



City Councillor
Dianne Saxe
Ward 11, University-Rosedale

August 23rd, 2023

Dear Executive Committee

I am writing to express my support for the City Manager's recommendations on the long-term revenue plan for the city. Toronto is in desperate need of additional revenue, and appropriately designed fees and taxes are important tools to achieve other major objectives such as TransformTO and Vision Zero.


In particular, I have long been a supporter of a city-wide commercial parking levy. The city pays a very high price for having so much free or low-cost parking. This can provide the funds necessary to achieve the Mayor's election commitment to restore full TTC service while rolling back the recent fare increase, plus expanding lower or free fares, e.g. for high school students and equity seeking groups. In addition, a parking levy is essential to level the playing field between driving and TTC; how can we expect to restore full ridership to the TTC and to achieve TransformTO when it is cheaper to drive and to park a personal fossil-fueled vehicle than it is to take the TTC?

I do, however, have a concern about how the consultant report and staff's recommendations describe the levy.

Both label the parking levy a "downtown" parking levy, without any justification or analysis. On the contrary, the fine print acknowledges that all relevant data is provided for the city as a whole. It would be unwise to increase the cost of parking downtown while leaving it low-cost or free in most of the city. This would unfairly harm downtown businesses that are already suffering heavily from congestion and construction (especially by Metrolinx). In addition, restricting the levy to downtown would strip it of most of its benefits. Torontonians who live downtown already take a high percentage of their trips by foot, bike and TTC, partly because parking costs are already high. The climate benefits of the parking levy would come primarily from incenting changes in how consumers access suburban stores, especially those in malls. We cannot achieve our climate goals without such changes.

I therefore recommend that you should change the name of the levy before approving it.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "D Saxe". The letter "D" is large and stylized with a loop at the bottom. The name "Saxe" is written in a cursive style.

Councillor Dianne Saxe
Ward 11, University–Rosedale