

# DPRG NEWS

THE VOICE OF OUR COMMUNITY 🌿



## September 2025 Newsletter

Your source for the latest news and updates about our neighbourhood.



Photo: ©[A Great Capture](#)

## President's Message

Hello Deer Park,

I hope you all had a good summer and were able to find some relief from the heat.

The Board is back to regular meetings and connecting with the City on a range of issues - although we didn't get much of a break this past summer as

the City consultations and meetings continued, especially on contentious development applications.

We continue to express our community's absolute objection to the tall towers, in particular on Lawton Blvd and at 135 St. Clair Ave. (the southeast corner at Avenue Rd), but we find the City is increasingly unwilling to act on our objections. The provincial legislation leaves them few options and they are not able or willing to use those options often. We continue to push back even though it is extremely frustrating - see below for more detail on developments.

We have had more positive news in our push for restoration of our local ravine - read those details below as well.

We are aiming to send 6 newsletters this year - if you have an idea for an article, please let us know.

Cynthia Crysler  
President, DPRG

## Development





## 53-89 Lawton Blvd.

This huge double tower development of 37 and 43 storeys is almost FOUR times taller than the closest apartment building to the north. Immediately across the road are single family homes.

Unfortunately, the City of Toronto Planning did not submit its report within the timeframe designated and it is still pending, so the developer has taken the opportunity to go directly to the Province's Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) for approval. The date for this is pending but once things go to the OLT, they tend to be approved.

We have met with the City and with the MPP for the area in anticipation of it going to the OLT. One of our neighbours has [started a petition](#). We will advise of any further opportunities to intervene this ludicrous development.

Sign the petition



# 135 St Clair Ave. West - Public Meeting Sept. 18

10 a.m., or as soon as possible thereafter

Committee Room 1, Toronto City Hall and by Video Conference

See the [Notice of Public Meeting](#) for the 49-storey building planned for the corner of Avenue Rd. and St. Clair Ave. W. This huge tower, both in height (49 floors) and in footprint, generating a massive 540,000 sf of space and 631 suites, towers over the adjacent condos to the east and west and the single family detached homes on Foxbar.

DPRG is completely opposed to this inappropriate proposal but it is supported by Toronto Planning, despite it being out of context with the surroundings. We will be speaking against this at the Toronto and East York Community Council meeting this Thursday. If approved by the eight councillors voting on Thursday, we have no channel to appeal this terrible development.

You also have the opportunity to attend or to depute at this meeting. You may send written comments by e-mail to [teycc@toronto.ca](mailto:teycc@toronto.ca). You can submit written comments up until City Council gives final consideration to the proposal.

You are also invited to address the Toronto and East York Community Council, in person, by video conference or by telephone, to make your views known regarding the proposal.

If you wish to address the Toronto and East York Community Council directly, please register by e-mail to [teycc@toronto.ca](mailto:teycc@toronto.ca) or by phone at 416-392-7033, no later than **12:00 p.m. on September 17, 2025**. If you register, the City will contact you with instructions on how to participate in the meeting.

## Neighbourhood Happenings

### Calling All Future Girl Guides!

The **70th Toronto Sparks** unit will be running again this fall, meeting on **Tuesday evenings** right here in Deer Park. Girls born in **2019 or 2020** are welcome to join the fun, friendship, and adventure!

**Register now at** [girlguides.ca](http://girlguides.ca) – they're so excited to welcome you!

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# Nature Walks

## Toronto Ravine Days

Sat. Oct 4, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

Lost Rivers Midtown Ravines Group (MRG) Vale Walk

With Floyd Ruskin of Lost Rivers and MRG's John Bossons and Rob Spindler

**Meeting Place:** Alvin and St. Clair, adjacent to the side of the Deer Park Library

**Also on Oct 4, 10 a.m. - 2: p.m.:** Learn about the project to restore the Vale of Avoca at our information table and see how you can help. **Location:** Near the Rosehill and Avoca Avenue entrance to David Balfour Park.

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## The Beautiful Trees of David Balfour Park

Sat, Oct 18, 2025, 2 - 3:30 p.m., meeting at Rosehill & Avoca, David Balfour Park entrance

Join Urban Forestry Associates' (UFORA) arborist Stephen Smith for a guided walk through the Park's wonderful tree canopy. Learn about native Maples, Oaks, Beeches, Horse Chestnuts, Pines, and introduced species like Ginkgo and Katsura. Enjoy vibrant fall colours along the way.

## Parks and Ravines

The Midtown Ravines Group has launched two new websites:

<https://midtownravinesgroup.ca>

<https://valeofavoca.ca>

and now has Instagram pages for each - [Vale of Avoca](#) and [Midtown Ravines Group](#).

The MRG also just published [their first newsletter](#) last week - check it out and catch up on all the recent ravine news - and subscribe to get updates in your inbox.





*The neighbourhood is lucky to have engaged and committed citizens who are seeking to improve our overall environment. One example of such dedication is a project that was kicked off last year and is updated below. Can you help?*

## Tracking the Health of Yellow Creek

**by Jason Spitkoski (updated Sept 12, 2025)**

Digital Waters is a Toronto-based non-profit developing affordable, made-in-Canada water monitoring technology to better understand and protect our local waterways.

We were inspired by Toronto's ravines. They are amazing veins of nature that stretch across town, always lush and green in the summers and the perfect way to take a break from life. But nothing lives in the waters that carve out Toronto's ravines.

Yellow Creek has a few drainage pipes and storm outputs in the three kilometres of its shoreline between Mount Pleasant Cemetery and the Don River. Oftentimes, there is discoloration in the water. Sometimes the whole

creek suds up, like someone dumped a barrel of foam. The creek had different smells that accompanied the different water colour. Sometimes the water was green, sometimes a dark grey, sometimes a creamy white, sometimes a more sinister dark red. Regardless of the colour though, nothing lives in the water.

But sending a photo of the water to a city worker and expecting anything to be done isn't realistic. Especially if the contamination happens intermittently. What's more, municipalities and governments around the world don't have a budget to combat water pollution in a significant way.

Coming up with a log of specific location, time of day, water colour/temperature/other details, weather conditions, are what are needed to really build a compelling case. Having year-round water quality data allows us to compare the same waterway year over year.

Imagine how powerful that information would be in trying to pinpoint where and when pollution is entering our water. I thought about how people could organize to put low-cost water monitoring devices in our waterways to find exactly where bad water is entering our water.

Since early fall of 2024, we've been monitoring Yellow Creek using a series of three devices spaced roughly 500 meters apart along the creek, beginning just south of Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

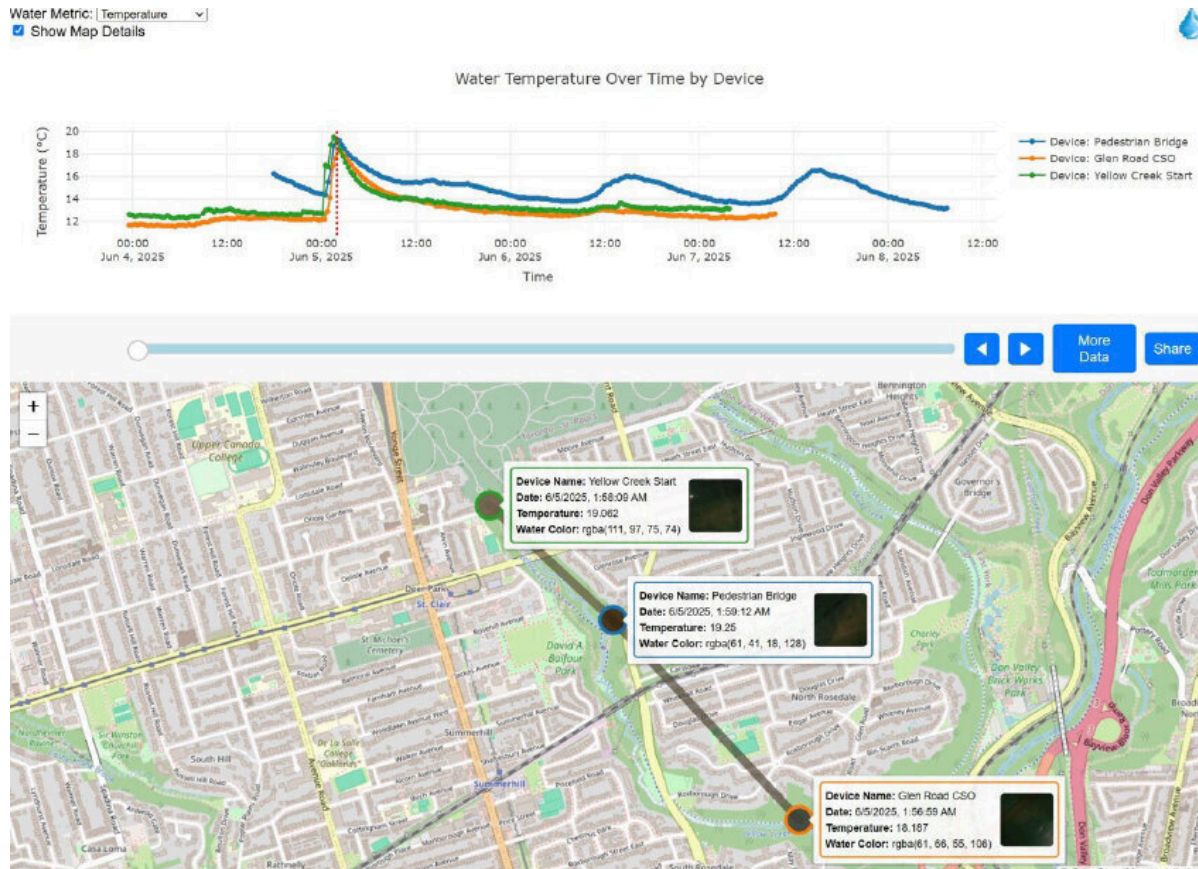
Each device captures high-frequency data, photographs and temperature readings are taken every few minutes and published in near real-time on our website. Our goal is to provide continuous, publicly accessible insight into the conditions of urban waterways across the GTA.

In Yellow Creek, we've observed notable differences in water quality over short distances. At the northernmost monitoring point, where the creek first emerges from Toronto's stormwater infrastructure, the water is consistently murky, often carrying sediment and a greyish tone even on clear days. Yet just 500 meters downstream, the water appears significantly clearer.

This natural self-filtering process is striking. However, clearer water is not always cleaner water. Yellow Creek receives runoff from several stormwater outlets, and because much of the creek flows through buried infrastructure, it is exposed to road residue, construction discharge, and occasionally sewage overflow. Especially after heavy rain.

Some of the patterns we've recorded, including persistent cloudiness upstream and abrupt changes in water chemistry, suggest that poor water quality in Yellow Creek may not be limited to storm events but may also

reflect ongoing, systemic issues.



These findings are not definitive, but they raise important questions. What is the source of these consistent pollutants? How resilient is this urban creek system over time? What does "normal" even mean for a waterway surrounded by dense infrastructure?

Digital Waters is currently expanding its monitoring network and seeking local collaborators, both individuals and organizations, who are interested in data-driven approaches to watershed stewardship. If you're curious to explore our findings, contribute time or expertise, or support the work we're doing, we'd love to hear from you.

Visit [our dashboard](#) to view the data, or reach out to us directly at [hello@digitalwaters.org](mailto:hello@digitalwaters.org).

## Tenants





From Councillor Matlow's July 28 newsletter:

## RentSafe Signs Approved by Council!

I'm pleased to report that my [motion](#) to move forward with colour-coded RentSafe signs, and to reform how buildings are audited, was approved last week by Council in a 20-3 vote. Other motions to increase fines and strengthen enforcement measures were approved unanimously. Together, these initiatives are the most significant step Council has taken to protect tenants since I first introduced the RentSafe program in 2017.

Starting next year, the City will require landlords to post signs on apartment buildings related to property standards violations. Based on the City's successful DineSafe program, the new rating system will see apartments have a red sign for serious health and safety violations, yellow for more minor infractions, and green for most buildings that are in good repair.

The motion also directs Municipal Licensing staff to provide greater weighting in City audits to serious infractions including pests, mold, and inoperable appliances, and a new mechanism for fines that will allow higher monetary amounts and will be harder for landlords to challenge.

Our success was the result of an organized campaign by tenant organizations from across the city including ACORN, the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations, York South Weston Tenants Union, NoDemovictions and many local tenant associations in Toronto-St.Paul's, that included canvassing, online petitions and direct advocacy to Councillors.

For more information, please see [Toronto City Council votes to establish](#)

colour-coded ratings for apartment buildings.

## Membership

### **Membership is vital to the on-going work of the DPRG.**

Our purpose is set out in our bylaws and includes:

- identifying and raising awareness of issues in and/or affecting our community
- representing and advocating on behalf of our community
- working constructively with municipal political representatives and leaders to improve our community

Membership fees are used according to the bylaws, primarily for newsletters, web support and operation, and donations to support the restoration of our local ravine. Any questions? [Please contact us.](#)

**Renew or join the DPRG today!**

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