



Deputy Mayor

Mike Colle

**City Councillor | Eglinton-Lawrence
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Dear Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

As the Deputy Mayor for North York, and the local City Councillor for Ward 8, Eglinton-Lawrence, I am writing to voice my strong support for the City staff report recommending the formation of the Upper Avenue Business Improvement Area, and encourage you to support the formation of Toronto's newest BIA.

Business Improvement Areas are essential to Toronto's small business community. With 84 BIAs across the City and a Council approved plan to create up to 40 more, the City's BIA program has been proven to drive greater collaboration and coordination to advocate for their most important priorities for City services such as adequate parking, snow removal, and clean streets and sidewalks are delivered to support the area and its businesses.

BIAs can also leverage additional direct investment from the City for local improvements within the business district through matching capital funds for streetscaping and various other grant programs for events, festivals and creating a more attractive and animated destination for Toronto residents to shop local.

I have taken various initiatives to raise awareness and champion the formation of this BIA on Upper Avenue Road including:

- Attending City-led meetings regarding the formation of a new BIA
- Producing two Fall Festivals with music, food, and sidewalk sales
- Supporting the annual Farmer's Market at the Roe Bus Loop
- Supporting businesses to combat an epidemic of break and enters going door to door with window signs, and working with police to educate businesses about Point of Sale (POS) terminal thefts and fraud including holding a summit for businesses and BIAs in March 2024 at City Hall; and
- Most recently, delivering signs to promote Shopping Local and Buying Canadian.

I am encouraged by the incredibly strong support that the Upper Avenue BIA received during the polling period – with a vote of 66 - 8. I am excited to work with the future Upper Avenue BIA board, in addition to members of the local community, to make the much-requested improvements that Upper Avenue needs as one of Toronto's major shopping streets.

Best regards,

Deputy Mayor Mike Colle
City Councillor, Eglinton-Lawrence

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