

FALL 2023



SOUTH ROSEDALE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

**AGM**Annual General Meeting  
And Town Hall**South Rosedale Residents Association  
Wednesday, November 29th 2023**At: Toronto Lawn Tennis Club  
44 Price Street, M4W 1Z4**6.15-7pm Member registration****7-7.30pm AGM (SRRA members only)****7.30pm Town Hall Meeting (all residents welcome)****Town Hall Meeting on  
Crime Prevention and Auto Theft**

Special guest speakers:

**Sergeant Colin Anderson & Constable Julian  
Herzberg 53 Division**Councillor Dianne Saxe will also be in attendance  
All residents welcome**The Greenspace Planning Void**

Our Spring newsletter highlighted the explosion of development along South Rosedale's Yonge and Bloor borders. Thousands of apartments mean many more thousands of new residents, putting increased pressure on our neighbourhood services, infrastructure and green spaces.

The expectation is that city planners anticipate these population bubbles and plan and invest in local infrastructure in readiness. However we live in a cash-strapped City and, concerningly, our Ward (Ward 11) is the only one in the City without a master-plan for its parks and ravines. With Parks, Forestry and Recreation carrying a 10 year back-log for proposal work, we're not likely to get one anytime soon!

In a planning void, it is left to community groups and motivated citizens to initiate and privately fund plans for our parks and ravines. Two such schemes that are underway locally are:

**Pricefield Park**

Pricefield Park Design Group, is a student-led urban design team initiated by residents in adjoining properties and involving local community associations like the SRRA.



Spearheaded by students at Toronto Metropolitan University's school of urban and regional planning, this innovative project is using youthful enthusiasm and expertise to envision a vibrant new park for the projected needs of our burgeoning neighbourhood.

Students have been soliciting local engagement via online surveys, community town-halls and by interviewing park-users at on-site pop-ups. If you regularly use or pass through this park, they'd love to

*(continued on page 2)***Speeding Traffic Risk to Resident Safety**

An unfortunate side effect of the recent installation of the Yonge bike lanes is the redirection of vehicular traffic flows away from Yonge Street and onto residential side streets. The subsequent congestion on our local section of Yonge Street has encouraged drivers to seek alternative routes through our neighbourhood. Residents have reported drivers frequently exceeding speed limits and disregarding stop signs, posing a significant safety risk to our community.

The SRRA has made our local councilor, Diane Saxe, and Ward Director of Operations, William Hopkins, aware of this pressing issue. They are actively exploring traffic calming measures to enhance the safety of our streets. We wholeheartedly support these efforts and believe that collective action can lead to positive change.

Your voice matters, and we want to hear from you. If you have experienced or noticed the increase in traffic volume and are concerned about its impact on your safety and the well-being of our community, please share your thoughts with the SRRA at: [southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com](mailto:southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com). You can also take action by writing to Councillor Saxe at: [councillor\\_saxe@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_saxe@toronto.ca) or calling Ward Director of Operations, William Hopkins at (416) 392-4009.

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at: [www.southrosedale.org](http://www.southrosedale.org) .**

## The Greenspace Planning Void

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have your input to guide their plans. A link to their survey and their newsletters can be found on their website:

<https://sites.google.com/view/pricefield-pdg/home>

### Yellow Creek Ravine (The Vale of Avoca)

Having patiently waited 5 years for a ravine masterplan from the City, the Midtown Ravine Group (MRG), which has been tireless in advocating for this ravine on behalf of its local community, was advised by Councillor Saxe that it was best to fundraise to develop one for itself.

Maintenance and repair work in this ravine is decades behind where it should be. MRG intends to develop a master plan that would allow the City to carry out work in a planned and meaningful way that prioritizes community needs for ravine-access and pathways, along with necessary repair work for erosion and stormwater management, rather than the ad-hoc, band-aid approach adopted thus far.

It is likely that a public-private partnership will be necessary to fund the necessary work. The MRG master plan, to be funded by local residents, will provide costed goals for that work.

If you would like to invest in the future of your local ravine, or know of funding opportunities that may be available to the MRG, please contact the SRRRA via the link on our website: [southroosedale.org](http://southroosedale.org)

## Land Transfer Tax Rise

As a means of addressing its fiscal shortfall, the City of Toronto will implement a new graduated Municipal Land Transfer Tax rate for all residential property sales in excess of \$3 million from January 1st, 2024. This new “mansion” tax is in addition to the existing system, where the maximum rate of 2.5% was charged on all sales over \$2 million. Given the average value of properties in South Rosedale, most home sales will trigger the new tax rates as detailed below:

### New Land Transfer Tax bands as of Jan 1st 2024

Value of Property (\$million)	Rate	Incremental Impact of New Tax
Over \$3m and up to \$4m	3.5%	\$10,000 for a sale price of \$4m
Over \$4m and up to \$5m	4.5%	\$30,000 at \$5m
Over \$5m and up to \$10m	5.5%	\$180,000 at \$10m
Over \$10m and up to \$20m	6.5%	\$580,000 at \$20m
Over \$20m	7.5%	\$1,080,000 at \$30m

\* The tax applies to high value residential properties containing at least one, and not more than two, single family residences

The incremental impact of the new tax is relatively minor at a sale price of \$4m, increasing the total municipal land transfer tax by \$10,000 or 11% compared to that payable under the old system. For a selling price of \$10m, however, the effect is much more significant with the net increase in tax amounting to \$180,000 or 76%.

House sales in Toronto are also subject to an Ontario land transfer tax, making our city the highest taxed in Canada from a land transfer tax perspective. The chart below shows the total tax (provincial + existing municipal + new mansion tax) that will apply from 2024 at different selling prices.

It will be interesting to see what impact the mansion tax will have on the Toronto property market. In the short-term, the new tax has certainly created a major incentive for buyers in excess of \$3m to try and close a deal before January 1st, 2024, and a flurry of recent high value sales in the Rosedale area would suggest that's happening.

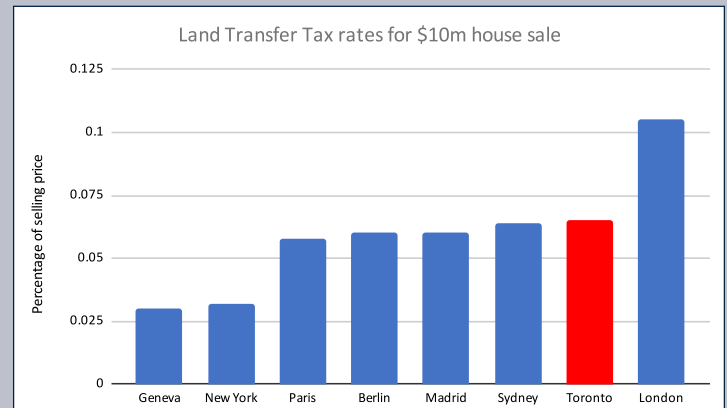
### Total Land Transfer tax - Jan 1st 2024



In the longer-term, the extra tax has clearly made buying a big ticket house even more expensive. In a soft market, this may provide a greater incentive for buyers to negotiate on price, particularly if the asking prices of high-end homes next year remain similar to 2023 prices on a like-for-like basis.

Although Toronto land transfer taxes may be the highest of any city in Canada, they do not appear to be too far out-of-step with those in other major international cities, albeit at the higher end. The chart below, shows a comparison of land transfer tax rates for a house selling for \$10m in each city.

### Land transfer tax rates for a \$10m house sale



## Toronto Nature Stewards

In the bustling metropolis of Toronto, where urban landscapes often overshadow natural beauty, the Toronto Nature Stewards (TNS) have emerged as a beacon of hope for preserving and revitalizing the city's natural areas, particularly its ravines.

Co-founded by local resident, Catherine Berka, this grassroots organization has grown to become an integral part of Toronto's efforts to conserve and restore its ravines. The TNS' journey began when Berka, one of the driving forces behind the organization, was moved by a visit from two students from the Faculty of Forestry at University of Toronto. The students' research clearly showed a marked decrease in biodiversity in both flora and fauna from a 1977 baseline study. Berka was particularly troubled by the explosion of invasive species and the loss of almost half of our native tree species in the sample plots. This encounter led to a collaborative effort with the University of Toronto and a small team of citizens to improve the well-being of the City's ravines. The organization's mandate is to protect, preserve, and enhance the city's natural heritage.

Since its inception in 2020, (with its roots firmly in a pre-cursor organization Toronto Ravine Revitalization Science), the TNS have expanded their reach and influence. With 87 dedicated Lead Stewards at the helm, they've been able to mobilize 800 registered volunteers who regularly steward 32 approved sites throughout the city--something the City simply does not have the resources to tackle.

Collaboration is at the heart of the TNS' success. They have established partnerships with organizations such as the Toronto Field Naturalists, Toronto Master Gardeners, Indigenous Humber Lodge, Don't Mess with the Don, and EcoSpark. One noteworthy ongoing project is "Project Buckthorn", a multi-year endeavor in collaboration with the City to remove invasive buckthorn plants in a degraded area of Sunnybrook Park.

## The Down-side of Downtown Ravines

South Rosedale is blessed with an incredible ravine network, but downtown ravines can come with problems. The SRRA is working with the City to address some of these:

### Encampments:

Encampments have become a major problem, particularly in the ravine along the Rosedale Valley road where firefighters are regularly called-out to extinguish fires endangering bridges and adjoining property. Occasionally garbage bins are stolen, with garbage being burnt to start these fires. A recent call-out under Sherbourne bridge resulted in a firefighter being assaulted.

If you see anyone camped in the ravine, do not approach them, but please alert Troy Ford at City Hall [troy.ford@toronto.ca](mailto:troy.ford@toronto.ca). His team is there to



## TNS in South Rosedale

We have a local group of volunteers working in South Rosedale's Severn Creek Ravine (entrances at Rosedale subway and off Cluny). Led by Finnbar O'Calloghan, his team meet on Monday evenings to remove invasive species, allowing native species to flourish and making Severn Creek even more welcoming for local wildlife and visitors.

Recently, O'Calloghan was joined by a group of students from UCC, adding youthful enthusiasm to their efforts.

The TNS have ambitious plans for the future. Approximately 15 new sites are slated for submission in 2024, including the Chorley Switchback in Rosedale. After construction of the Switchback it was



planted with a variety of native trees, shrubs and native herbaceous species. Unfortunately, invasive species like burdock, dog-strangling vine and garlic mustard have taken hold since. TNS want to support the ecological restoration of the Switchback by removing invasive plants, picking up litter and planting native species.

With just three full-time staff members, TNS relies heavily on volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to the cause. They welcome donations to support their operations and further their mission. To volunteer or get involved, please see their website [torontonaturestewards.org](http://torontonaturestewards.org) or e-mail [torontonaturestewards@gmail.com](mailto:torontonaturestewards@gmail.com). By joining this movement, you become a steward of Toronto's green beauty, ensuring that the city's natural heritage remains a vital and cherished part of its identity.

remove vagrants and find them suitable living places. Please be vigilant, and report encampments encroaching into ravines or parks in your area.

### Ravine Fencing:

Ravine lands are fenced-off along their perimeter borders, but fences often get damaged by falling trees or neglect. This results in more trespassers entering private land from the ravines, some of whom opportunistically break into cars or houses. Residents should ensure they update their security cameras (see our security tips) and enlist their communities in a Neighbourhood Watch program. If you would like to be on the Rosedale Digital Neighbourhood Crime watch email list, send your email details to: [rosedaletorontowatch@gmail.com](mailto:rosedaletorontowatch@gmail.com)

Unfortunately the City will not repair fencing that is broken by trees grown on private property, but the SRRA is working with the City to try to address this matter.

## Living with Coyotes

Coyote populations have been consistently rising across North America. They thrive in urban areas, so it is not surprising that sightings and encounters in our downtown neighbourhood have risen dramatically. We're now used to occasionally spotting them in their natural ravine habitat, but increasingly coyotes are being spotted on our streets.

Naturally timid in nature, coyotes do not generally pose any danger to people, but they can pose a danger to pets, as highlighted by a recent late-night, fatal attack on 2 dogs in Ramsden Park. Their natural diet is small mammals like rabbits and rodents, so a small dog or a cat can represent a tasty meal for a coyote.

It's unusual for them to approach people and when it occurs it is usually because people have fed them. When they appear on our streets they are looking for food, garbage scraps, or compost all make easy pickings. The more food they find, the more they visit our homes and gardens and adapt to our urban environment, realizing there is a bounty of food and few threats.



Coyotes, like raccoons, skunks and squirrels are our City's natural wildlife inhabitants and are here to stay. So how should we interact with them and how do we protect our pets? It's best to be informed, safe and prepared, so here are our top tips gathered from trusted sources:

### What should I do if I see a coyote near my home or on my property?

- Encourage the coyote to keep moving by shouting and gesturing aggressively.
- Check if you or your neighbours have a food source in the yard

### To stop a coyote from coming into your yard:

- Avoid feeding your pets outdoors.
- Store garbage, recycling and organics properly.
- Remove dense brush and weeds to minimize hiding spots.

Coyotes are naturally timid and flee when confronted aggressively. **Never run away from a coyote.** The following actions teach coyotes to fear humans:

- **Be Big:** Stand up and raise your arms in the air. Appear as large and threatening as possible
- **Be Loud:** Stomp your feet, clap your hands, and yell "go away coyote" to alert people nearby.

- **Be Threatening:** Throw a tennis ball or a small pebble or stick at the coyote, but only to show the coyote who is boss – not to injure!
- Avoid turning your back, maintain eye contact and slowly back away.

### To Keep your Pet Safe:

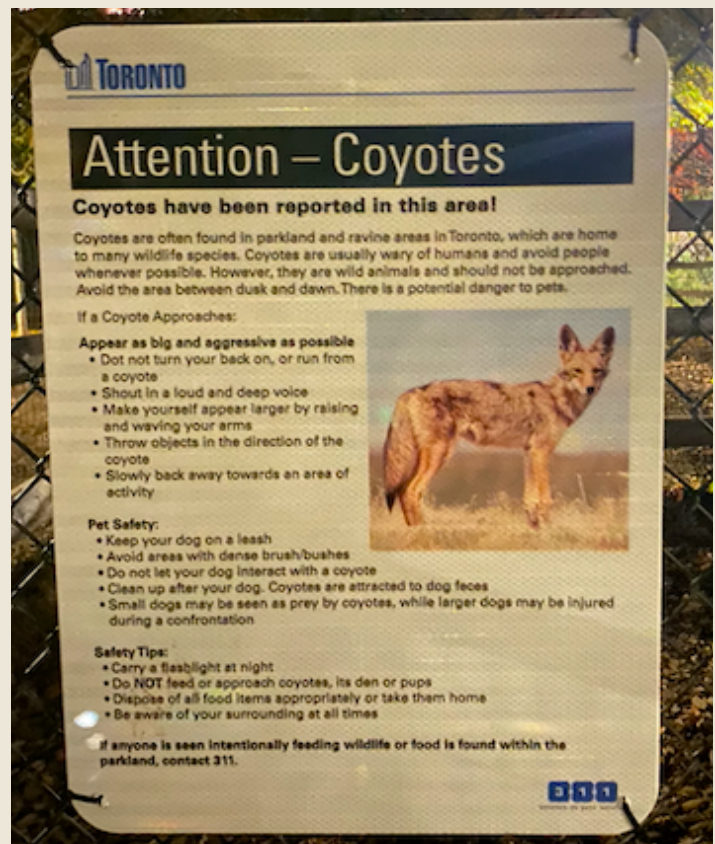
- Keep dogs on a leash.
- Keep cats indoors or supervised when outside.
- If coyotes are in your area, do not let your pet out into your backyard alone.

### When walking your dog in a park:

- Allow your dog off leash only in enclosed areas.
- Walk your dog in areas of high pedestrian traffic such as busy streets, jogging and park trails.
- Walk during daylight hours.
- Avoid walking along abandoned properties or densely forested areas.
- Keep your dog in sight.

### If you encounter a coyote while walking your dog:

- Pick the dog up in your arms.
- If not possible, keep your dog on a short leash and move to an area with more activity.



Coyote warning sign posted at Ramsden Park after recent dog attacks

## Preventing Auto Theft

Car theft is a growing concern for Rosedale residents. Here are the top products on the market for preventing this type of crime (along with their approximate cost) as recommended by 53 Divisions' Organized Crime Unit:

- After-market alarm systems like Compustar CS7900-AS (\$200)
- Wheel lock device "The Club" (\$120)
- Installing an ignition kill switch (between \$25-100 plus installation by a mechanic)
- Onboard diagnostic port block (\$500)
- Air tags (1 placed in a conspicuous place and 1-2 hidden) (\$40/each)
- Faraday box that blocks the fob signal (\$35) and keep it away from your front door

### Please be Aware:

- Police would like us to report suspicious activity even if we do not see a crime being committed. It helps them see trends and identify areas to send patrols. Photos and videos are helpful. Call 911
- You can contact 53 Division to book a safety audit of your home where a Toronto Police officer will come and make recommendations on how to make improvements to your home to reduce the chances of you being a victim of a crime. Email Constable Tim Somers at: [90023@tps.ca](mailto:90023@tps.ca)
- **Members of 53 Division will share their extensive knowledge of Crime Prevention at our AGM & Town Hall at the Toronto Lawn on Nov 29th (see page 1 for details).**



## Don River and Lake Ontario Water Quality Improvement Project

Rosedale residents may remember environmental groups holding a funeral procession along the Don Valley Parkway in 1969 after declaring the Don River dead. Years of poor river management, including the direct dumping of toxic materials into it, resulted in the Don being heavily polluted. Since then, a variety of projects have cleaned up the river considerably and its mouth is nearing the end of a billion-dollar restoration project which will create wetlands, parks and reduce possible flooding by diverting the river where it reaches Lake Ontario.

In addition, the City of Toronto is investing more than \$3 billion to build a new network of underground shafts and tunnels to hold overflows after a storm until there is capacity to clean it at the Ashbridges Bay Treatment Plant. This project also includes a 10.4km tunnel which runs along the Don River from Coxwell Ravine Park. The City's current outdated system sometimes combines storm runoff and sewage which spills into the river. The new infrastructure will improve the water quality in the Don River and Toronto's Inner Harbour.

Substantial benefits from this program are expected and include enhanced recreational use such as swimming and boating, a better environment for fish and other wildlife, a reduction in nutrient levels that cause excessive algae growth and erosion control.

In our neighbourhood, work is continuing on the new underground shaft at Bayview and Rosedale Valley Road. Although the progress on this part of the project appears slow, much of the work is not visible as it is being done underground. Once the shaft is completed in 2024, grass will be planted and the site will be restored to its original appearance.



## Tree Tour Leaves Residents Wanting More!

There was a great turnout of over 20 tree enthusiasts for the SRRA Tree Tour in September. The informative 2 hour tour led by knowledgeable guide Jess Wilkin from LEAF, focussed on indigenous trees and she found many fine tree specimens to educate us on.

The tour ended with local TNS coordinator Finnbar O'Callohan leading the group into Severn Creek ravine to demonstrate the work that he and his group of volunteers do each week, to remove all the invasive species from its wooded areas.

Due to popular demand, we will organize another tour for our residents this Spring. This tour will be focussed on Rosedale's rich history and architecture. If you're interested in signing up for this tour, please email us through our website contact page at: [southrosedale.org](http://southrosedale.org). We will be in touch as soon as we have the tour details.



Residents learn about tree identification from LEAF's tree expert Jess Wilkin

## Membership Matters

The SRRA works hard to protect and enhance South Rosedale as a great place to live. Through actions large and small, we protect the heritage and character of our neighbourhood, enhance its parks and ravines, manage traffic, parking and security issues, and much more.

To do all this, we need your financial support. You can help us by ensuring you take out or renew your annual membership of \$100 or \$250 for 3 years.



## New Membership Offer!

A 3 year membership deal is now available for \$250. Sign up and save \$50 on a three year membership! Credit card payment is newly available, in addition to e-transfer or cheque. PLUS every member signing at this level gets a free Neighbourhood Watch sign to place at their property to deter criminal activity.

To join or to pay your dues, please visit our website [southrosedale.org](http://southrosedale.org) and click on "SRRA Annual Membership". Credit Card payment welcome!

## South Rosedale Needs You!

Do you care about the beautiful neighbourhood we live in? Do you have time to help build and preserve our thriving downtown community? We are always looking for new Directors for our board and volunteers to help with the many and diverse projects we are involved with.

**If you are interested in volunteering your time for our community, we'd love to hear from you.**

**Contact: [southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com](mailto:southrosedaleresidents@gmail.com)**

## STAY IN TOUCH!

We send out regular e-blasts with up to date news and information concerning your local community.

If you would like to stay up to date with what is happening in your neighbourhood then please sign up to our email list through our website:

**[southrosedale.org](http://southrosedale.org)**