



James Pasternak
Councillor | York Centre - Downsview

Toronto City Hall

City Hall, 100 Queen St. West, 2nd Floor, A22
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

May 13, 2021

Good evening Chair Kennedy, Trustees, school board staff and members of the public.

This has been a difficult time for our city. I hope all of you are and remain safe and healthy. I also understand one of my colleagues Councillor Joe Cressy is participating in tonight's meeting.

It is a pleasure and commitment to say a few words this evening to assure the Toronto Catholic School Board, its parents and educators that the City of Toronto is a strong partner in improving recreational assets and student safety.

The health and wellbeing of cities is often defined by health of its school system. This can only take place when a city is a true partner in listening, learning and getting things done. As a former Trustee, I can honestly say that a school system thrives with a good partner at City Hall and cities thrive when they have healthy, vibrant and successful schools.

I am here today to support the parents of Madonna Catholic Secondary School and their local Trustee Maria Rizzo and that I as the local City Councillor will work with them to make these projects happen. I would also like to thank Annalisa Crudo-Perri for inviting me here this evening.

Discussions are currently underway between the City of Toronto and the TCDSB on two projects which required minor negotiated land surplus declarations which will come to this Board for deliberation and approval in the future.

The first is of the utmost urgency. It is redesigning and rebuilding the TTC stop waiting area at Wilson Avenue and Dubray Avenue. As many of you know, students from Madonna, Downsview Secondary and other transit users must cram onto a very narrow sidewalk while waiting for the bus. In order to create a safer and wider platform area, we must rebuild the bus stop, which will encroach on school lands. The city, TTC, my office and the local Business Improvement Area board are fully committed to this project. We have been working on this for some time. Our ask this evening is for the Board to consider and support a surplus declaration of a small sliver of the southeast corner of the school property so this vital safety project can happen. We are also hopeful that school board staff expedite their engagement with the city to bring this before Trustees.



The second project I would like to pledge my support for is the creative and vital proposal to upgrade the fields and school yard at Madonna. Of note, I want to pledge our support to the part of this plan which would see a multi-use trail built along the east side of the property that would run north and south along from the Downsview Lands to Wilson Avenue. Once again, I would urge this board to support a surplus declaration of the strip of land, for city purchase, along the east side of the property to make this a reality. Negotiations would take place between the city and the school board to find common ground and common property value.

Regarding the school yard project itself, it is a wonderful project worthy of the Board's support and investment and my office and the city will explore what funds are available through various provisions of the Planning Act through local development.

In conclusion, I want to thank you for your time, and your due consideration of these two projects that are essential for the safety and wellbeing of students and staff at the school. I hope you all remain safe and healthy that students and teachers can return to the classrooms soon.

Sincerely,



Councillor James Pasternak

Toronto - Ward 6, York Centre - Downsview
Chair, North York Community Council