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Tuesday June 30 COVID-19 Update

Dear neighbour,

On Monday, June 29th I hosted an online Townhall asking you and the experts what should education in September look like? We heard from Marit Stiles MPP for Davenport, Nigel Barriffe TDSB educator and activist, Dr. Michelle Science from Sick Kids, and Rachel Huot from the Ontario Parent Action Network.

A big thank you to everyone who submitted their questions and comments ahead of time and throughout the event. If you missed our townhall, you can watch it by [visiting my Facebook page](#).

It is clear there is a lot of work to do before kids return to class and a lot of questions that need to be answered. What we do know is that it is imperative teachers and staff are included in designing any plan for going back to school, funding is increased to ensure students have access to the learning tools they need, and schools have PPE and are in good repair. Additionally, parents must have paid sick leave and more affordable child care.

Please continue to write to my office and share your concerns.

I am determined to ensure the plan for school in September is directly informed by the needs of parents, students, and educators. I will be writing to the Education Minister and sharing University--Rosedale's key concerns and recommendations for moving forward.

Yours,

Jessica Bell

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New report reveals major delays on transit projects

On Monday, June 29th [I sent a letter to the Minister of Transportation](#), Caroline Mulroney, demanding answers from the Ford government after an Infrastructure Ontario report revealed major delays that could set transit projects in the GTHA back by years.

The Ford government needs to explain why so many transit projects are being delayed as many of these projects were already facing delays before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Ford is learning the hard way that it's easy to draw lines on a map and it's much harder to build transit. Infrastructure investment is critical to the work Ontario must do to rebuild our economy and get people working good jobs. I believe it is time to return to the more reliable and cost-effective traditional model of public transit delivery.

Upcoming: University-Rosedale virtual townhall on a green and just recovery

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headed prior to COVID-19 was unsustainable and inequitable.

On **Monday, July 13 from 6:30-8:00** pm I will join panelists City Councillor Mike Layton and Anjum Sultana, Founder of Millennial Women in Policy, for a discussion moderated by Emmay Mah, Executive Director of Toronto Environmental Alliance about what a green and just recovery could look like for University-Rosedale. The event is co-hosted by [Green 11](#), University of Toronto Student Union (UTSU) and For Our Kids.

To join the conversation register on Eventbrite [here](#). You are encouraged to submit questions for panelists in the space provided on the registration form.

Request to appear during the Finance Committee's review of COVID-19

Municipalities, Construction and Building will be the next sector considered at the Ontario Finance Committee's review of the impact of COVID-19 on Ontario's Economy (**deadline to request to appear: Mon 6 Jul @ 5:00pm**).

The link to the signup page is here: <https://www.ola.org/en/apply-committees>

(Choose "Yes", then, on the dropdown menu, select "Study of the recommendations relating to the Economic and Fiscal Update Act 2020 and the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on certain sectors of the economy" and follow the prompts.)

If you have any questions, please reach out.

Immediate action needed to protect migrant workers

COVID-19 infections are rising in Ontario's migrant worker community. It's been clear for some time that measures to protect these workers have been woefully inadequate.

against this recommendation and is asking asymptomatic migrant workers who have tested positive for COVID-19 to continue working.

This is unacceptable.

Instead of putting others at risk, we need to ensure that COVID-19 positive migrant workers are rehoused offsite so that they may properly isolate. We need to coordinate and fund PPE and access to sanitation. Finally, we need to ensure every worker has paid sick days so they may take leave when ill without worrying about losing their livelihood. To get more involved in this issue please follow the [Migrant Workers Alliance for Change](#).

Toronto City Council puts forward policing recommendations

For far too long governments have failed to address the pain of Black, Indigenous and racialized people in Ontario who face systemic racism daily. Your activism and pressure have forced them to address these issues. Thank you.

On Monday, June 29th, Toronto City Council passed a motion which, among other things, called on the province of Ontario to:

1. Immediately instate the Police Services Act reforms recommended by Justice Tulloch, particularly those reforms focused on enhancing the independence and notifications requirements of the Special Investigations Unit.
2. Review and overhaul the Equipment and Use of Force Regulation, R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 926, so as to emphasize de-escalation; and incorporate further modifications based on alternative models and best practices in peer jurisdictions, which address the use of deadly force.
3. Eradicate racial profiling in policing
4. Broaden the City of Toronto Act to include provincial oversight (by the Auditor General) of the Toronto Police Service budget
5. Provide Toronto City Council with line-item control of the Toronto Police Service budget
6. Revoke the Toronto Police Board and the Ontario Civilian Police Commission's ability to override Toronto City Council decisions on funding
7. Expand instances when officers can be suspended without pay

the police service.

I join my colleagues in calling on the Premier to implement Toronto City Council's proposals immediately as critical first steps in an overall plan to address police violence and systemic racism.

There is still much more to do following these first steps, like an overhaul of police oversight, demilitarization of police forces, ensuring elected representatives have oversight on police budgets, an end to carding, as well as investments in alternative first responders and programs to address mental health, addictions, homelessness, and other issues of community health and wellbeing.

Toronto has a homelessness emergency

Toronto's homelessness crisis is a ticking time bomb. The City has spent nearly \$200 million on housing and supporting 7000 people in community centres, hotels, and schools. Now, these schools and community centres are reopening, and the four to six-month contracts the City has with hotels are beginning to expire. People have nowhere to go.

This week, [Rima Berns-McGown, the MPP for Beaches-East York tabled a motion](#) asking the Ford government to declare homelessness a public health crisis and temporarily house people experiencing homelessness in hotels or other spaces where they can self-isolate, and to increase funding for supportive, transitional, and permanent housing.

On Friday, June 26th I joined City Councillors Kristyn Wong-Tam and Gord Perks as well as the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness, Covenant House and Fred Victor to [demand the Ontario government do more to help the City of Toronto address homelessness](#).

No one should have to live in a tent, but the United Nations and the US Centers For Disease Control and Prevention's Covid-19 guidelines are clear: Don't destroy encampments unless people can be moved to accommodation where self-isolation is possible.

The Premier should assist the City of Toronto by ensuring people in tents have access to refillable water bottles, water stations, portable toilets, and garbage pick-up.

Access to safe housing is a human right. The need to provide safe, accessible, supportive transitional and permanent housing is urgent.

It's been a hot week and temperatures will continue to rise

The City of Toronto has opened emergency cooling centres which will offer an air-conditioned place to rest indoors and receive a cool drink. Infection prevention and control measures will be in place. The closest Emergency Cooling Centres to University-Rosedale are:

- Wallace Emerson Community Centre (1260 Dufferin St). Open from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during a heat warning.
- Metro Hall (55 John St). Open 24 hours a day during a heat warning.

More information on cool spaces can be found [here](#).

Toronto Public Health continues to advise residents to stay home, when possible, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19; however, people who are at higher risk for COVID-19 (e.g., persons who are more than 70 years of age), or who are required to self-isolate due to COVID-19 (e.g., symptoms, high risk exposure), may visit an Emergency Cooling Centre if necessary to beat the heat while taking the following precautions:

- When traveling to an Emergency Cooling Centre:
 - Wear a [non-medical mask or face covering](#) at all times
 - Avoid the use of public transportation, taxis or ride-shares
 - Practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - Practice [physical distancing](#)
- When arriving at an Emergency Cooling Centre, inform a staff member prior to entering your COVID-19 or self-isolation status during the screening process.

Staying cool with SwimTO

SwimTO is a program that will be expediting the opening of the City's beaches, outdoor pools, wading pools and splash pads to prevent heat related-illnesses while continuing to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

All [outdoor pool](#) locations are open as of June 27. All visitors to outdoor pools

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pools will operate from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, 11 a.m. – 12 noon lane swim, 12 – 8 p.m. leisure swim.

[Wading pools](#) will begin to open on July 1, 2020, on a location-by-location basis over an 11-day period. [Splash/spray pads](#) started to open on June 24, 2020, with all locations open by June 27, 2020.

Capacity at outdoor pools will be significantly reduced. Staff will prioritize leisure swims throughout the day in order to give as many swimmers as possible the opportunity to cool off. Swimmers will be limited to a 45-minute session that starts at the top of each hour.

Toronto city council votes to make masks mandatory indoors

The temporary by-law goes into effect starting July 7, though you are encouraged to start following the order immediately. As a reminder, the Toronto Transit Commission's board voted to [make face coverings mandatory](#) for all customers on the TTC starting July 2. Exceptions will be made for anyone who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons, as well as for children under two years old.

Canada Student Service Grant program is now available

The [Canada Student Service Grant](#) is a federal program and is available for full-time students who have been unable to find summer jobs to help pay for school in September.

Eligible students will receive grants of \$1,000 to \$5,000 to support the costs of post-secondary education in the fall. The amount of each grant depends on the time the recipient devotes to volunteer work.

Your eligibility will be determined when you apply for the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

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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

