

Press Release

Thursday, June 4, 2020

***Community Members demand the province live up to its funding obligations to address homelessness
Members of the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Association (BQNA) rally to raise awareness of people
trapped in cycle of homelessness in local neighbourhood parks.***

An influx of tent encampments in the downtown core has raised the visibility of the homelessness crisis gripping our city. Our shelter system has proven inadequate to provide the safety measures needed for public health during the COVID-19 pandemic. With more than 300 cases of COVID-19 in our shelters, many are reluctant to accept spots when they become available.

Little Norway Park and two nearby parks have seen a steady increase of tents during this pandemic. Neighborhood residents have stepped up to support immediate needs by providing some basic hygiene supplies and food, but the gaps in other basic needs, such as shower facilities, are grossly lacking.

Members of the BQNA are shocked to learn that the province has:

- Reduced funding for the Ontario Ministry of Housing by \$161 million in 2019-20, even though it had received an additional \$100 million in federal funding under the Federal National Housing Strategy (NHS)
- Cancelled the provincial goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2025

Many of the buildings in the Bathurst Quay neighbourhood are co-operative housing or operated by Toronto Community Housing and offer subsidies to support certain members who have low or fixed incomes. Therefore, residents recognize the stability and safety that supportive housing affords and the scarcity of it.

The BQNA demands that the province increase transparency around the federal funding that was provided and asks why it is not being leveraged in these urgent circumstances. At this point, Toronto has spent \$200 million providing six months of shelter for the homeless, even though they've only received \$40 million from the federal government and \$38 million from the province for all emergency pandemic relief, including providing homes for people who are homeless.

Speakers

- Chris Glover – MPP Spadina/Fort York
- Joan Prowse – Chair of the BQNA, Co-Op Resident
- Bev Thorpe – BQNA Executive, Condo Resident
- Jen Evans – Condo Resident, Housing Advocate
- Cory Galloway – Co-Op Resident
- John Ferguson – TCH Resident
- Drew – Encampment Resident

About the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood and the BQNA

The Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood is a waterfront community developed in the mid-1980s as a mixed income neighbourhood. It is bordered by Stadium Road to the west, Lake Shore Boulevard West to the north, Spadina Avenue to the east, and extends south from Queens Quay and Bathurst to Lake Ontario. Largely residential, it is made up of eighteen townhouses and lo-rise buildings that include six co-ops, two Toronto Community Housing sites and ten privately owned condo buildings.



Residents form the general membership of the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Association, a non-profit organization, which was incorporated in 1990 with a mandate to help improve the quality of individual and community life in the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood. The BQNA's board is made up of elected representatives from the 18 eligible buildings in the neighbourhood. Their role is to act as liaisons for the community at the local, federal and provincial level to governments, business and community groups.

Contact Information

Lesley Monette – infoBQNA@gmail.com

Jacqueline McLaughlin – 647-781-5601

Joan Prowse – 416-460-2463

BQNA Website – <https://www.bqna.ca/>

BQNA Facebook Group – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/72388881615/>

BQNA on Twitter – <https://twitter.com/BathurstQuay/>