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Friday, December 11 Update

Dear Neighbour,

Queen's Park closed for the year on December 8, ending a tumultuous legislative session. I have included some highlights from the week in our newsletter, including the Auditor General's annual report, which revealed the Ford government has made no real progress in tackling climate change.

In response to public pressure from so many of us, Doug Ford extended the commercial eviction ban so tenants can't be evicted for non-payment of rent. That said, businesses still need urgent help. That is why I have launched an "I Shop Local" sign campaign to encourage our community to safely buy essential items from local stores so small businesses can survive while we fight for direct government support. You can [order a sign](#) and we'll safely drop it off outside your home or business.

Many of you have raised concerns with me about school safety, whether schools should open or close, and the rising concerns around children's mental health. Thank you for your calls and emails. We will continue to advocate for public health to make non-partisan decisions that put the health of Ontarians first, support for parents who must take time off to care for kids, and additional resources for schools to be as safe as they can be. I know this is such a hard time right now.

Happy Hanukkah,

Sincerely,

Jessica Bell

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My newsletter for this week includes:

At Queen's Park:

- [Auditor general report investigates retirement homes, lax condos rules, and more](#)
- [Annual environmental report shows Ford is failing the environment](#)
- [NDP eviction ban passes unanimously, now it must be enforced](#)
- [Ford passes dangerous law overriding environmental protections](#)
- [I introduce a motion calling for fair fare integration across the GTHA](#)
- [Our housing town hall furthers call for homes you can afford](#)

Community

- [Ghost Bike mourns death of woman killed cycling on Dufferin St](#)
- [Order your "I Shop L♥cal" sign to help save main street](#)
- [Nominate someone for our University-Rosedale community awards](#)
- [Applications for our constituency assistant position are still open](#)
- [NDP announces BIPOC Victory Fund to nominate and elect diverse candidates](#)




Auditor general report investigates retirement homes, lax condos rules, and more

The Auditor General's (AG) report was released on Monday, and it includes audits of the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA), agencies overseeing the condominium sector, and more.

In its [inspections of retirement homes](#), the AG report revealed there has been a big increase in the number of higher-needs residents who are living in retirement homes as they wait for long-term care, trapping seniors in places that aren't equipped to meet their care needs. The report also found that because of regulatory gaps in the RHRA, higher needs seniors living in retirement homes are not afforded the safety, care and consumer protection they need. The NDP has been [fighting for the RHRA](#) to be replaced with a body that has the authority and the mandate to enforce strict regulations, ensuring seniors are cared for in safe, clean homes.

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sector are not doing enough to protect residents and they lack the ability to inspect or investigate potential abuses or misconduct by condo boards. Many of you raised these concerns in our condo dweller town hall last year. In our [housing platform](#), we are calling for improvements to the condominium tribunal, improved condo management and better elevator standards. [Read the full AG report here.](#)

Our job now is to pressure Premier Ford to implement some of the AG's recommendations. Please contact us if you have direct experience with any of the concerns raised by the AG that you'd like to discuss with myself and staff (JBell-CO-@ndp.on.ca). 

Annual environmental report shows Ford is failing the environment

The Auditor General's [recent annual environmental report](#) exposed the Ford government's failure to even meet its own miserly climate change goal of reducing emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. It looks like they didn't even try. Our collective work to tackle climate change goes beyond any four-year term. In the coming weeks, we will be releasing our bold Green New Deal plan. I also urge all of us to work with local residents and groups, from Fridays for Future to the Ontario Clean Air Alliance to the Palmerston Residents Association, to push for real climate solutions. 

NDP Bill to ban evictions passes unanimously, urgent action still needed

Surprisingly, this Tuesday, NDP MPP Suze Morrison's motion to bring back an eviction moratorium during the pandemic was passed unanimously.

Since the motion was non-binding, now is the time to put pressure on Premier Ford to honour the vote and pass regulation so no more Ontarians are forced out of their homes in the height of a pandemic.

Since Premier Ford lifted this eviction ban in August, the Landlord and Tenant Board has been undergoing an eviction blitz. We are hearing disturbing reports of people being evicted without even receiving notice of their hearing. There is no benefit to society or our economic recovery in evicting people, during a lockdown, who can't afford to pay rent because they have lost their job in the pandemic. Ontario needs a well-run Landlord and Tenant Board with competent and fair adjudicators, a moratorium on evictions during the pandemic, and rent subsidies so people who have lost their job can pay the rent.

Ford passes dangerous law overriding environmental protections

Last week Doug Ford introduced midnight amendments to Schedule 6 in Bill 229, which stripped the power of local conservation authorities to protect water quality and floodplains from development. Despite wide opposition from organizations like the [Canadian Environmental Law Association](#), [Toronto and Region Conservation Authority](#), and [Environmental Defence](#), as well as the [resignation of seven Greenbelt Council members](#), Schedule 6 passed into law.

We also learned that Premier Ford has issued 38 Ministerial Zoning Orders to allow developers to override local planning rules and municipal opposition and immediately build on farmland, protected conservation area, and wetlands. We calculate that 19 of these developers are PC party donors.

Doug Ford should use his power for the good of the people, not for personal political gain. As your MPP, I will continue to fight against this legislation and champion legislation that protects our natural environment. 🌍



I introduce a motion calling for fair fare integration across the GTHA

This week, I introduced [Motion 128](#), which calls for a two-hour, flat fare across all municipal GTHA transit systems. You can [watch my full press conference](#)

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Our current fragmented fare system for municipal transit forces riders to pay multiple fares on a single trip, sometimes just to go a short distance. This hurts lower-income transit riders.

Truly fair fare integration will encourage riders to return to public transit post-pandemic, and help local transit agencies financially recover.

Fare integration is going to continue to be an issue as the Ontario government has signaled its interest in replacing our current fare system with a fare-by-distance or fare-by-speed system, which will hurt transit riders who must travel long distances or force lower-income riders to take the bus because it is cheaper. I am very concerned and am following this issue closely. 🚆 🚊 🚌



Our housing town hall furthers call for homes you can afford

On Wednesday, I co-hosted a housing town hall with MPP Faisal Hassan (York South-Weston) and Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horwath.

During the town hall, we heard from NDP MPP's who are fighting to ensure affordable housing for all, and from constituents who have experienced unfair renovations. From the questions and comments, it's clear we have an affordable housing crisis in Ontario.

We need practical solutions that will keep folks housed long-term like rent control and [renoviction protections](#), making it easier for people to buy their first home and support for seniors who want to live in their home longer. For more information on the Ontario NDP' Homes You Can Afford platform, [follow this link](#).



Ghost Bike mourns death of woman killed cycling on Dufferin St

On Wednesday, I joined MPP Marit Stiles, ARC, Friends and Families for Safe Streets and Patrick Brown from Bike Law, to rally and mourn the loss of a young woman who was killed riding her bike on Dufferin St. Her family do not want the woman to be named.

In response to this death, Davenport City Councillor Ana Bailao submitted a motion to expedite changes already scheduled such as new traffic lights, and also additional measures including automated speed enforcement cameras.

I am encouraged by this motion and want to see further action before it is too late. Please contact Mayor Tory at mayor_tory@toronto.ca and ask urge him approve Bailao's motion.

[Users Act](#) and the [Vision Zero Strategy Act](#) to push for safe streets and proper enforcement of our road rules. People have a right to make it home on their bike without being killed or injured. The Ford government needs to step-up and implement a provincial road safety strategy that will reduce deaths and injuries on Ontario's roads to zero.

Save Main Street

I SHOP

L ♥ CAL

Jessica Bell, MPP University—Rosedale

Order your “I Shop L♥cal” sign to help save main street

Every day our office hears from small businesses that are struggling to get by and are worried about surviving a second economic shutdown. It's been difficult to see so many beloved businesses in University-Rosedale [close due to a lack of government support during these difficult times](#).

safely buy what they need from local stores.

To support small businesses during the pandemic, I have launched an “I Shop Local” sign campaign encouraging Torontonians to safely shop at local stores during the busiest shopping season of the year.

You can [request an “I Shop Local” sign right here](#). ❤️





UNIVERSITY-ROSEDALE'S ANNUAL

Community Celebration

HOSTED BY MPP JESSICA BELL

Jessica will be recognizing a number of community members who are making a difference in University-Rosedale.

nominate a person or group for recognition at:
jbell-co@ndp.on.ca
or by phone at 416-535-7206

Nominate someone for our University-Rosedale community awards

We invite you to participate in our 2nd Annual University-Rosedale community recognition event. This is an opportunity to highlight community members who are making a difference and to say thank you!

MPP Jessica Bell (University-Rosedale) will hold a community celebration recognizing individuals and groups who have shown exceptional leadership and have made vital contributions to their community.

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any age who is living or working in the riding who has made a positive change to our community, including groups, businesses, students, and workers in all areas. 🌱

Applications for our Constituency Assistant position are still open

Our team is looking for a constituency assistant to take a leadership role in supporting the Chinese-Canadian community in our riding and joining our close team. Fluency in Mandarin and/or Cantonese is a requirement for the job. The position is for four days a week. [For complete details on the job description, as well as instructions on how to apply, please follow this link.](#)

The NDP Caucus is an equal opportunity employer. Accommodations for job applicants with disabilities are available on request. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

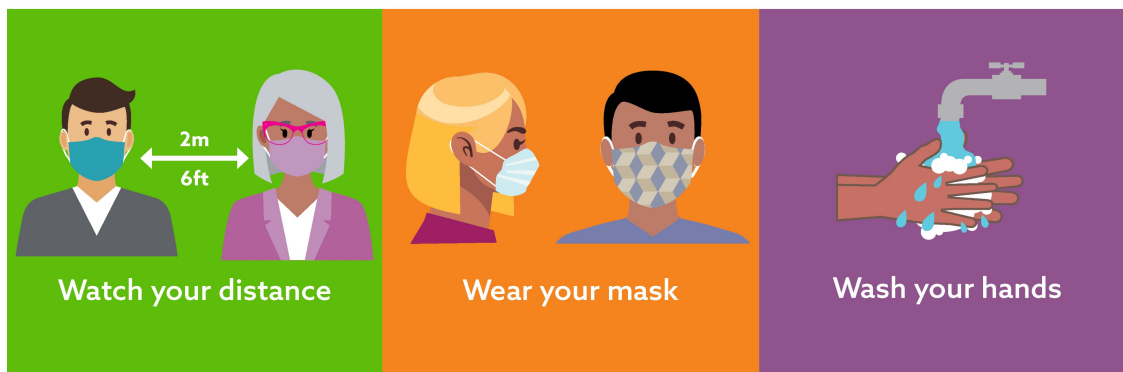
NDP announces BIPOC Victory Fund to nominate and elect diverse candidates

In preparation for the 2022 provincial election, the Ontario NDP has launched its BIPOC Victory Fund – a fund dedicated specifically to supporting candidates that are Black, Indigenous and people of colour.

The BIPOC Victory Fund is a critical part of our broader effort to nominate, empower and elect candidates that reflect the incredible diversity of communities across Ontario. We are excited to keep building on decades of work that in 2018 culminated in helping New Democrats elect the strongest, most diverse Official Opposition Ontario has ever seen. That means doing everything from helping folks encourage leaders in their communities to run, to assisting candidates throughout the process, and ensuring BIPOC candidates have the support and resources not just to be nominated, but to win.

To learn more, [follow this link](#). 🙌🙌🙌

We all have a role to play to reduce COVID-19 spread & keep our city safer:



TORONTO.CA/COVID19

 **Toronto** Public Health

Now is the time to follow public health guidelines

As COVID-19 cases climb in Ontario, please consider these reminders from Toronto Public Health to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed:

- Limit non-essential trips out of your home and follow [travel advice](#)
- Keep [two metres \(six feet\) distance](#) from others
- [Wear a mask or face covering](#) in indoor public spaces and when you can't keep physical distance
- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based (70-90 per cent) hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home if you are feeling unwell

Download the [COVID Alert app](#) so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19. I have downloaded the app and I encourage you to do the same.

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**Protect your
community.
Download the
COVID Alert app.**

Health
CanadaSanté
Canada

Canada

Note that this email and all previous COVID-19 updates are available at: www.jessicabellmpp.ca/coronavirus

As always, if you require urgent assistance from my office, please contact my team at 416-535-7206 or email us at jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca



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