



# Jane-Finch Initiative

## Public Meeting #1 Summary

November 23, 2020  
6:30 - 8:00 PM





## Background

An 11-kilometre, 18-stop light rail transit line (LRT) is under construction along Finch Avenue West, running from the TTC's Finch West Station to Humber College, with expected completion in 2023. In anticipation of this transit investment and the potential for growth and change in the area, on June 29, 2020, Toronto City Council directed staff (see Item [EC12.1](#)) to undertake the [Jane-Finch Initiative](#), a collaborative community planning exercise in 'Neighbourhood 24 - Black Creek' and 'Neighbourhood 25 - Glenfield-Jane Heights' (see [Neighbourhood Profiles](#)), centred on the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue West.

The initiative would involve three integrated streams of work:

- 1) **Comprehensive engagement;**
- 2) A **community development plan** including a local economic opportunities plan;
- 3) An update to the **land use planning framework**.

## Meeting Summary

On Monday, November 23 2020, the City of Toronto hosted the first virtual public meeting for the Jane-Finch Initiative from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. City staff were joined by Councillor James Pasternak (representing York Centre) and Councillor Anthony Perruzza (representing Humber River-Black Creek). Based on the expert advice of the City's Medical Officer of Health to practice physical distancing to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of Toronto residents and City staff, the meeting was held online and phone-in only via WebEx Events.

The purpose of the event was to:

- Raise awareness about the Jane-Finch Initiative;
- Introduce the Study team;
- Present the proposed engagement strategy for feedback;
- Inform attendees about aligned initiatives as part of the Study;
- Learn from attendees about how they want to be engaged in the future.

All consultation materials are available online at [www.toronto.ca/janefinch](http://www.toronto.ca/janefinch).

Meeting notices were mailed to 18, 510 residential and commercial addresses in the Black Creek and Glenfield-Jane Heights neighbourhoods. In addition to the neighbourhood mailing, promotion of the meeting occurred through the Jane-Finch Initiative website and email subscribers list, which had 70 subscribers. An e-update was sent on November 12, 2020 promoting the Virtual Public Meeting. The meeting information and notice was also promoted through local networks and City Planning's Official Twitter and Facebook Accounts. A Facebook event was created and promoted in the area between November 16 and 23, 2020.

Around 75 participants joined the meeting, not including City staff. For a list of staff panelists in attendance please see Appendix 1 on page 9 and for unedited Q/A box submissions refer to page 10.



Following opening remarks from Councillor Perruzza and Councillor Pasternak, a 20-minute [presentation](#) was given by Zahra-Joseph-Wilson from City Planning, and Dan Rosen from Economic Development and Culture.

The presentation was followed by a Question and Answer period where participants could ask questions of the panel. Questions were accepted in writing through the Q&A function on WebEx Events, or verbally through the Raise Hand function. Over 40 questions and comments were received. Questions that were not answered during the event have been answered in this Meeting Summary.

## Questions and Answers

Questions submitted at the virtual meeting have been consolidated and answered by staff below. All suggestions and comments that are received will be considered as staff continue to advance the Jane-Finch Initiative. Staff can be reached at [janeфинch@toronto.ca](mailto:janeфинch@toronto.ca).

### Feedback on Meeting Format

*Will Webex be the medium by which we move forward with virtual engagement? The format is not conducive to community consultation and exchange and to generate ideas. Also as it relates to public record, how can we be assured all questions will make it into the public record?*

There are a number of ways in which we intend to engage with the Jane-Finch community online. Until the public health situation improves, we will have to use Webex for virtual meetings. Moving forward, Webex Meetings (instead of Webex Events) will be used to convene meetings. Webex Meetings enables all participants to see each other, mute and un-mute themselves, turn their cameras on or off, and see all questions and comments in the chat box. The meeting chat will only be monitored for offensive language.

The City has launched the [EngageTO](#) platform so that people can engage with public meeting activities and content at a time that is convenient for them. This includes commenting on information boards and showing support for each other's feedback. Pending the advice of the Chief Medical Officer, in the Spring we hope to be out in public spaces such as malls and parks. For those who are unable to join online or in-person, we have telephone office hours and provide hard copies of all materials along with postage-paid comment forms to all who request them.

This process will change as we continue to receive feedback on how the community would like to be engaged and explore how to improve transparency in the future. Other ways staff propose to create more space for dialogue include:

- Creating polls throughout the meeting to check-in on what participants think;
- Pausing the presentation to ask a few guiding questions and receive focused feedback;
- Creating breakout rooms within the meeting for facilitated discussions; and
- Launching regular "Community Conversations" for drop-in discussions with residents and the Project Team.





## General Study Questions

*Where were the study area parameters?*

The study area for the Jane-Finch Initiative includes two neighbourhoods – Glenfield-Jane Heights and Black Creek. The boundaries of the study area are Highway 400 to the west, Black Creek to the east and south, and Steeles Avenue West to the north. This will be the study area for the purposes of the Community Development Plan and when assessing community services and facilities. The area for the secondary plan may be smaller, focusing on where to direct growth-related policies.

*What specific plans are in place and proposed and is the budget allocated?*

We are at the beginning of crafting the plans and will be having conversations with the community about what to include in the land use plan (which is about the allocation of space, mobility and more) and the community development plan (focused on people-oriented programs and services). The work program presented at the meeting will take us to City Council in 2021 with initial policy directions, and a final proposal in 2022.

Latter phases of work have not been budgeted, but we do have a budget in place to hire a facilitation team that will support engagement. Most of the Jane-Finch Initiative will be implemented through the resources of existing staff who are here today.

## Land Use Planning Framework and Development Activity

*What is planned for land on the north-east corner of Driftwood and Finch (the University Presbyterian Church) as homes back on to this parcel?*

There are no current applications for this site and no one has approached City Planning with any long term plans. To re-develop this site under the current [Official Plan](#) policies (see Section 4.1), no more than four storeys with appropriate transition to the adjacent homes would be permitted.

*Would your team describe Jane-Finch as an area with diversified land use? If yes/ no what current planning policies or strategies would be introduced, retained, or enhanced?*

Yes, the Jane-Finch area has diversified land use. Under the current Official Plan, there are areas designated as Neighbourhoods, Apartment Neighbourhoods, Mixed Use Areas, Employment and Institutional uses. The Jane-Finch Initiative will develop a community vision for the area and the City Planning team will review the land use designations to see what policies and strategies need to be changed or introduced to implement the vision.

*After the transit expansion construction is complete, what is the next major land development going to be? That is, the Plaza at Petro-Can, Jane-Finch Mall or Yorkgate?*



The Province is proposing a long-term care facility on the Humber-Finch Hospital site (2111 Finch Ave W). Construction will likely begin towards the end of next year. As well, City Planning staff will be reporting out on the two current development applications in the area – one at 2839 Jane Street (see [Application Information Centre](#) where you can enter the address to find out more) and Toronto Community Housing's Firgrove-Grassways Revitalization (see the staff report attached to City Council Item [PH13.4](#)) in 2021 and development is likely to occur in the next two to three years.

With the construction of the LRT, property owners (mainly the large apartment sites and the malls) have shown renewed interest in re-investing in their properties. Discussions with City Planning have been very preliminary in nature and no concept plans or applications for any of the mall sites have been submitted.

## Economic Development and Culture

*Is the City looking at informal businesses that people run out of their houses? How are you considering these businesses? Are you also considering houses that provide space for these businesses?*

To assess the local economy, we tend to rely on Census data and business and labour-force surveys. These wouldn't necessarily capture businesses running out of people's homes. We are open to suggestions on how to include informal businesses to capture the supports they might need. We may rely on forums, voluntary interviews, and anonymous submissions of information. Additionally, access to broadband internet is a key piece of infrastructure for home-based businesses that we will be exploring through this initiative.

*Will the external private sector be involved in the study? What companies have expressed interest in partnering with the city to redevelop housing? What is the plan for economic development in the area?*

On the Inclusive Economic Opportunities plan, there will be extensive outreach and consultation with businesses and employers in the area – large and small, and across industries – to learn about their plans for the future, their history and willingness to engage with the local community and hiring.

## Community Development Plan

*One of the key concerns is the security of residents from drug/ gang-related activities. What actions are being taken to alleviate this situation?*

The Community Development Plan is an opportunity to explore and build consensus with community members on the specific approaches and investments needed to support communities in the short, medium and long term, as well as how to implement them. Long-term investment is needed in areas of well-being, including community safety programs and supports for community residents. There is also ongoing investment through different units of the City, such as the Community Safety and Wellbeing unit, and lessons learned from this process can influence our present staffing and investments in the community.



*We have to start with the youth – there are no opportunities. There are so many kids with talent but they don't have anything to do. You are giving subsidized housing to the wrong people – people are really struggling and need help. Youth need guidance on what they can do, especially if they don't have parents supporting them.*

The Community Development Plan is an opportunity to address what programming and supports could be provided for youth. These could include but are not limited to job readiness training and mentorship opportunities.

*What is the Tower Renewal program?*

Tower Renewal is a program that the City has run for about 10 years that supports improvements and actions in roughly over 1000 apartment towers/highrise buildings. These programs range from supporting community safety audits, engagement opportunities at community events to working with building managers on improvements. [Recipe for Community](#) is one example that helps to support investment in the Jane-Finch area.

## **Affordable Housing**

*What is the city doing to ensure that new development includes deeply affordable housing, ensuring current residents don't get displaced with new developments? Same in terms of public space.*

Existing rental replacement policies in the [Official Plan](#) (see Policy 6 under Section 3.2.1) protect existing rental housing stock when developers are proposing to demolish more than 6 rental units. We require like-for-like replacement of the existing rental housing and support for tenants including the opportunity to return to the replaced rental housing at similar rents to what were previously paid. Other Official Plan policies ([Official Plan Amendment 453](#)) address the loss of dwelling rooms, which we know are the most affordable housing stock in the city, and social housing development.

We are also consulting on the [Inclusionary Zoning policies](#), which will require affordable housing to be included in developments occurring in Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs). As the Jane-Finch area has not been identified as a PMTSA, tools like [Section 37](#) and the City's large site policy (see Policy 9 in Section 3.2.1 of the [Official Plan](#)) would be used to negotiate with developers on how much affordable housing will be provided as part of the development approval process. We also provide incentives to developers through our [Open Door Affordable Housing Program](#) to encourage provision of affordable housing in new developments by providing relief on development charges and tax exemptions.

With regard to public space, the first phase of the initiative will take stock of the entire Jane-Finch area including built form, streets, sidewalks and trees. In later phases, we would determine where we need new or improved seating, trees, places for gathering and connections to ensure new development and public realm investment fit with the existing context.



## Transportation

*Are there any ways to help with the congestion caused by the construction of the LRT? Is there possibility to have construction work during off-peak hours or speeding up construction?*

Metrolinx has implemented an expedited schedule and traffic management plan where some work will occur overnight to speed up the construction of the [Finch West LRT](#). The Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) is being built at Finch Ave West and Yorkgate Boulevard, and is the core of the project. Trains will arrive there and will be tested between Jane and Sentinel several times before they are cleared for use. The rapid bridge replacement (RBR) method used to expedite other projects cannot be applied to the MSF and so the congestion unfortunately cannot be avoided at this time.

*During the development of the Metrolinx stations, how many jobs were given to the residents of the area? How many jobs will be awarded to the local residents after completion of the project?*

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*To clarify that conversation about local hirers, the most recent report on community benefits from Mosaic (q1 2020) says PAT jobs are at 10. Is the 100 number just presented updates to this number? Is it the apprentice numbers or something different?*

Metrolinx staff verified hiring numbers with the community benefit specialist following the public meeting and would like to issue a correction to the number of local hires stated at the meeting (100 people). According the Community Benefits and Liaison Plan – Q3 Quarterly Reports (July 1 – September 30, 2020), through the Community Benefits Program, 12 local residents and people from disadvantaged communities were hired – 7 full-time equivalent (FTE) roles and 5 casual roles – in professional, administrative, technical and casual areas.

Category	Hires to date
Administrative & Professional	3
Technical (contracts – one ended March 1st, 2020)	4
Casual (includes photographer, videographer, and flyer distributor)	5
<b>Total Hires</b>	<b>12</b>

To date, a total of 20 apprentices and two (2) labourers, representing 8% per cent of the trade's workforce, have been hired for the Finch West LRT project. Apprentices and local trades people were hired through LIUNA Local 183, IBEW Local 353, Operator's Local 793 and Carpenters Union Local 27. Companies hiring apprentices to work on the Finch West LRT project include AGF, Avenue, Black and McDonald, Tri-Star and DAD – a division of Mosaic.

*How can you keep vehicle traffic off smaller side streets like Potsdam Road? It is unsafe to have commercial trucks sneaking through residential areas.*

There are various measures that can be taken to ensure commercial trucks are not using residential streets including, but not limited to: signage prohibiting truck traffic, traffic calming (such as speed humps) and other road design measures. The Jane-Finch Initiative team will follow-up with Transportation Services staff to determine which measures may be suitable for Potsdam and other residential streets in the study area.



## Proposed Community Engagement Strategy

*Can you talk a bit more about the Community Advisory Committee and how the members will be recruited?*

The current plan is to have a mixed method of recruitment for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC will have 30 members, 10 of which will be recruited through a civic lottery and 20 would be recruited using an open call out through the project webpage and the City's networks with community partners.

Through the civic lottery, every household in the area will be invited to participate by sending in key demographic information. The 10 members will be selected at random based on demographic criteria to reflect the diversity of the broader community. Through the open call out, the remaining 20 members would consist of the following:

- 3-7 members from community initiatives aligned with City processes like Growing in Place ([Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#));
- 10 members who are under-represented in City processes and traditional engagement methods;
- 3-5 members involved in inclusive economic opportunities.

The project team is open to feedback from the community on this approach.

*How can we engage all neighbours into our planning as well? York Centre Seniors Steering Committee tried to set up a meeting with Councillor Perruzza's office and never ended up having an information meeting until now.*

This is part of the challenge of engaging during COVID-19. Normally, there are more opportunities to reach out to the local community including mail, email and phone blasts about upcoming meetings. The Councillor will follow up with his staff on this particular meeting to find out what happened.

*Do the mailouts go to only registered households or do they hit every mailbox?*

The mailout goes unaddressed to every mailbox, including all residential addresses (whether for a house or an apartment) and all businesses. Residents who are not the property owner will still receive the notice. The meeting notice was mailed to 18,510 addresses in the Jane-Finch Initiative study area through Canada Post.

## Immediate Next Steps

City staff will continue to engage on the recruitment method and composition of the Community Advisory Committee. City staff will procure a facilitation team to support engagement in 2021. Information boards and other engagement activities are available for public comments through the [project engagement page](#). To remain update on the advancement of the Jane-Finch Initiative, subscribe for e-updates at [toronto.ca/janefinch](https://toronto.ca/janefinch).





## **Appendix 1 – Staff Panel**

### **Councillors**

Councillor Anthony Perruzza, Humber River-Black Creek

Councillor James Pasternak, York Centre

### **City Planning**

Andrew Farncombe, Strategic Initiatives

Luisa Galli, Community Planning

Reynold Caskey, Urban Design

Samuel Baptiste, Transportation Planning

Tom Schwerdtfeger, Transportation Planning

Alex McDonough, Community Policy

Christine Ono, Housing Policy

Gary Miedema, Heritage Planning

### **Parks, Forestry & Recreation**

Desi Simova, Parks Planning

### **Community Development Plan**

- John Smith, Community Development
- Aderonke Akande, Tower Renewal and Revitalization
- Dan Rosen, Economic Development & Culture
- Andrea Raymond-Wong, Arts & Culture Services
- Imara Rolston, Confronting Anti-Black Racism

### **Aligned Initiatives**

- Sundus Balata, Toronto Community Housing
- Ryan Glenn, CreateTO
- Luiza Sadowski, Metrolinx
- Adolphus Wilson, Metrolinx
- Frank Panacci, Transit Expansion Office



## Appendix 2 – Unedited Q+As

### Q&A Session for Jane-Finch Initiative Virtual Public Meeting #1

Session number: 1775336042

Date: November 23, 2020

Starting time: 5:56 PM

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-Anson Ma - 6:10 PM

Q: I'm having trouble hearing the presenters / I have tech related issues.

Priority: N/A-

-Zahra Joseph-Wilson - 6:12 PM

A: If you are having trouble with WebEx, please visit the City's tech page here to troubleshoot: <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/public-consultations/participate-in-virtual-engagement-events/>-

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-Shannon Holness - 6:32 PM

Q: how many ppl are in attendance tonight? it would be great to learn about the impact of outreach for this meeting. also what forms of outreach were used?

Priority: N/A-

-Andrew Farncombe - 6:45 PM

A: Hi Shannon: Our main form of outreach was the mailing out, using Canada Post, of a notice to every household in the study area. We also used our website, social media, distribution through networks of community orgs and an ad in the Downsview Advocate-

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-Butterfly GoPaul - 6:41 PM

Q: racist comment to make reference Jane Finch Corridor

Priority: N/A-

-James Pasternak - 6:43 PM

A: Sorry didn't know that. Event is called the Jane-Finch Initiative. My apologies.

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-Sam Tecle - 6:49 PM

Q: what were the "study area" parameters?

Priority: N/A-

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-Errol Young - 6:54 PM

Q: How many participants are not paid by the city? eg residents?

Priority: N/A-

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-Errol Young - 6:55 PM

Q: Why can we not see resident participants in this app

Priority: N/A-



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-Butterfly GoPaul - 6:58 PM

Q: who's here? why can't i see other residents? comments?

Priority: N/A-

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-Shannon Holness - 6:59 PM

Q: that's great. how many ppl are here so far?

Priority: N/A-

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-Butterfly GoPaul - 6:59 PM

Q: is it only city staff and workers?

Priority: N/A-

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-Merrilees Willemse - 7:00 PM

Q: Is the City looking at the informal businesses people run out of their homes? How are you considering these businesses? The informal economy in the area. Are you considering that housing also provides space for at-home businesses?

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:01 PM

Q: Hi,

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:02 PM

Q: I serve as Director at Large Provincial and Liberal for the Liberal Party

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:03 PM

Q: My specific assigned area is the Jane & Shoreham Condo YCC82

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:04 PM

Q: One of our main challenge is the security of the residents from drug gang related activities

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:04 PM

Q: would like to know how the city has planned and what actions are being taken to alleviate this situation

Priority: N/A-

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-Shannon Holness - 7:12 PM

Q: sorry i missed his to join a committee

Priority: N/A-

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-Shannon Holness - 7:12 PM

Q: how to\*

Priority: N/A-

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-tina medina - 7:14 PM

Q: What is planned for land on north east corner of Driftwood & Finch (university presbyterian church) as homes back onto this land parcel ?

Priority: N/A-

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-Shannon Holness - 7:16 PM

Q: would your team describe JF as an area with diversified land use? if yes/no what current planning policies or strategies would be introduced? retained + enhanced?

Priority: N/A-

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-Butterfly GoPaul - 7:18 PM

Q: thank you so much Sam!!

Priority: N/A-

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-Butterfly GoPaul - 7:18 PM

Q: and planners

Priority: N/A-

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-Gayle Thody - 7:18 PM

Q: after the Transit Expansion construction is complete, what is the next major land development going to be.... ie. plaza at Petro Can., Jane & Finch Mall, Yorkgate

Priority: N/A-

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-Elizabeth Jassem - 7:20 PM

Q: ard Keele)? How we can engage all neighbours into our planning as well? (YC SSC) York Centre Seniors Steering Committee tried to connect with Councillor Peruzza office several times, yet never end up with having an information meeting until now. Elizabeth

Priority: N/A-

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-Mike Schmitz - 7:21 PM

Q: The mail outs, do they go to only registered households or do the hit every mailbox?

Priority: N/A-





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-Mike Schmitz - 7:22 PM

Q: \*they\* hit every mailbox

Priority: N/A-

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-Sam Teclé - 7:22 PM

Q: thank you for addressing my questions. i appreciate that

Priority: N/A-

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-Elizabeth Jassem - 7:23 PM

Q: Could you please elaborate about what do you know/imagine & what is your plan to connect Jane Finch with us, Ward 6, especially w/Seniors Health Village being created at William Baker (Sheppard Keele)?

Priority: N/A-

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-Sam Teclé - 7:24 PM

Q: especially vital during COVID, if we can do this right, this can help what often feels like a fragmented community to feel connected and motivated behind a common goal. thanks. glad to hear you are amenable to adjusting on the fly as we all get accustomed

Priority: N/A-

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-Elizabeth Jassem - 7:24 PM

Q: How we can engage all neighbours into our planning as well? (YC SSC) York Centre Seniors Steering Committee tried to connect with Councillor Peruzza office several times and didn't end up w/info meeting until now.

Priority: N/A-

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-Troy Budhu - 7:24 PM

Q: Can you talk more about how members of the Advisory Committee would be recruited? I know you spoke about the lottery for ten members but did you cover how the other 20 members would be selected?

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:26 PM

Q: What specific plans are in place and proposed and the budget allocated

Priority: N/A-

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-Butterfly GoPaul - 7:28 PM

Q: what is the city doing to ensure that new development includes deeply affordable housing, ensuring current residents don't get displaced with new developments? Same in terms of public space?



Priority: N/A-

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-tina medina - 7:28 PM

Q: what is Tower Renewal Revitalization? the lady did not tell us who she represents

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:29 PM

Q: During the development of the metro linx stations, how many jobs were given to the residents of the area

Priority: N/A-

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-tina medina - 7:30 PM

Q: Great question!!! Traffic is chaotic

Priority: N/A-

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-tina medina - 7:33 PM

Q: How can you keep vehicle traffic off smaller side streets ( Potsdam Rd ) it is unsafe to have commercial trucks sneaking thru residential areas

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:34 PM

Q: How many jobs will be awarded to the local residents after completion of the project

Priority: N/A-

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-Troy Budhu - 7:37 PM

Q: Thanks Andrew.

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:39 PM

Q: Can the panelist provide specific numbers

Priority: N/A-

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-Natha G - 7:41 PM

Q: Will the external private sector be involved in the study? What companies have expressed interest in partnering with the city to redevelop housing? What is the plan for economic development in the area?

Priority: N/A-

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-Shannon Holness - 7:42 PM

Q: how will current property owners be engaged d



Priority: N/A-

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-Shannon Holness - 7:42 PM

Q: for capital repairs

Priority: N/A-

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-Bobby Ramroop - 7:44 PM

Q: unmute me please after

Priority: N/A-

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-Butterfly GoPaul - 7:49 PM

Q: only in english

Priority: N/A-

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-Azhar Ahmed - 7:52 PM

Q: 100 out of ?

Priority: N/A-

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-Butterfly GoPaul - 7:52 PM

Q: can you share the link here for that mtg

Priority: N/A-

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-tina medina - 7:55 PM

Q: hope that all supporting services will be able to handle the growth: Policing, Ambulance, Fire Services,

Priority: N/A-

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-Troy Budhu - 7:57 PM

Q: To clarify that conversation about local hirers, the most recent report on community benefits from Mosaic (q1 2020) says PAT jobs are at 10. Is the 100 number just presented updates to this number? Is it the apprentice numbers? or something different?

Priority: N/A-

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-Errol Young - 7:58 PM

Q: My impression of this event is that it is not a true consultation. It is a forum for staff and councillors to strut their stuff. there is not real opportunity for community input. Most speakers are city paid.

Priority: N/A-

-Zahra Joseph-Wilson - 8:00 PM

A: The summary will be made available on [toronto.ca/janefinch](https://toronto.ca/janefinch)-

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-Elizabeth Jassem - 8:00 PM  
Q: Thank you Coun Peruzza.  
Priority: N/A-

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-Elizabeth Jassem - 8:00 PM  
Q: THANK YOU ALL.  
Priority: N/A-

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-tina medina - 8:00 PM  
Q: Well done 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌  
Priority: N/A-