

Dear Residents,

I'm sending out this special edition of my eNews to clarify what took place at City Council yesterday with regards the proposed Land Transfer Tax.

Firstly - I am opposed to both the proposed Land Transfer Tax and the Vehicle Registration Tax.

A "deferral motion" was passed which held any decision on this matter off until after the upcoming provincial election. This was done by a majority of Councillors who hope they can get one of the successful provincial parties to give us enough financial support to avoid a Land Transfer Tax.

I haven't changed my position. I do not support the concept of a Land Transfer Tax or a Vehicle Registration Tax. All a deferral does is bring this matter back to Council later this Fall. Allowing the Mayor to regroup, refocus, continuing to lobby Councillors and get them to support these measures.

By deferring these proposals until after the Fall provincial election, it is grasping at straws the winning party when it forms a government will do something to help our financial situation. All we have done is be traditional politicians and put the matter off hoping "the skies will open" and money will flow from the province which I don't think will happen.

I voted against the deferral because I don't want to put this off. It was not a vote in support of David Miller. I do not support his financial management of this City. His ability to spend our hard earned money which we give to the City of Toronto as tax dollars is irresponsible, and doesn't do much to help the people of our area in particular.

People on both side of the debate will agree that property taxes and handouts from the other two levels of government are the basis for City of Toronto finances in the long haul. In my opinion charging residents for services they enjoy and the costs they create is smarter and fairer than raising money from taxes or other levels of government.

The new City of Toronto Act gave the City options to impose new taxes on alcohol, tobacco, parking, and land transfer, vehicle registration and roads. So far under David Miller's regime yield and convenience, not fairness and logic are shaping the use of these powers.

Our City relies too heavily on property taxes and provincial transfers, and needs new revenues that will promote better services, place costs of those services more squarely on those who enjoy them, and lower property taxes. We need to take a mature approach to our financial challenges. The deferral does nothing to accomplish this in fact it will hinder the budget process which the Budget Committee will begin to work on this September. As Vice Chair of the Budget committee I fully understand the importance of transparency when dealing with the needs of the departments and the resources they need to run the City. Deferring this vote does nothing to help with the budget process it only stalls decisions.

Please contact my office if you would like to discuss this further, or make your concerns known to me.

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