

MINUTES OF YQNA MEETING #101 Tuesday Sept. 17, 2024

On-line Via ZOOM with approximately 78 participants

Hosted by Neal Colgrass, Chief Technical Officer

Chaired by Ryan Singh, Chair

Full video [available on YouTube](#)

1. Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Wendat, the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Chippewa, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. We pay tribute to their legacy and the legacy of all First Peoples of Canada. Today the traditional meeting place of Toronto is still home to many Indigenous People from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work in the communities that have grown in the treaty lands.

2. Ryan Singh – Chair

- Ryan Singh announced the launch of YQNA's [bi-monthly community newsletter](#) and new [Instagram account](#).
- He said YQNA members recently met with Deputy Mayor Ausma Malik as well as Kathy Loblaw, new CEO of Harbourfront Centre.
- He reminded people to donate to YQNA and volunteer for two vital open positions, Secretary and Treasurer.

3. Katherine Hebb and Tim Kocur – Waterfront BIA

- Hebb shared details about upcoming events, including Nuit Blanche on October 5, which is expected to draw about one million visitors to the Waterfront.
- The BIA is supporting the Tall Ships Festival in 2025 and other events including the Harbourfront Centre Night Market, Bentway Dominos, the Toronto International Festival of Authors, and concerts at the Music Garden.
- Tim Kocur said the City will likely have New Year's Eve fireworks on the Waterfront this year.
- See the BIA's [full PDF presentation](#).

4. Massimo DeMaria – Harbourfront Centre

- Massimo DeMaria said Harbourfront Centre (HfC) continues to see an increase in suspicious activities and property damage, including break-ins.
- HfC is working with the City to potentially restore and operate the Amsterdam Bridge. HfC wants to bring back the skating rink and is seeking funds to operate it.
- Events: HfC will host Nuit Blanche including a Night Market, as well as programming in the Brigantine Room, the International Festival of Authors, a Poutine Festival Oct. 18-19, and the [Elaborate exhibition at Gallery 235](#) until Dec. 29.

5. Sim Shukla and Darna Savariau-Daley – Gerstein Crisis Centre

- The Gerstein Crisis Centre is a community-based alternative for responding to mental health crises, established in Toronto in 1989.
- People in need can call Gerstein’s 24-hour crisis line at (416) 929-5200. Gerstein is also connected to the 988 suicide prevention network and takes referrals from 911 based on judgment of the dispatcher.
- Gerstein sends out staff members to help people at work, home and in public spaces. Workers can help in various ways, like taking people to hospital, performing wellbeing checks, and responding to disorderly behaviour and substance abuse.
- Those seeking a human connection can also join “socials” that include going a walk or having a coffee.
- See Gerstein’s [full PDF presentation](#).

6. Lancefield Morgan and Kristjan Naelapea – TTC

- TTC has replaced Queens Quay / 509 streetcars with buses while completing overhead wire upgrades – part of city-wide streetcar repairs that include the 510 Spadina route.
- Streetcar service on the 509 route from Union Station to Spadina resumes Oct. 6.

7. Kevin Vuong – Federal MP

- Vuong commended the Ford government policy of shutting down safe injection sites within 200 metres of schools. He noted that the site at Lakeshore Blvd. and Bathurst St. will remain open despite being across from a school, because the site is only for clients of that facility.
- He expressed support for federal funding to address the issue of asylum seekers occupying shelter spots in Toronto.
- He also supported RESA extensions at the Island Airport.
- He said Canada’s immigration system is “not working,” noting long wait times for asylum seekers and vetting failures.
- He will advocate for the feds to allocate money for repairs at HfC, and remains concerned about the closed skating rink.

8. Chris Glover – Provincial MPP

- MPP Chris Glover criticized the Ford government for cutting \$230M from public health funds amid the opioid crisis and increased homelessness.
- He highlighted the value of Waterfront tourism, noting the ongoing importance of Ontario Place as well as funding for HfC and the Caribbean Carnival.
- He criticized the Ford process of redevelopment proposals at Ontario Place, saying the government waived any conflict of interest, had proponents sign non-disclosure agreements, and allowed the government to choose proponents who had not applied.

9. Ausma Malik – Deputy Mayor and City Councillor

- Malik said she supports the Island Airport meeting RESA requirements “in the most cost-effective way possible” to make the airport safe. Further discussion of the airport’s future must be done through a transparent, democratic process including a thorough review – taking into account that the Waterfront is a shared public asset that is growing in new ways with parks, public spaces, connections to the water, new communities, etc.
- She expressed support for a community liaison committee with Harbourfront Centre and for seasonal skating there.
- She urged people to get involved in planning for [dog off-leash areas in the city](#).
- She said the City is also planning a [micromobility report](#) by the end of 2024. She noted that e-bikes are whipping through stop signs and endangering people.

10. Ed Hore – YQNA member

- Ed Hore urged people to attend a City meeting Sept. 24 to express opinions on RESA extensions at the Island Airport, because the timeline was tight – to be followed rapidly by a [City Report on RESA and possibly reopening the Tripartite Agreement](#).
- Porter, Ports Toronto and Nieuport Aviation (which operates the terminal) are lobbying for an extension to the Tripartite Agreement for decades into the future, enlarging the airport and possibly allowing jets.
- Hore argued for further consultation and study of the Island Airport.

YQNA’s next meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 12 at Harbourfront Centre.