

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee

Re: IE30.8

Queen's Park North

June 8, 2026.

June 10, 2026

City Hall Committee Room 1 at 9:30 am

Queen's Park North—Its Future

Deputation of Kathryn Holden

I have been a member of the Bay Cloverhill Community Association, the BCCA for more than 20 years.

Our neighborhood association is 2 sq miles of Downtown Toronto.

It just happens that the entire Queen's Park Precinct is completely within our BCCA borders. Although we cannot do much with Queen's Park South, the home of our provincial legislature, we certainly can take some actions on QPN.

But---we certainly have a different attitude about QPN

Since it is in our catchment area, we considered that it was our responsibility to watch over the park and care for it. The park has seen cycles of very heavy use that caused a lot of damage.

In the early days, from 2003 to 2012, Huge commercial events at the park brought up to 50,000 visitors over a weekend.

Many vehicles and 16-wheeler trucks drove across the grass with all of the set-up tents and hardware with low hanging branches being snapped off, large tire treads set deep into the grass, Hundreds of tent pegs hammered into the soil and tree roots.

Up to 60 very large 2-centre- pole tents were set up for sales and shows. Large ranks of 10 toilets were put on the grounds at 2 or 3 locations. Sometimes the large flatbed trucks stayed in place for the weekend to be used for concert platforms or stages.

The BCCA was aware of the destruction caused by the weekly flow of vehicles, tents and the huge crowds. We monitored all of the events and regularly drew attention to the flaws of the permit program that the city was using. We copied our observations to our City Councillor.

In 2012, Councillor Wong-Tam and Councillor Layton made and seconded a motion saying that a moratorium should be placed on events in QPN and a revitalization program started. By 2017, the park was running again but never with the huge crowds.

Queen's Park North is a small park by most standards, about 10 acres. But...it is a green oasis in the centre of a huge city. As such, QPN is a refuge for people wanting a bit of peace and quiet from all the noise and fumes of the Downtown. That is the entity that we are trying to protect. The Weston Legacy proposals promise to be showy but do not have the peace and quiet needed for the hundreds of thousands of residents in Downtown Toronto

In the present, when you enter the park, Mother Nature encircles you with her green arms and cool breezes. Life calms down to a peaceful pace for a moment of reflection and solace. Birdsong and peace are all around all visitors.

Conversely, the Weston Foundation is suggesting some 'grand' ideas.

- A restaurant in the middle of the park.
- An enormous and showy flower Garden: The flower garden measures 20 m. by 60 m. And it will be beautiful.

But I want you to think about just how big that is.

I live in a condo that is 20 storeys in height. That is about 60 metres of height.

Think about putting the front wall of my 20 storey condo building flat on the ground in QPN. Yes, put the front wall of my 20 storey building flat on the ground.

That is not small. It is huge.

The maintenance staff and activities for such a park may well become an overwhelming aspect of this very large garden.

There are many issues that need to be put in context of a smallish 10-acre park.

I am asking Council to be thoughtful and reflective of what they are approving. Put it in real spaces in our downtown context. Personally, I want a lot more green and a smaller flower garden.

That is my wish for this, The People's Park north of our Legislature.

Thank you,

Kathryn Holden,

701-62 Wellesley St. West, Toronto, On, M5S 2X3

Tel: 416-927-8190

p.s. Please make this letter publicly available.