



Julie Dzerowicz
Member of Parliament / Députée
Davenport



July 8, 2025

Dear Dufferin Grove Friends & Neighbours,

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer! I know many of you have continued to share your concerns about the encampments in Dufferin Grove Park, and I wanted to respond.

Where We Stand Today & Federal Government Support

Since the encampments began in summer 2024, our community has been waiting for meaningful action from the City of Toronto who adopted a new Encampment Protocol in May 2024.

As I've shared previously, our federal government has provided substantial funding to support Toronto's homeless population through programs like Reaching Home and the Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP).

In addition, we announced in January 2025 an additional \$26 million in direct funding to the City of Toronto specifically for encampment efforts. I also urged the City, in a letter I sent to Councillor Bravo in April, to prioritize Dufferin Grove Park in using the federal dollars provided to the City, given its significance as Toronto's largest encampment.

Through communications from Councillor Bravo, the new Encampment Protocol, which follows "a people-first, human rights approach", instructs the City *to balance* the needs of encampment dwellers with the needs of the local community who want to have full access to their local parks. So, this moves the community and its need to access local parks **from being the priority** to an approach that sees **an equal footing** between the community and encampment dwellers.

It is important to note the following:

1. **When our federal government asks for the City to adhere to a "human rights approach" in order to receive federal funding**, we simply mean ensuring that an alternative space is offered and available to those being asked to leave an encampment. The City may be defining their "human rights approach" differently based on their newly adopted Encampment Protocol.

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2. Federal dollars are not dependent on the City following any new or former Protocols.

Our Community's Right to Public Space

Despite having these resources and nearly a year to act, the City has not made the progress our community would have liked to have seen as families in our neighbourhood still cannot fully enjoy their local park.

I understand the frustration many of you feel. Green space is precious in our downtown community, and families have the right to feel safe and comfortable using Dufferin Grove Park for barbecues, games, and quality time together.

It is my opinion that parks are not meant to be housing solutions—they are vital community spaces that should remain accessible to all residents who rely on them for recreation, wellness, and connection.

Next Steps

The federal government does not have any tools or power to act on encampments in our City parks — that authority rests solely with the City of Toronto. Our community deserves transparency about when and how the City will act; this means a clear timeline and meaningful progress.

Finally, I want to share that there is an excellent proposal for supportive cabin communities (enclosed). This idea is coming to the Community & Economic Committee at City Hall tomorrow. I love this idea – and think that all levels of government should be open to making land available to pilot this idea.

Thank you for your patience and your continued engagement in making our community stronger. As always, it is a true honour and pleasure to serve you.

My best regards,

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