



SAHRA Report for 2020 presented at the SAHRA Annual General Meeting on April 21, 2021

This written report can be read in conjunction with [the Powerpoint presentation](#).

As with most organisations, 2020 was an odd year with all the changes brought on by COVID-19. We moved online in many ways, which leads to the first heading.

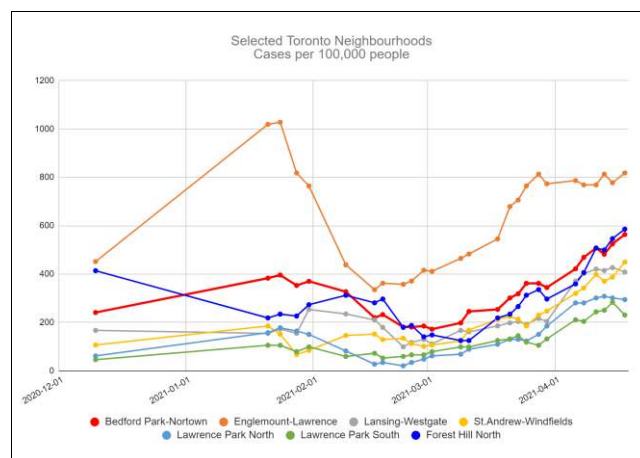
Communications

While we normally publish one paper newsletter each year, in 2020 all mass communication was by email. But even here, we made a change: we now use Mailchimp to manage our eBlast distribution lists and to deliver our eBlasts. And we have migrated to a different email address:

info@sahratoronto.com. We have an ongoing concern that some members may have email systems which see this email address as spam. If you are receiving our eBlasts, you could do us a favour by asking your neighbours if they have been receiving them as well. If not, please ask them to contact us. One big plus: the email address campaign which we ran before the pandemic started added 132 addresses to our distribution lists.

In April 2020, we asked in an eBlast if anyone needed help due to the pandemic. While we received several offers of help, no one requested it.

We've made a number of improvements to our website. We've added many photos of local scenes on a number of pages. And we have a couple of COVID-19-related pages of which we are quite proud. This includes a graph which shows COVID-19 cases in our neighbourhood and some other surrounding neighbourhoods. Case rates in April are heading in an alarming direction. Bob Williams has been instrumental in keeping the COVID information pages up to date which is a feat itself.



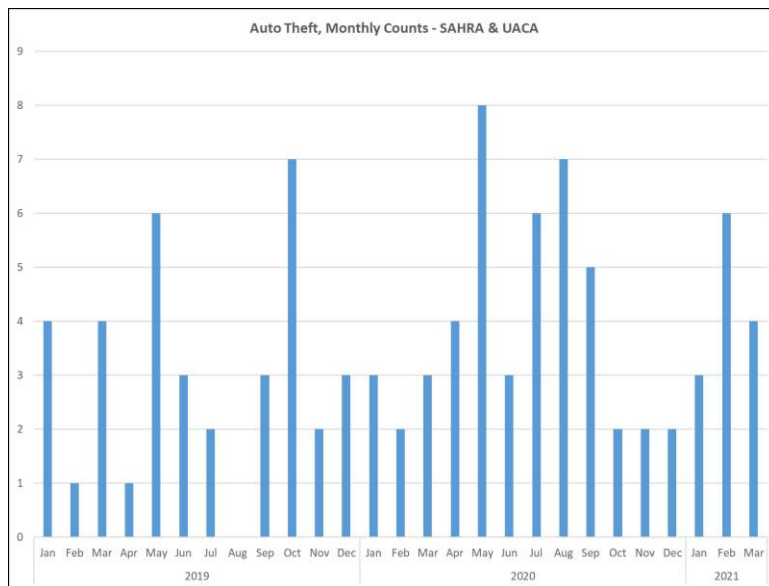


Community Safety

All the specifics of the following information can be found on the [Crime Prevention page](#) of our website.

Every month, we take a look at Auto Theft and B&E stats, and provide an update through our eBlasts when we feel it is warranted.

Auto Theft remains a concern. The Toronto Police Service formed an Auto Theft Suppression Team last September, working with other jurisdictions, the RCMP, Canada Border Services Agency and others. This led to a large seizure of stolen vehicles and a number of arrests a few months ago. Our Auto Theft rates declined for a few months but they have risen again recently. This is an issue across the GTA and to a lesser extent elsewhere.



Toronto Auto Thefts YTD to April 11, 2021

You can see the issue in Toronto from the map where each green dot is a theft.





Pam Main from the Upper Avenue Community Association, Ron Johnson and Jim Sadler recently had an informative meeting with a rep from the Insurance Bureau of Canada. Read upcoming eBlasts for more and ongoing information. In the meantime, here are a number of well-known auto theft prevention tactics (they are also listed on our website).

1. Park in the garage, if possible.
2. Strategically park vehicles in the driveway (less valuable vehicle blocking the more valuable).
3. Store your key fob in the middle of your house, in a signal-blocking container.
4. Never leave your vehicle running and unattended.
5. Install an anti-theft system in your vehicle (such as a steering wheel locking device).
6. Install a flood light to brighten your driveway.
7. Point any cameras in the direction of your driveway.
8. Avoid leaving valuables in the vehicle.
9. Avoid leaving garage door remotes in your vehicle overnight.

As for Break and Enters, in general, house B&E's are way down since the pandemic started (most people are at home), but commercial B&E's have increased.

Unfortunately, since the pandemic started, the Community Police Liaison Committee meetings have been put on hold and this has limited our communications with the Toronto Police Service. Notwithstanding this, Pam Main and Jim Sadler have met with the police twice and we have ongoing email access when needed. Still, it's not the same as a meeting. The good news is that virtual meetings are beginning in April.

An endemic issue is what we have started calling "night vehicle entry". In this case, a thief enters a vehicle and steals anything of value and which is easy to take. If this happens to you, you probably forgot to lock the vehicle. Please make a habit of locking your vehicle when you leave it.

Porch pirates are active in our area. In early March, an 80 lb. package measuring 4 feet x 5 feet was stolen from a front porch. Consider using hubs when offered or Canada Post's "FlexDelivery" service, or buddy up with a neighbour to retrieve the package when it arrives.

We are continuing to support Neighbourhood Watch and have several areas within our boundaries represented. However, we are still looking for additional Group Captains in order to provide wider coverage. Please consider stepping forward and volunteering for this role, which doesn't take a lot of time.

Traffic and pedestrian safety

Traffic continues to be an issue in our area, leading to concerns for pedestrian safety as well as vehicular safety. Thanks to Councillor Colle, a traffic study, with the objective of traffic calming, is underway covering the area between Yonge Boulevard and Kelso, from Highway 401 south to Brooke. This study has been delayed due to the pandemic: city traffic engineers need to measure traffic rates but traffic needs to return to "normal" before any measurements will be meaningful. In the meantime, the councillor's office arranged for a virtual videoconference in February with the traffic engineer leading the study. What struck us was the complexity of the issue with multiple City department impacts. Regardless of what will be done, traffic volume will not be going away. There



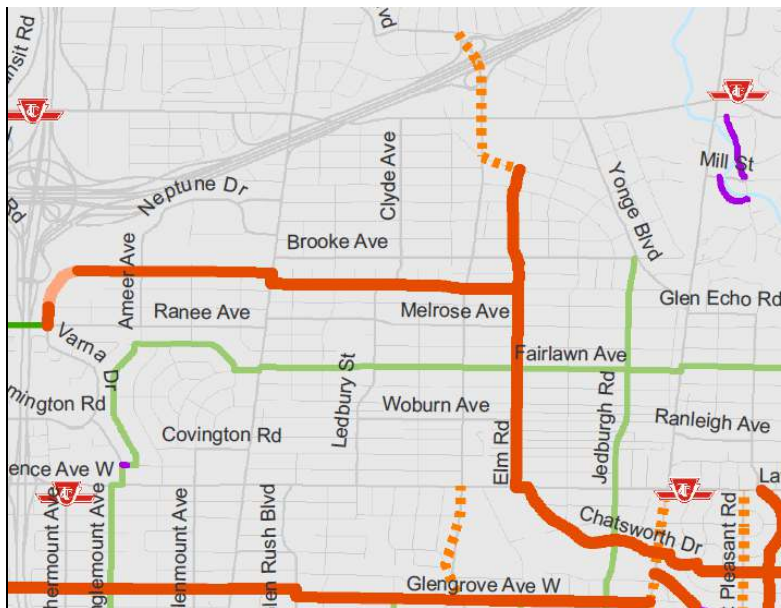
will be an opportunity for the public to attend a future meeting so stay tuned. A couple of volunteers (Barry and Frank) have shown an interest in being involved in this issue - thanks for putting your hands up!

We are aware of several traffic safety issues within our boundaries. The top ones will be raised as part of the traffic study. We are working to resolve the two other issues.

- Avenue Road traffic study: Yonge Boulevard to Kelso; 401 to Brooke
 - Drivers often not stopping at stop signs
 - Parking on south side of Wilson, east of Avenue Road, makes it difficult for buses to merge left when vehicles are waiting to turn left into apartment parking
 - Often not obeyed: no left turn from Avenue Road south to Ridley
 - Heavy traffic on Elm
 - Pedestrian safety crossing at Yonge Blvd/Wilson
- Other issues
 - Greer between Felbrigg and Haddington: Vehicles parking too close to intersection while waiting for school bus
 - Traffic calming sign missing in median at north end of Yonge Blvd

While we are disappointed that the new bridge over Highway 401 did not include the province's standard for cycling infrastructure, we have seen a city map which shows that – sometime in the future – the city will consider a cycling route from the north end of Avenue Road, south and then turning east on Ridley. There are also a number of other routes that have been planned.

We have been informed that plans are underway for new Cycling routes in the future coming down Avenue Road from the 401 area and then east onto Ridley to Elm Rd..





Enhancing the environment and social life in our neighbourhood

Our annual Neighbours Night Out celebration was cancelled this last year due to the pandemic. We are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to hold this event in September.

SAHRA undertook a number of initiatives regarding Avenue Road, including a gap analysis between the street furniture installed and the city's policy. (Street furniture includes benches, garbage bins and bike rings.) We also have assessed tree health and the weeds around their bases. We've communicated our findings to the city which is slowly responding. Some trees have been pruned. There have also been discussions with the councillor's office regarding planters, enhanced street lighting and street banners to hang from utility poles. On occasion, we approach business owners to address cleanliness issues near their establishments.

The Avenue Road Avenue Study called for the removal of boulevard parking at several corners. We are working with the councillor's office to address boulevard parking, to make it safer or to eliminate it in order to provide more green space.

We are hopeful that trees will be planted at the on- and off-ramps at the Avenue Road – 401 interchange. We understand that these trees will be provided through the Highway of Heroes Tree Campaign, which is a registered charity.

SAHRA took an inventory of faded city signs within our boundaries and submitted requests to the city to have them replaced. All have been replaced to date, except for two No Stopping signs on the north side of Wilson in front of Armour Heights Public School.

We were upset with certain sections of the provincial government's override of the City's noise by-law which, among other things, allowed residential construction from 6 am to 10 pm, 7 days per week until October 2021. We wrote to Premier Doug Ford together with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and our MPP, Robin Martin. In many ways, our concerns complemented those of the City.

Development

Garden Suites:

A very important issue – provides for a second house on a property. This could be of great interest in our area due to the size of the lots. Residents need to provide input to the City on what the specifications, rules and regulations should be. An eBlast was sent out on Mar 26 publicizing the City study that is currently underway, asking that residents complete the Survey by April 30th as the first step in the consultation process. Community Consultation meetings, roundtable discussions, etc. will take place in May – we will publicize these events in eBlasts. Planning is supposed to report back to the City by the end of Quarter 2 so we anticipate that they will be preparing their Final Report for submission in June.

Toronto Building:

A lot of the residential and commercial issues that SAHRA is involved with are handled by Building (which is different than Planning). Building has different rules as to how they relate to a residents association. Building is re-organizing to have a 'functional' focus rather than a



District-based arrangement. We have submitted 7 issues of concerns for discussion with Building on how these can be better handled in the future:

- Orders to Comply – take years to enforce
- Old Building Permits never acted on should be Closed/Expired
- Inspections – residents or SAHRA often has to request the Inspections
- Driveway Expansions – bylaws are in place but are not monitored/enforced
- Artificial Turf – again bylaws are in place but are not monitored/enforced
- Zoning Examination errors – even once determined, it is very difficult to get them corrected

Section 37 Funds:

The Provincial Government has eliminated Section 37 funds (now a lesser Community Benefit) but SAHRA has a Wish List for use of funds from:

- The former Beer Store condo (Section 37 fees were assessed)
- 250 Lawrence Ave West (Section 37 fees were assessed)
- Avenue & Lawrence – not yet defined
- 1660 Avenue Road – a new application/not yet defined

Cannabis Stores:

Cannabis store licencing is controlled by the Provincial government under the Alcohol and Gaming Commission. They have now approved 5 stores within an 8-block radius on Upper Avenue. Canada Chemist is also licensed for medical cannabis. Now another application has been submitted for 1971 Avenue Road (the former Su Casa) just 5 doors north of an existing store. So now we will be 7!

Committee of Adjustment (CofA):

We review each application – there were 15 in 2020. If merited, we send a notice to the adjacent neighbours, offering assistance. SAHRA may submit a Letter and/or deput. The CofA Hearings were cancelled from March to June, 2020 and then virtual hearings were initiated. The virtual meetings are even more challenging for SAHRA/neighbours to make their opinions known.

Toronto Local Appeal Body (TLAB) Appeals:

A very busy year with 3 TLAB appeals underway. SAHRA was involved as a Party for 113 Ridley Blvd – a third storey situation. The Owner appealed the Committee of Adjustment refusal but withdrew just prior to the hearing date. SAHRA is also involved with neighbour-based appeals for 3 Jainey Place (a May hearing) and 103 Esgore Drive (a June hearing) as a Participant.

250 Lawrence Avenue West:

Construction has commenced but SAHRA has asked Councillor Colle for Transportation reviews of the developer's intent to remove the No Left Turn when exiting from the site as it would involve making a dangerous left turn onto Lawrence Avenue. A public hearing has also been held to provide comments on design issues for the public park on this property.



Avenue & Lawrence proposal:

A proposal has been submitted for 2 buildings at the NE corner of Avenue Road and Lawrence. Concerns are: 15 storeys (46.4 metres) at the corner; 10 storeys (34.8 metres) north on Avenue Road; no parkland dedication; only a small POP on top of an underground garage; proposing a private road but the City requires that it be a public road which has certain rules; proposing that traffic feeds in and out from Lawrence and Avenue allowing both left and right turns. The developer is currently revising the plans.

4050 Yonge St proposal:

In 2011, a 7 storey (32.9m) commercial building was approved. In 2016, this was modified to add a 9 storey (33.5m hotel). In 2020, a proposal was submitted for a 35-storey (130+metre) condo and a 21-storey (80+metre) hotel. A Community Consultation was held on Jan 12, 2021. But on Sept 25, 2020 the developer had appealed to LPAT (the new OMB). The City of Toronto is opposing the application as a Party and York Mills Heights Residents Association and York Mills Valley Residents Association are opposing as Parties. SAHRA, Upper Avenue Community Association, Yonge Ridge Residents Association and St. Andrew's Residents Association are opposing as Participants. This LPAT hearing will likely be held sometime in 2022.

3180 Yonge Street:

This proposal involves demolishing 12 retail/apartment buildings on the west side of Yonge in the block between Woburn and Bedford Park. It is classified as a Tall Building (not a Midrise) as it is 12 storeys (41m). It would have 109 condo units and 5 ground floor retail units. Concerns are: neighbourhood transition and step-back issues; height and massing issues; no parkland dedication; traffic issues. A joint letter was submitted to Councillor Colle and Planning by Bedford Park Residents Organization, Lytton Park Residents' Organization, SAHRA, Upper Avenue Community Association, York Mills Valley Residents Association, York Mills Heights Residents Association, Teddington Residents Association and Uptown Yonge Residents Association. A Community Consultation meeting has been called for May 3, 2021.

1648-1660 Avenue Road:

SAHRA has been advised that an application will be submitted in the next month or so for a development for the entire block from Cranbrooke to Brookdale on the west side for a Midrise condo, likely with retail on the ground floor. The City may be negotiating a Green-P parking lot at this site.

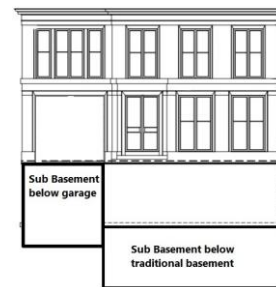
Overdevelopment Fundraising Campaign 2021

In the Fall of 2020, SAHRA's members clearly told us that they are concerned about both residential and commercial overdevelopment.

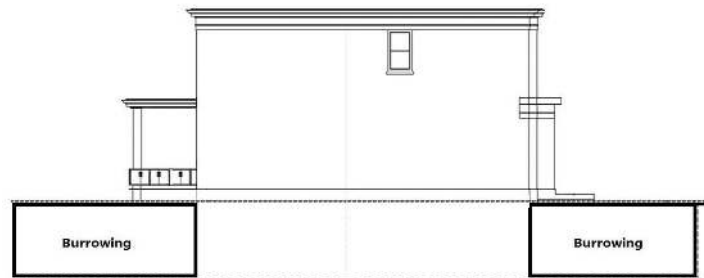
- **Opposed to three Storeys** **80%**



- **Opposed to Sub-basements 73%**



- **Opposed to Burrowing 75%**



- **Concerned about Commercial Development on Avenue Road 81%**

Keep in mind that developers maximize their profits by maximizing building size. This can have detrimental effects on our neighbourhood by changing its character, and on neighbours' properties through shading and reduced privacy. Sub-basements and burrowing can affect drainage and the water table. Commercial developments can also bring increased traffic with attendant parking, speeding and safety concerns.

The size of houses in SAHRA's neighbourhood is limited primarily by three by-law provisions: lot coverage is limited to 35%, the number of stories is limited to two and the overall length is limited to 17 metres. Anything beyond this requires a submission to Committee of Adjustment, and CofA decisions can be appealed to TLAB. Once appealed to TLAB, having a chance of winning requires



South Armour Heights Residents' Association



Website – sahratoronto.com

Email – info@sahratoronto.com

hiring a planner and a lawyer. We have one of each who provide very good value, but even so, recent appeals which have gone through to a full TLAB hearing have cost in the neighbourhood of \$10,500, and there is no awarding of costs even upon a win.

Since 2014, we have appealed 9 times on our members' behalf resulting in 6 wins, 1 loss related to parking variances at a commercial property on Avenue Road, and 2 appeals still in progress. It is worth noting that we didn't hire a planner or lawyer for the appeal which became our single loss since we felt that this case wasn't as important to our neighbourhood.

We will be running an overdevelopment fundraising campaign come the Fall and we hope that you and your neighbours will participate. For the first time, eTransfer will be available.

Jim Sadler, President
Sheila Dunlop, Secretary