



Councillor

Mike Del Grande



WARD 39 • SCARBOROUGH - AGINCOURT

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 1

Dear Friends and Neighbours,

Thank you for the renewed confidence in re-electing me to serve as your City Councillor. At your front door, and at the ballot box, you re-iterated your appreciation for the hard work and dedication of my staff and me. Your re-assurance is humbling. I ask for feedback on how we can improve the neighbourhood together and serve you better.

As I begin this second term, I reflect on our successes and challenges of the previous term. I believe that we, as a community, are better off. We have accomplished a great deal, you have shared concerns and as a result, provided opportunities for improvement in the neighbourhood. I know that with your support and feedback we will continue to move forward, to strive to work hard for the place we call home and strengthen our community. I pledge to work with my counterparts at the Federal, Provincial and School Board levels. Together, we can better utilize our collective resources to serve you.

Our neighbourhood is for residential purposes and families. Business is conducted in properly zoned areas. We have numerous rental units in the Ward and they change the aesthetics of our community, not always for the better. Absentee landlords reap great profits at the expense of tenants and to the deterioration of neighbourhoods. I will support you, my friends and neighbours, not commercial enterprises hiding among us, I will not allow any illegal or criminal activity.

I stand for the same universal principles you believe in: treating you like you want to be treated, recognizing that family and children are important, being able to live in a safe and peaceful society, assisting those who need help to help themselves, employment that pays a living wage and abiding by the rule of law.

Thank you for your continued support and for the privilege to represent and serve you.

Your Neighbour,

Mike Del Grande
Councillor, Ward 39
Scarborough-Agincourt

(Please visit my website at: www.mikedelgrande.ca)

Because of Canada Post's delivery requirements, residents outside of Ward 39 may have received this newsletter.

請閱內頁中文版

What's Inside

- The Strong Mayor System P2
- Environment Day 2007 P2
- Spending Restraint P2
- Winning Gardens P2
- Be a Good Neighbour P2
- McNicoll Bus Loop P2
- City Services P2
- Toronto Hydro P2
- Smoother Rides to Come - McNicoll Ave. P2
- Driveway Paving P2
- And So We Grow P3
- Housing Price Update in Ward 39 P3
- Education P3
- International Schools P3
- Property Tax Relief for Seniors P3
- Safety P3
- Marijuana Grow Houses P3
- Graffiti P3
- Widened Driveways & Front Yard Parking P4
- By the Numbers: Ward 39 P4
- Sewer Backup P4
- Claims against the City P4
- Downspout Disconnect Program P4
- Commissioner of Oaths P4
- Traffic Studies P4
- Your Office Staff P4



Police Chief Bill Blair & Mike discussing community issues



Official Opening of Splendid China Tower

Mike Del Grande

416-392-1374

Councillor Mike Del Grande

THE STRONG MAYOR SYSTEM

The New City of Toronto Act gives greater powers to the Mayor. He can now select who gets appointed to the Executive Board and as Chairs of Committees. He chooses people he feels will carry out his wishes on how the City is run and how your taxes will be spent. As your Councillor, I remain independent and non-party affiliated. I will support good policy and suggest alternatives beneficial for the community and the City.



SPENDING RESTRAINT?

- 9% guaranteed annual water increase for the next 10 years
- Renovations to the Mayor's office - \$3 Million approved
- 4 additional staff members in the Mayor's office - approx. \$300,000
- \$40 million for renovating Nathan Phillips Square
- St. Clair Streetcar Right Of Way project: \$100 million.
- Delay in paving Pharmacy & Kennedy - money re-directed to the Mayor's "Clean & Beautiful" budget.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

Some of the complaints I receive are:

"My neighbour lets the dog bark all night; does not collect the dog's droppings in the backyard; does not stoop and scoop on the road; does not trim his tree; leaves the property in a mess; does not clear the snow from his/her property; piles the snow on my property; has a rooming house; runs a business from home; has several cars parked on the street; leaves shopping carts in front of my home; puts his/her garbage on my property, is doing illegal construction...." the list is endless.

When I receive these confidential calls I forward them to City Staff for investigation. If any of these activities contravene the by-law, fines and penalties are imposed. It results in strained relationships with neighbours and part of that frustration is taken out on me as the third party. I try to mediate differences but there will always be someone who is unhappy. Follow common sense and courtesy to avoid dispute, be respectful of others and don't break the law.

CITY SERVICES

The City endeavours to be proactive. If something needs fixing I need to know as repairs are done sequentially based on funding. For example, being seasonal, sidewalk repairs cannot be done in the winter. Please do not leave it until the last moment and be disappointed when it is not completed in a timely manner.



- Trees are trimmed every 3-5 years. New trees are planted in the Spring or late Fall. If your boulevard tree is dead and needs replacing, call before the season starts. Safety issues take priority. Should you have concerns, let us know before the season commences. The wait time for regular tree maintenance is 6 - 12 months.
- Sidewalk lifted? Temporary asphalt not fixed with concrete? Again, phone and let us know before construction season starts. Further, Utilities are responsible for repairing damage due to their own construction work and must be contacted directly: Bell: 611; Hydro: (416) 542-8000, option "0", Rogers: 1-888-764-3771.



TORONTO HYDRO

Work on our Hydro restoration project continues. I am pleased that Toronto Hydro, at my request, is spending millions of dollars to improve our electrical supply. Many of you called to thank us for the quality of work, professionalism and organization shown by the Hydro teams. Work is currently being completed in the Heathwood Community. My thanks to Hydro's dedicated team.



Environment Day 2007

Saturday September 8th
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Kidstown - 3159 Birchmount Rd.

- Bring your hazardous waste & recyclables
- Pick up free compost (while supplies last)
- Exchange damaged green and blue bins for new ones with proof of residency



Winning Gardens

Gardens serve many purposes - aesthetic, functional and recreational. Some of you take great pride and joy in beautifying your gardens and our neighbourhood. I have submitted award-winning photographs to the City taken on ward tours. Your creativity and imagination was rewarded.

This year, I have asked our very own, local garden centre:

Valleyview Gardens
3012 Kennedy Road
Tel.: (416) 291-1270

to sponsor the "Ward 39 Garden Contest". Benny and Larry Varlese (father and son team) have generously donated 10 gift certificates @ \$25 each to the best maintained gardens in the ward. Email us a photograph by July 1st, 2007 to participate.

McNICOLL BUS LOOP



As of January 14, the new McNicoll bus loop officially opened. The loop is located east of Kennedy Road on McNicoll Avenue. This allows commuters easy access to Kennedy bus routes without bracing the elements. The old loop will be re-sodded and turned back into parkland.

SMOOTHER RIDES TO COME - McNICOLL AVENUE

McNicoll is due for a complete reconstruction commencing this Spring. It really will happen....and just like Pharmacy, from McNicoll to Steeles, the ride will be smoother. Construction is expected to begin in May and continue for 26 weeks till the end of 2007. We will consider leaving one lane available for westbound TTC buses to make transit easier for residents during this period. The project costs \$5 million.

This project will include more trees and improved intersections for left turn lanes at Birchmount Road and Pharmacy Avenue. The cross walk at La Peer will be removed and a sidewalk from La Peer to Innislawn will be installed so that pedestrians can cross safely at a new set of lights at Innislawn.

Further, I have asked if more transit shelters can be installed or at a minimum, to have the infrastructure (bay and electrical) in place, for when the volume of passengers warrants a shelter.

McNicoll Road reconstruction from Pharmacy to the 404 overpass will take place in 2008. Pharmacy repaving from McNicoll to Finch will be completed as part of the project.

DRIVEWAY PAVING

Are you re-paving your driveway? Do you need to put your car on the roadway overnight? Let Parking Enforcement know of special or unusual circumstances at 416-808-6600.



AND SO WE GROW....

COMMERCIAL

On February 17th we welcomed the newest commercial venture to Ward 39 when Splendid China Tower officially opened its doors. Located on Steeles Avenue East just east of Kennedy Road, this exquisite and well-designed mall is a tourist attraction. If you haven't had a chance to visit, I recommend an outing.

RESIDENTIAL

Excavation on a housing development in Ward 39, created by the Waltman Group, started last February. This new development is at Tom Wells Crescent, located at Canongate Trail and Sanwood Boulevard. Fifty-three new homes will be ready for occupancy by the end of November.

SANWOOD PARK

Public safety is always a concern of mine. Installation of new path lighting in the Sanwood Park is now complete. Five new bright lights illuminate the walkway south of Sanwood Park. Neighbours say these lights are brighter than those on the 401 – and do not interfere with sleep. The official park opening will take place with a community BBQ on Saturday, June 9th, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

HOUSING PRICE UPDATE IN WARD 39 - INCREASE IN 2006

Steeles, Victoria Park, Kennedy and Highway 401 are known as Real Estate District E5. The average selling price here is up from \$262,855 in 2004 to \$282,680 in 2006. The prices are about the 3rd highest in Scarborough. As we continue to work together to improve the community, our property values will climb.



EDUCATION

Ward 39 can boast of being home to two of the 37 top schools in Ontario. Congratulations to Kennedy Public School and St. Sylvester Catholic School for excellence on the Grade 3 and 6 standardized testing. Property values tend to increase and the demand for homes near such schools (where parents perceive standards are high) goes up as families move into these sought-after areas.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

One of my founding principles is fairness. I have come to know that some International Schools, in our community, are recruiting foreign students and charging enormous amounts of money. These schools do not award the diplomas or degrees promised and paid for. As a member of the Licensing and Standards Committee, I asked staff to look into regulating these schools. The Ministry of Education contacted my office to inform me that new amended legislation was passed late last year to address the concerns that I raised. I am satisfied that the law has been strengthened. Complaints can be lodged at 416-314-0500.

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF FOR SENIORS

If you qualified to have your property taxes frozen at 2005 levels, you must apply every year and continue to qualify each year. The deadline for the 2007 taxation year is August 31, 2007. If you are not aware of this program and would like information, my staff will be pleased to assist with details. All low income seniors are eligible to apply, regardless of whether you own a single family home, townhouse or multi-residential home.



Ward 39 Volunteer gathering

SAFETY

Emergency Situations – 911

Non Emergency Situations 416-808-2222

We are fortunate to have a new and concerned Crime Prevention Officer, Gary Gomez of 42 Division. We look forward to working with Gary on safety issues affecting our neighbourhood.

The 42 Division Neighbourhood News Bulletin is on the Internet: http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/d42/20061220-d42_community_bulletin.pdf

MARIJUANA GROW HOUSES

As mentioned in my Fall 2005 Newsletter "Grow houses bring gangs and gangs breed the violence that we see in the news. Quite often, gang shootings are over turf or money and the stakes are high when growing marijuana." Let's continue to get rid of these criminal activities. My sincere thanks to the Toronto Drug Squad 'East' and the City's Executive Management Office for their commitment and dedication.

Know your neighbours, and attempt to greet the new ones; watch for suspicious activities. Grow Houses are extremely dangerous not only due to criminal activities but also due to toxic chemicals, faulty electric wiring in and around the home and the heightened risk of the home burning down. If you suspect such illegal activities in your neighbourhood tell the Police. Vehicle descriptions and license plate numbers are also valuable information – phone them in:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Crime Stoppers: | 416-222-TIPS (8477) |
| 42 Division Major Crime Unit | 416-808-4206 |
| Police | 416-808-2222 |

Here are some indicators that a home may be a potential Grow House:

- Skunk-like odour escaping from the house or apartment;
- Windows are closed and covered up constantly, may have condensation;
- People come and go at odd hours, stay for short periods of time or visitors have unusual patterns;
- Localized power surges and decreases in power;
- Sounds of fans or humming noises coming from within the house or apartment;
- No snow on the roof during the winter.

The battle continues...Grow house numbers increase as they make their way into high-rise communities. You need to know that this is not unique to our community. What is unique though is that together we have eliminated many Grow Houses in our community.

Grow Houses closed in Ward 39:

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Total – 2004: | 26 |
| Total – 2005: | 24 |
| Total – 2006: | 19 |
| Total – 2007: | 2 (at time of printing) |

(10 homes were vacated before police involvement).

GRAFFITI

Call my office as soon as possible
(416-392-1374
or fax 416-392-7431)

What is Graffiti? It is any writing, drawing or symbol applied to a surface without the owner's consent. It is a sign that no one cares about the state of the community and it is also an offence.



Inform my office with sightings of graffiti. I will ask Hydro, Canada Post, Rogers, Bell or the City to remove it. You may also call: 416-392-5326 (416-39CLEAN) for public or private property concerns. If you have information on anyone responsible for Graffiti Crime, call Crime Stoppers at (416) 222-TIPS. Let's send a clear message to offenders.

Councillor Mike Del Grande

WIDENED DRIVEWAYS AND FRONT YARD PARKING

Excerpts: City of Toronto Web Site:
<http://www.toronto.ca/zoning/frontyard.htm>

Implications of front yard parking

When the front yard is covered in hard, impervious surfaces devoted to driveways, garages, parking pads and carports, there is less area for plants, trees and soil, called soft landscaping. When it rains, it runs off into the storm water system rather than the ground, without replenishing the watertable, also putting a strain on the sewer system. Hard surfaces also lead to the urban heat island effect that increases temperatures in cities.

Apart from environmental concerns, other reasons to regulate front yard parking include:

Use of parking space

- Parking space (garage) is used



- for storage and not for parking.
- Garage is converted to a living space eliminating the required parking space.
- People are leasing out parking spaces on their driveway, which create a commercial parking lot in a residential area.

Streetscapes

- Driveways are being widened to accommodate additional vehicles on the driveway. This has the effect of turning the front yard into a parking lot.
- Vehicles are parked on the driveway but overhanging onto the City boulevard and sidewalk.
- Vehicles are parked on the front lawn and walkway rather than on the driveway.
- The increase in hard surfaces

and loss of landscaped open space has a detrimental impact on neighbourhood streetscapes.

BY THE NUMBERS: WARD 39

MLS Summary January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006

The chart below shows Municipal Licensing and Standards activity for 2006. Thanks to concerned homeowners and my ward tours, we have addressed numerous concerns:

| Type | Direct From Home Owners | MLS Initiated | Through Councillor's Office | Closed | Active | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Adequate Heat | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Appliance (Emergency) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Business/Trades License | 6 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Fence | 4 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 12 |
| Graffiti | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Grass & Weeds | 23 | 6 | 68 | 89 | 8 | 97 |
| Noise | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| Property Standards | 62 | 21 | 396 | 342 | 137 | 479 |
| Signs | 9 | 30 | 31 | 66 | 4 | 70 |
| Waste | 41 | 6 | 149 | 159 | 37 | 196 |
| Zoning | 61 | 11 | 279 | 213 | 138 | 351 |
| Total | 216 | 80 | 933 | 894 | 335 | 1229 |

CLAIMS AGAINST THE CITY

There are times when you may have a valid claim against the City for basement flooding, car damage due to pot holes etc. You must file a written claim to the City Clerk's office within **seven days** of the event, or your claim will be disallowed. Please also forward a copy of your claim letter to my office. If you wish to take further action against the City, you have two years from the date of the claim to appeal the decision. Your written appeal should state that you are making a claim for damages caused by: (name and date of event). Please also indicate that you contacted your insurance company. The letter should be sent to:

The Office of the City Clerk
 City Hall - 12th Floor, West Tower
 100 Queen Street West • Toronto, ON M5H 2N2 • Fax.: (416) 392-1867

SEWER BACKUP

(For Water Emergency call: 416-396-4808)

Twenty homes on Huntingwood and several on Glendower Circuit were affected by sewer back up. I was on site to meet residents to inform them how to submit claims to the City. My office helped expedite their paperwork. Claims have been forwarded from the City Clerk's office to the City's insurance company for consideration.

Your Office Staff - 416-392-1374

I am pleased to introduce my staff members. All are considered Special Assistants and look forward to working with you.



My 2007 office staff: Jennifer Coutinho, Noah Ng, and Carol McDonald.

• Jennifer Coutinho

I welcome Jennifer back to my office as a re-appointment. Jennifer has just finished her Project Management Certificate from Ryerson University. Her past experiences include Consultant with RFQ Strategies and Change Management Controller, Sprint Canada Inc. (now Rogers). Jennifer speaks German and a number of Indian languages.

• Carol McDonald

Carol is a familiar face in Ward 39. In the past she has served as your School Trustee on the Toronto District School Board and has established roots and many acquaintances within the community. Her past background includes several years of business experience with IBM and other software companies. She has also worked with Quebecor-World. Carol is a great addition to the office.

• Noah Ng

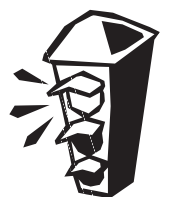
Noah is a Political Science and History Graduate from the University of Toronto. He served for three years as a Scarborough School Trustee on the Toronto District School Board. Noah spent the first 25 years of his life growing up in our neighbourhood and certainly is no stranger to the area, attending school at Sir Samuel B. Steele, Terry Fox and Bethune High School. He also has previous City of Toronto experience.

COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

- A number of you have called upon me to sign for Name Changes, True Copies and Passports. For Passports, you will need form PPT132 from the Passport Office.
- I offer you this service at no cost. Please call my office to arrange an appointment.

TRAFFIC STUDIES

Have you ever asked my office to put in a Stop sign on your street or a speed bump or traffic lights? Initiated traffic studies (with employee time factored in) are expensive. Each study can cost up to \$5000. In future, a signed petition from yourself and your neighbours helps build greater consensus and justifies doing the study.



Keep in touch!

CITY HALL • 100 Queen Street West, Suite A1 • Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2
 TEL: 416-392-1374 • FAX: 416-392-7431 • E-MAIL: councillor_delgrande@toronto.ca