

Toronto City Councillor

Chin Lee

WARD 41 E-NEWS REPORT



Call: (416) 392-1375 E-mail: councillor_lee@toronto.ca

Dear Neighbour,

The City's \$9.6 billion 2014 Capital and Operating Budgets passed at Toronto City Council by a 35-9 vote on Thursday, January 30, 2014 at 9:30 P.M.

This year's budget will keep the High Park Zoo in operation, expand school breakfast programs, add nearly 1800 hours to the District Branches of the Toronto Public Library system, open 2 new library branches (one just south of Ward 41 at the Scarborough Civic Centre) and increase community grants to organizations that provide much needed community services.

Approximately \$4.8 million in services were added to the budget and went towards programs for at risk youth, after-school recreation and daycare programs and the City's swimming pools and theatres. This slight increase in spending also prevented 1 fire truck from going out of service but was not enough to keep 4 others on duty.

Toronto City Council has to increase property taxes by 2.71% on average to pay for the increased cost of providing services (mainly due to inflation) and to pay for the Bloor-Danforth subway extension into Ward 41. The average Toronto homeowners property tax bill will see a mean increase of \$68.59.

Of that \$68.59 increase of property taxes on the average residential property, \$42.33 is earmarked for paying for the increasing cost of providing city services, \$1.63 will go to repairing the City's tree canopy after December's ice storm while \$12.70 will fund the Bloor-Danforth subway extension into Scarborough. If you believe the poll taken on the weekend, over 60% of respondents believe that the LRT is a more appropriate replacement. I support the Bloor-Danforth subway extension into Ward 41 because it will provide more reliable and faster service to commuters in our community and the SRT is reaching it's end-of-life date, and we cannot buy replacement cars for this one-of-a-kind and non-standard system. Expert projections for ridership of the Scarborough Subway in 2031, less than 10 years from projected opening, sits at 100,000 per day and 14,000 at peak-hour.

Property taxes make up only 39% or \$3.75 billion of the City's \$9.6 billion budget. The other 61% mainly comes from development fees, parking fines, TTC fares, user fees and provincial grants. I explained this to attendees of my Budget Town Halls in January. For more information, see www.toronto.ca/budget.

There are many issues facing Toronto, including what to do about the F. Gardiner Expressway, our Drinking and Waste Water Infrastructure, Public Transportation/Transit, Gridlock and its cost, etc. It does cost money (from taxpayers) to operate, maintain and keep our infrastructure in a state of good repair (SOGR).

With a snowier and colder winter, combined with the recent ice-storm, our roads have taken a beating, and many of our arterial roads have become pot-holed. If you see any, please report it to 311 or use SeeClickFix to report it - http://en.seeclickfix.com/can_toronto. In addition, people have called about high snow banks making it more difficult to see around corners, so please use extra care and caution in those cases, and call our office and we will report them. I try to clear the storm-water grates in front of my house by just making a path for water to flow to it. See attached photos. In this case, I used a small shovel head with a long handle. I have also used an 8-foot 2x4 lumber to poke a hole into the snow bank. This solves the problem of water pooling on the street and in front of my driveway, then re-freezing, making the street dangerous for driving and walking. I will attempt to put a video together and put that on my Youtube site. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any city issues, do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Chin Lee

Toronto City Councillor
Ward 41 - Scarborough Rouge River

Phone: [\(416\) 392-1375](tel:4163921375)

E-mail: councillor_lee@toronto.ca

Mandatory Water Meter Upgrade In Progress

In February, 2014, the City of Toronto will be contacting every homeowner in our Ward by mail asking them to book an appointment to upgrade their water meter to a new automated version.

The new water meters will transmit your water use directly to the City, which will eliminate the need for you to call in your water reading or for City staff to visit your home to obtain a water reading. The new meters will provide a more accurate, fair and efficient way for the City to administer and bill water use in Toronto.

The Water Meter Program is mandatory under City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 851, Water Supply. The new automated water meter and installation is absorbed in the water rates, and the payback in cost savings and elimination of under-billing is about 6-7 years. After that, it's saving for the consumer. Failure to comply with the Water Meter Program will result in a \$625 fine on the first offense and a potential \$1300 fine on subsequent offenses. Water shut off is also a possibility for homeowners who are not in compliance with the new by-law. There is a high cost to sending a person to get a manual reading, which is why the City is upgrading to automated water meters.

The Program is being rolled out on a ward-by-ward basis. You are required to book an appointment **within two weeks** of having received a "Water Meter Program Appointment Notice Booklet." Ward 41 residents should receive this booklet in February 2014.

Appointments can be made by phone at [\(416\) 236-3837](tel:4162363837) or online at toronto.ca/watermeterprogram.

Installations are expected to take 30 minutes and appointments are available for different time blocks between 8 A.M. to 8 P.M., Monday to Friday, and between 9 A.M. to 6 P.M., Saturday and Sunday.

Transportation - Gardiner Expressway Study

Toronto is in the process of a study as to what to do with the F. Gardiner Expressway, a regional transportation roadway which Toronto is responsible for. This has been on-going before I became a Councillor. This study is about the section just west of Jarvis to the Don Valley Ramp and the Ramp onto Lakeshore Blvd East. This public consultation is proceeding with the scoping down of the alternatives. The latest public information is available on the website at <http://www.gardinereast.ca/>

For anyone interested in this, there will be a public meeting on Thursday, 6 February 2014, 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at The Bram & Bluma Appel Salon, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St., (north of Bloor). Open house begins at 6:30 p.m.; presentations at 7:00 p.m.

Transportation - Metrolinx Stouffville GO Line Expansion Study

At the January 28th Metrolinx Public Information discussion at the Agincourt CC, a good turnout of residents were on hand. There was general agreement that this will be a great improvement on the current transit network, and local concerns will have to be mitigated or addressed. The expansion of this and other regional transit corridors, plus the re-alignment of GO fares with local transit fares may reduce the need for a costly downtown relief line, which have little benefit for most of the people transitting through Bloor/Yonge Subway Station, or getting congested on the Yonge Subway Line, or people who commute to their jobs in the inner suburbs or the 905 area.

The major concerns were noise and vibration to neighbouring properties, pollution, traffic interruptions at level crossings (there are 5 in Ward 41 alone), fear of property value impact, capital costs, etc. There is not much information online, but the website is at <http://www.gotransit.com/public/en/improve/environmentalassessments.aspx>

Transportation - Feeling Congested

Last year there was a session conducted in North Scarborough at the Agincourt CC, and 3 residents came out. 2 weeks ago, there was a session at a church on Bloor at Church, and I attended it and there were more than 160 people, attendees spilling out into the hallway. Congestion in the GTA is estimated to currently cost our economy more than \$6 Billion annually, rising to \$15 Billion in the future if current trend continues. Public consultations have

been underway for some time now, and we should all get involve with our feedback. For more information, visit website at <http://www.feelingcongested.ca/>

The Economy - What the City Can Do

If you follow the economic indicators, Toronto's unemployment, seasonally adjusted, exceeded 10% in December. The unemployment rate among younger workers is much higher than for the average population. I was recently appointed to 2 boards that helps promote the business environment in Toronto and the surrounding region.

The Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance (GTMA) is a public-private partnership to promote the Greater Toronto Area to foreign companies to locate here. Their targets are mid-size and large-size companies, which could provide more employment to workers in the GTA. Their website is at <http://www.greatertoronto.org/>.

The Toronto Business Development Centre (TBDC) is an organization that helps improve the success rate for some of the Toronto's most innovative entrepreneurs in TBDC's [Business Incubation Program](#). Their website is at <http://www.tbdc.com/>. They are currently housing some young entrepreneurial companies and outreaching to others with a partnership with the Toronto Public Library Foundation on the Business Inc Program - see <http://www.tbdc.com/news.php?id=240>.

Connect with Me Online

I have traditionally connected with residents through my office, in-person or through my newsletter and e-newsletter. To keep residents up-to-date and to become more accessible to residents I have launched my website, Flickr photo stream, YouTube channel, Twitter account and Facebook page. Please remember that this is "work-in-progress".

Please like, subscribe or follow to my various e-communications channels to stay up-to-date on the latest news from City Hall.

Website: <http://chinlee41.wordpress.com>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/councillorchinlee41>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CncllrChinLee> | @CncllrChinLee

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/councillorchinlee>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Chin-Lee/1427255057510026>

Live Green Toronto Community Grant Program

The Environment and Energy Division is now accepting applications for the 2014 Live Green Toronto Community Grants Program. The deadline to submit an expression of interest is Monday, April 7, 2014.

Grants of up to \$25,000 are available for environmentally beneficial projects that address community needs such as: park enhancements, school yard improvements, local food production, sustainable transportation, building retrofits for energy efficiency or extreme weather resiliency and tree planting.

Eligible applicants include: resident associations, community groups, not-for-profit organization and Business Improvement Areas. Please note that individuals and businesses are not eligible to apply.

Applicants can learn more and apply online at livegreentoronto.ca.

Toronto Heritage Grant Program

The Toronto Heritage Grant Program encourages the conservation of heritage resources in the City of Toronto and provides grant funds of up to 50% of the estimated cost of eligible conservation work to designated heritage properties. Further information and application forms are available at: www.toronto.ca/heritagegrants.

Application Deadline: March 26, 2014, 4:00 P.M.

Application forms can also be picked up at Reception, 17th Floor, East Tower, City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario.

Events

First Tuesday of Every Month – Toronto Public Library Adult Book Club – Woodside Library Branch – 1:30 P.M. to 2:30 P.M.

The Toronto Public Library is holding an Adult Book Club at the Woodside Square library branch. The book club will meet on the first Tuesday of every month. The next two meetings are February 4, 2014 and March 4, 2014. Enjoy great discussions about a selection of popular books. Please register in person at 1571 Sandhurst Circle or by phone at [\(416\) 396-8979](tel:4163968979).

February 12th, 2014 – Electronic and Illuminated Signs Public Consultation Session – Scarborough Civic Centre – Committee Rooms 1 and 2 – 6:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.

The City of Toronto is seeking input on proposed regulations for electronic and illuminated signs. A public consultation session will be held by the City. For more information visit, <http://bit.ly/1l2dLLJ>.

March 22nd, 2014 – Scarborough Seedy Saturday and Green Fair – Blessed Cardinal Newman Catholic High School – 100 Brimley Rd. South (south of Kingston Rd.) – 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

At the Scarborough Seedy Saturday and Green Fair you can learn how to live a sustainable lifestyle, exchange your seeds with other seed savers or buy heirloom and organic seeds. You can also join a workshop on composting or bring in used electronics for recycling. The Fair is hosted by the Stewards of the Earth at St. Agatha Catholic School, the Treehuggers at Blessed Cardinal Newman Catholic High School, the Eco Club at Jean Vanier Secondary School and Seeds of Diversity.