



**Janet
DAVIS**

*City Councillor
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Beaches-East York*



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To: Executive Committee

From: Councillor Janet Davis

RE: Improving Special Events and Permitting Processes

Dear Committee Members,

I often get approached by community groups looking for support a new community event or initiative. Usually, this help takes the form of helping groups navigate through the various approvals, permits, fees, and other requirements that the City asks of anyone trying to use a City park, the right of way, or – even more complicated – both at the same time.

I recently had exactly this experience as a highly motivated and well-organized group in my ward organized a very successful event called Art of the Danforth. This exciting new event brought amazing art installations to various public and private locations, as well as art-related events and workshops for the public. It was yet another expression of this City's vibrant cultural life.

However, the organizers faced multiple and inconsistent requirements, which almost derailed some elements of the event. While most requirements and fees may have made some operational sense individually, collectively they were experienced by this community group as incoherent, onerous, and prohibitively expensive. Rather than supporting this kind of community event, the City's processes were discouraging and unsupportive.

It should be the role of the City to support and encourage special events such as these to happen wherever and whenever they can. I know that City staff have already begun some substantial work to improve the approvals and to review the costs associated with this kind of event, and I would like to ensure that this work proceeds quickly and that the results are brought to Council.

Therefore, I am recommending that the City Manager report to the August Executive Committee Meeting on a proposed customer service strategy that addresses permitting requirements, fees, inter-divisional coordination, and supports for applicants in organizing community events, and that the report examine the possibility of establishing a one-window event office.

I urge the Committee to support this motion, and ensure that we tackle this important issue and improve our support for community groups who contribute so much to the life of this City.

Sincerely,

Councillor Janet Davis
Ward 31, Beaches-East York