Numerous residents and neighbourhood associations have expressed strong support to repeal the left-turn prohibition. I have asked traffic planning staff to complete the report for Community Council consideration in April.

Last week, The Economist ranked Toronto as the 4th most liveable city in the world. While we can always improve life in our city, it's sometimes worth recognizing that we already live in a great city, thanks to generations of city-builders before us.

Also last week, City Council passed its first budget of this term. I have concerns about the direction it sets and the position it puts the City in for the 2012 Budget, and for these reasons, I was unable to support it.

The 2011 Budget included cuts in bus service, a cut in advocacy service for tenants, cuts to free access to low-income adult programs at priority Community Centres, and the closure of the Urban Affairs Library at Metro Hall. These cuts could have been avoided by increasing the operating budget by 0.03%, or even by simply reallocating that amount within the budget. This is why I believe the changes were more about signalling a political direction than achieving practical solutions for the people of Toronto-the kind of practical solutions I was elected to find.

This year's budget was relatively simple to balance, at least in part because of a significant one-time surplus from 2010. The 2012 Operating Budget has an initial funding gap of \$774 million, or 8% of this year's budget. I am very concerned about how the City will choose to address this shortfall, given the direction it set by refusing a 0.03% adjustment in 2011 to meet some of the most pressing needs of residents.

We must balance the budget, and we must ensure value for money, but cutting the services and programs that help to make Toronto one of the world's most liveable cities should be our last resort, and approached with incredible care and respect.

The city's social housing portfolio, which includes about 58,000 units managed by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, has been the subject of a review by the auditor general for

spending without adequate controls. This news is troubling given the sizeable presence of TCHC housing in Ward 27.

During the election, I canvassed every single TCHC building in our neighbourhoods and personally witnessed the backlog of capital repairs needed in most buildings. Tenants complained about the need for improved security and that the buildings' maintenance standards were not upheld. Since I took office less than 100 days ago, I revisited several of the TCHC buildings with senior staff to address the deficiencies identified during the election.

Following the news headlines, Mayor Ford immediately called for the resignation of TCHC's civilian board and CEO and as of yesterday the "privatization" of Canada's largest social housing agency. Today, the civilian members of the board have resigned, with the exception of tenant members elected by their fellow tenants.

Whatever approach is adopted to deal with the Board vacancies, our priorities must be ensuring decent living conditions and affordable housing for TCHC residents, and excellent and accountable business practices for the residents of Toronto. We need to bring stability to TCHC for the benefit not only of its tenants, but for the whole city. Public housing is a fundamental tool for making sure that everyone has the opportunity to succeed in Toronto.

As always, I am here to work with you. Please feel free to contact me or my office if you have any questions or requests.

Respectfully yours,

Kristyn Wong-Tam

2. Ward 27 Community Calendar Highlights

March 11, 2011

Planning Charette for Yonge Street Planning Framework
Where: Courtyard Marriott, 475 Yonge Street
When: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

March 9, 2011

[City Council](#)

Where: Council Chamber, City Hall
When: 9:30am

March 22, 2011

[Toronto and East York Community Council](#)

Where: Committee Room 1
When: 9:30am

3. Church-Wellesley Safety Audit

In an effort to improve safety in the community, Councillor Wong-Tam, in coordination with the Church and Wellesley Neighbourhood Association organized a community safety walk, Saturday February 13 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Approximately 30 residents attended our walk and shared with us their stories and experiences in the neighbourhood. Various safety issues were discussed such as: accessibility, lighting, security, signs/maps, sightlines and maintenance. During the safety walk we explored how space is designed, if sufficient lighting is present in the area, if there are identifiable markers and if there are obstructed sightlines.

Councillor Wong-Tam is now working to compile all the information collected during the walk and identify short-term and long-term strategies for improving safety in the Church and Wellesley Neighbourhood. If you have any questions or if you would like to learn more about the safety walk, please contact Councillor Wong-Tam's office.

If you are concerned about safety in your own neighbourhood and would like to arrange a similar safety audit, please contact Councillor Wong-Tam's office for more information.

4. 2011 Budget Update

Thanks to the efforts and advocacy of thousands of Torontonians, a number of cuts to bus service were partially averted or cancelled. The remaining service cuts adopted by the Toronto Transit Commission in Ward 27 are:

- **5 AVENUE ROAD** - Service ending at 10:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. Service ending at 7:00 p.m., Saturdays, Sundays and holidays
- **6 BAY** - Service ending at 10:00 p.m., Sundays and holidays
- **74 MOUNT PLEASANT** - Service ending at 7:00 p.m., every day.
- **94 WELLESLEY** - Service west of Wellesley Station ending at 10:00 p.m., Sundays and holidays

User fees for low-income adult programming at Priority Centres, including the **Wellesley Community Centre** and the **John Innes Community Centre**, will be introduced during the summer registration period at an average cost of \$68 for a 9-week adult course.

In addition to these cuts, **residential water rates** are set to increase 9 per cent, and **solid waste (garbage and recycling)** fees are set to increase 3 per cent. Popular environmental program such as the **drain grant program, low-flow toilet replacement program, and downsouth disconnect program** have been eliminated. More details of changes to water service programs are attached to this email. The Urban Affairs Library at Metro Hall will be closed and its collection will be moved to the Toronto Reference Library.

5. Yonge Street Planning Framework

A preliminary meeting on *The Yonge Street Planning Framework* was held Wednesday, January 26th at City Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together community residents, business owners and City of Toronto staff to discuss how to move forward from the recent fire at 335 Yonge Street. A *Yonge Street Planning Framework* was determined to be an appropriate planning tool that can assess whether existing planning controls are appropriate and permit desirable development from Dundas Street West to Gerrard Street West. This study will also allow us to respond appropriately and re-evaluate the city's role in preserving and maintaining heritage properties along Yonge Street.

Councillor Wong-Tam has retained the services of respected urban planner Ken Greenberg and architect Marianne McKenna from KPMB to research and write the report.

On March 11th there will a Planning Charette from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel at 475 Yonge Street. During the Charette there will be three sessions exploring various topics such as: accessibility, streetscape, heritage preservation and built form and density. All information collected at the charette will be presented to Community Council and will help create the Planning Framework study. You are welcome to attend the event and contribute to the Yonge Street Planning Framework. Please see attached poster.

6. Profile of the Tenant Defence Fund and Federation of Metro Tenant's Associations

The Federation of Metro Tenant's Associations (FMTA) is a non-profit organization which advocates for better rights for Tenants. Founded in 1974, it is the oldest and largest Tenant Federation in Canada. Each year, they support over 65,000 tenants in over 150 languages and have publications available in 25 languages. Tenants are served regardless of their income, location, political orientation or social standing.

Services offered by the FMTA include:

- A Tenant Hotline which provides information in over 150 languages on the Residential Tenancies Act, but also provides other relevant information, such as City by-laws, the Human Rights Code, the Cooperatives Act, how Property Standards works, and supports tenants outside of the litigation process;
- An Outreach team, which assists tenants through the complicated above guideline rent increase process;
- A Tenant Education Project, which provides tenant workshops mainly to youth, women, and homeless shelters as well as ESL/LINC classes and Newcomer programs in priority neighbourhoods across the City;
- Online resources, with extensive materials provided through a website and other electronic information.

Tenants in Toronto make up 50% of our population and many face insufficient maintenance, illegal evictions, large above the guideline rent increases, confusing smart-metering contracts, and the present bed bug epidemic amongst many other issues.

The City plays an important role in supporting tenants in Toronto through the Tenant Defense Fund. With the support of the Tenant Defense Fund, the Federation of Metro Tenants Associations is able to provide all of these important services and programs across the entire City each year. However, the Tenant Defense Fund has been dramatically cut in the 2011 Operating Budget. These cuts will put an incredible burden on the FMTA in providing vital resources and information to tenants across the City and they will inevitably have to cut their services.

If you would like more information about the FMTA, please visit their website:

<http://www.torontotenants.org/>

7. Property Tax Update

Information about your Property Assessment Notice

If you are a home or business owner, you may have received a Property Assessment Notice from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). MPAC is an independent, non-profit corporation funded by Ontario municipalities. They are mandated to assess and classify property values in compliance with the Assessment Act and related regulations set by the Government of Ontario. When the City of Toronto sets property tax rates, the assessed value of your property is used to determine your property taxes.

You can appeal your property assessment if you feel that MPAC has assessed it incorrectly. More on that below.

Some of the reasons for receiving a Property Assessment Notice include:

- A change to property ownership or legal description
- A change to the property's assessment resulting from a Request for Reconsideration (RfR) or Assessment Review Board decision

- A property value increase or decrease reflecting a change to the property, for example, a new structure, addition, or removal or demolition of an old structure
- Change in the classification or tax liability of a property.

Each notice shows the assessed value and classification of a property based on the legislated valuation date of January 1, 2008, which is in place for the 2009-2012 property tax years. Increases to the value of your property that occurred between the 2005 and 2008 valuation dates are currently being phased in over four years (2009-2012). The phased-in assessed values for a property are also included.

Current Value Assessment is the most probably sale price for your property as of the legislated valuation date. Comparing your assessed value to similar sold properties in your neighbourhood is the best way to determine the most probable sale price for your property.

You can obtain detailed information about your property and information on up to 24 additional properties of your choice and up to six selected by MPAC, free of charge.

If you don't agree with your assessment:

- 1) Contact MPAC
- 2) Ask MPAC to review your assessment through a Request for Reconsideration (RfR). **The deadline to file your RfR with MPAC is March 31, 2011.**

There are two ways to file a RfR:

- The preferred method is to submit a RfR form. Forms are available at www.mpac.ca or call 1-866-296-MPAC (6722). You can also choose to file it electronically through MPAC's website: www.mpac.ca
- Write a letter requesting a reconsideration. In your letter include the 19-digit roll number on your Notice; your full name, address and phone number; and, the reasons you feel your assessment is not correct, including any information you have to support your claim.

- 3) File an Appeal with the Assessment Review Board (ARB), an independent tribunal of the Ontario ministry of the Attorney General. **If your property is classified as residential, you must first file a RfR with MPAC before you are eligible to file an Appeal with the ARB. You have 90 days after MPAC has notified you of its decision on your RfR to file an Appeal with the ARB.**

For more information about your Property Assessment Notice

CALL : 1 866 296-MPAC (6722); 1 877 889-MPAC (6722) TTY

Monday - Friday; 8: 00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

WEBSITE: www.mpac.ca

Current Value Assessment (CVA) Property Tax Changes

The 2011 phased-in CVA for the residential property class has appreciated on average by 4.9%. A property which appreciates at a rate greater than the class average will experience an increase in tax burden. A property which appreciates at a rate less than the class average will experience a decrease in tax burden (http://www.toronto.ca/finance/tax_policies.htm).

The recommended 2011 Operating Budget assumes a 0% property tax increase. For 2011 the average residential property which is now assessed at \$427,177 will continue to pay \$2,400.40 in

municipal taxes. In 2010, the average residential property assessed at \$407,144 for 2010 paid \$2,400.40 in taxes, for a net zero increase on the average residential property.

Tax Increase Deferral & Cancellation Programs

The City provides both a Tax Increase Cancellation Program and a Tax Increase Deferral Program for low-income seniors and low-income homeowners with disabilities that meet certain eligibility criteria. Under the Tax Increase Cancellation program, eligible homeowners can have their tax increases, whether related to changes in current value assessment (CVA) or budgetary related, cancelled. Under the Tax Increase Deferral program, eligible homeowners can have their tax increases, whether CVA or budgetary related, deferred without interest, and only repayable once the homeowner becomes no longer eligible (http://www.toronto.ca/taxes/property_tax/tax_relief.htm).

8. Council Highlights

City Council meeting of February 7 and 8, 2011

Condolence motion for John Doe and Joanne Mitchell

'John Doe', who was homeless at the time of his death and whose real name and age have not been released by the Coroner's office, was hit on January 11, 2011 by a streetcar on Queen Street. He died of his injuries.

Joanne Mitchell, 60 was murdered in her home on January 23, 2011. She had been homeless for many years and had recently secured housing at a Toronto Community Housing Corporation building. She was born in Milton and moved to Toronto at the age of twelve and had worked as a Bell Canada sales representative. She had a daughter and seven grandchildren.

City Council supported Councillor Wong-Tam's motion to express its condolences to the family of "John Doe" and Joanne Mitchell and the many men, women and children who continue to struggle as they live on our streets.

Reduced fee for business licences

Council supported making a municipal code amendment reducing the City's fee for a new business licence application by \$25. The reduction comes in response to the Municipal Licensing and Standards division now requiring clients to provide their own documentation of police clearance instead of the City undertaking the police check at an administrative cost of about \$25. The City's fee reduction, which takes effect immediately, is retroactive to January 1, 2011.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

Salary freeze for Mayor and Councillors

Council decided to cancel a Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase to salaries that was scheduled for the Mayor and Councillors for 2011. The rationale for the decision is to set a good example in helping the City address its current financial challenges. The CPI increase would have totalled about \$110,000 for the year. A motion asking that the \$110,000 be allocated to the City's student nutrition program was referred to the Budget Committee for consideration.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

Improving the City's responsiveness

Council adopted the City Ombudsman's annual report for 2010 and directed the City Manager to implement six recommendations for the Toronto Public Service. The recommendations include, for example, ensuring that any City divisions without complaint systems in place complete them immediately and post them on their divisional websites no later than March 1, 2011. Another requirement is that the Toronto Public Service set standards for record-keeping in every area of its operations by this fall.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

Preparing to host the Pan Am Games

Council took steps to continue the City's efforts preparing for the Pan American Games and Parapan American Games that Toronto and surrounding municipalities will host in 2015. Among actions taken, Council approved using the City-operated track at York University for the games as well as creating a bicycle motocross/BMX course in Etobicoke Centennial Park - the latter requiring local community consultation. Council granted authority for the City to move ahead with partner the University of Toronto (subject to conditions) to build an aquatic centre in Scarborough that will serve the games and leave a beneficial legacy for the community.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

Extension of stimulus projects

Council authorized the extension of work on City stimulus projects that have experienced delays, and gave City officials authority to amend intergovernmental agreements to take advantage of an extension of deadlines for federal and provincial funding of local stimulus projects. The flow of funds was originally going to end March 31 but the funding will now remain available for qualified projects until October 31, 2011.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

Support for City job fairs

Council directed City staff to continue to build connections between employers and job seekers by hosting, participating in and supporting job fairs across Toronto. Job fairs bring together a large number of employers and job seekers. Council directed the Employment & Social Services and Human Resources divisions, along with other divisional and community partners, to plan and host a Toronto job fair later this year.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

Green roofs for industrial buildings

Council authorized extending the City's exemption period for industrial buildings for meeting green roof requirements that were set to take effect January 31, 2011. The extension to April 30, 2012, made by amending the Toronto Green Roof Bylaw, will allow for further consultation with stakeholders on the issue of green roofs on industrial buildings.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

Bikes on sidewalks, cars in bike lanes

Council wants Toronto's police to crack down on prohibited cycling on local sidewalks. Council decided to ask the police chief (through the police board) to create a strategy to enforce City bylaws covering cycling on sidewalks and to review ticketing procedures for infractions. The

police chief will also be asked to look into options to step up enforcement efforts that will help to discourage drivers from blocking cyclists by stopping or parking motor vehicles in bike lanes.

Councillor Wong-Tam voted in favour of this item.

9. Development Update

Community Consultation meetings have been held or are scheduled for the following development proposals in Ward 27 during February and March 2011.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about other development applications or future community consultation meetings, please call our office at [416-392-7903](tel:416-392-7903) or email at councillor_wongtam@toronto.ca.

395 - 403 Bloor Street East

Proposal: Zoning By-Law Amendment

Summary: This application proposes a 42-storey mixed use building comprising a 2-storey podium and 40-storey tower, with 386 residential units and 1,080 square metres of commercial retail space at grade and on the second floor.

A community consultation meeting was held by the City of Toronto and Councillor Wong-Tam on Thursday, January 27, 2011 at St. Simon the Apostle Church. Approximately 50 residents from the surrounding community attended. Councillor Wong-Tam and staff attended the meeting as well as staff from City Planning, Heritage Preservation Services, Transportation, and the applicant.

The applicant and architect have been invited to join a Working Group process in order for residents and the applicant to negotiate an agreement on aspects of the building design. The developer has not yet confirmed if they will participate in this process. City Planning staff will submit a report with recommendations incorporating public input in the Spring. This application is currently under review.

If you would like to provide input on this development and/or seek further information, please contact our office by phone ([416.392.7902](tel:416.392.7902)) or email (councillor_wongtam@toronto.ca). You can also contact the Senior Planner from the City of Toronto assigned to review the application, Michael Hynes, by telephone ([416-397-1761](tel:416-397-1761)) or email (mhynes@toronto.ca).

Additional information is available on-line:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-32563.pdf>

66 Isabella Street

Proposal: Rezoning Bylaw Amendment

Summary: This application proposes a 32-storey addition to the existing 26-storey residential rental unit building at 66 Isabella Street. In total, 212 dwelling units are proposed including 196 rental units, four townhouse condominium units on the first two floors facing Isabella Street and 12 condominium units on the top two floors. The proposal also includes 481 m² (5,177ft) of retail space at grade fronting onto Church Street.

A community consultation meeting was held by the City of Toronto and Councillor Wong-Tam on February 2nd, 2011 at the 519 Community Centre. Approximately 80 residents from the surrounding community attended the meeting in addition to Councillor Wong-Tam and her staff, as well as staff from City Planning and the applicant. City Planning staff will submit a report

with recommendations incorporating public input in the Spring. This application is currently under review.

If you would like to provide input on this development and/or seek further information, please contact our office by phone (416.392.7902) or email (councillor_wongtam@toronto.ca). You can also contact the Planner from the City of Toronto assigned to the application, Alex Teixeira, by telephone ([416-392-0481](tel:416-392-0481)) or email (ateixei@toronto.ca).

Additional information is available on-line:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2011/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-34017.pdf>

9-21 Grenville Street

Proposal: Zoning Amendment Application

Summary: The City has received a development application at 9-21 Grenville Street to maintain the existing heritage house and construct a new mixed use building containing retail and residential units. The proposed development is 52 stories above grade with 5 levels below grade parking (112 residential parking spaces and 17 visitor spaces,) includes 438 residential dwelling units. Ground floor retail will be located in an existing heritage house.

On February 9th 2011, a community consultation meeting was held by the City of Toronto and Councillor Wong-Tam at the YMCA located at 20 Grosvenor Street. Approximately 94 residents from the surrounding community attended the meeting in addition to Councillor Wong-Tam and her staff, as well as staff from City Planning, Heritage Preservation Services, Transportation and the applicant. City Planning staff will submit a report with recommendations incorporating public input in the Spring. This application is currently under review.

A Working Group process has been initiated to discuss this application further in the end of March and beginning of April. The Working Group will include members of the community, the applicant, City Planning staff and will be moderated by Councillor Wong-Tam.

If you would like to provide input on this development and/or seek further information, please contact our office by phone ([416.392.7902](tel:416.392.7902)) or email (councillor_wongtam@toronto.ca) You can also contact the Senior Planner from the City of Toronto assigned to the application, Michael Hynes, by telephone ([416-397-1761](tel:416-397-1761)) or email (mhynes@toronto.ca).