



Official Opposition · l'Opposition officielle

Ontario NDP Caucus • Groupe parlementaire du NPD de l'Ontario

Premier Doug Ford
Room 281
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

May 15, 2020

Re: Mount Pleasant Group of Cemeteries (MPGC)

Dear Premier Ford

I am writing with an urgent request. I am asking that we work together to protect the public interest, and pass legislation to clarify and confirm the long-standing status of the Mount Pleasant Group of Cemeteries (MPGC) as a public trust.

MPGC was established by provincial statute in the 1800s as a public trust, funded by charitable donations from regular people. It operates 10 cemeteries in Toronto, Vaughan, Thornhill, Pickering, Richmond Hill, Brampton and Oshawa. These cemeteries are the resting place of generations of Ontarians.

However, in the more than 150 years since MPGC was established, its founding legislation has never been properly updated.

In the absence of legislative clarity, the MPGC board has recently chosen to interpret its mandate as that of a private commercial corporation, rather than a public trust founded for charitable purposes. It has blocked the public from holding it accountable, while increasing executive compensation.

As a result, eight private individuals have effectively taken personal control of 1,222 acres of public land across the GTA, claiming the power to sell public assets worth billions and distribute the proceeds as they see fit.

An alarming Court of Appeal decision last week found that there was no legislative barrier to stop the MPGC board from using these public assets for private purposes. However, the decision makes it clear that the provincial Legislature has the power to provide legal clarity about MPGC's status.

Ontario NDP Caucus Services

Main Legislative Building, Room N200 • Queen's Park • Toronto, ON M7A 1A8 • ondpcaucus.com



Official Opposition • l'Opposition officielle

Ontario NDP Caucus • Groupe parlementaire du NPD de l'Ontario

I am urging the government to work with the Official Opposition to review MPGC's governing statutes, and quickly pass updated legislation to confirm MPGC's status as a public trust accountable to the people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrea Horwath', written over a blue scribble.

Andrea Horwath
Leader of the Official Opposition

Jill Andrew, MPP Toronto-St. Paul
Jessica Bell, MPP University Rosedale
Doly Beugm, MPP Scarborough-Southwest
Jennifer French, MPP Oshawa
Suze Morrison, MPP Toronto Centre
Marit Stiles, MPP Davenport