



**DISCIPLINE OR LEGAL PERSECUTION?
PICKERING COUNCIL MEMBER
RECEIVES 8TH PAY SUSPENSION
OVER CROWDSOURCED FUNDS**

PICKERING - It appears that City of Pickering Council is at it again when it comes to going after Councillor Lisa Robinson. Robinson with over a year without pay... has faced several pay suspensions in the past for violating council's code of conduct. In this instance, she was found to have violated the gifts policy. After an investigation by the integrity commissioner found a crowdsourcing campaign to be in violation of council's gifts policy, Pickering Coun. Lisa Robinson had her pay suspended for an eighth time at an explosive council meeting where she called the mayor and city council "corrupt" and "evil."

The complaint relates to a GiveSendGo page set up earlier this year, which the report says Robinson promoted on social media, podcast appearances and her website. The page noted the funds raised would be covering Robinson's "living expenses, legal fees and costs associated with defending her right to speak truth to power," according to the report. This in fact is not gift but a donation from concerned citizens.

The report notes that more than \$13,000 had been raised at one point and that this number was later reduced to \$1,055. It concludes the difference must have been transferred to Robinson, which would violate council's policy to not accept gifts worth more than \$500 from a single source. "What's before us is not accountability, it's corruption dressed as procedure," Robinson said of the charge against her at an explosive council meeting on Monday. "You guys would rather see me lose my house and not be able to provide for my family because good people are out there trying to help me out. That just shows how evil you are. None of you belong in this position."

Council voted unanimously in favour of a 90-day pay suspension, which will be Robinson's eighth suspension of pay in her first term as councillor. Including the latest suspension, the penalties total 580 days without pay. At the meeting, Robinson repeatedly claimed there was no evidence proving she had received the funds, such as bank receipts or confirmation from GiveSendGo. The integrity commissioner responded that, in addition to the inference the report makes that Robinson received the funds, the fact Robinson has refused to outright deny she received the funds constitutes further evidence. This in itself is not proof but erroneous assumption by the integrity commissioner that is paid by the City of Pickering. This creating a sense of legal persecution against an outspoken member of council in an attempt to silence her and force compliance. "We have communicated with you in writing and have provided you with the opportunity to respond to our preliminary findings," integrity commissioner Jeffrey Abrams said to Robinson at the meeting. "Despite a number of opportunities to do that, you have not."

Robinson also defended herself by pointing out that a crowdsourcing campaign, like the one in question, cannot be considered a "single source," since the funds come from individual donors. Abrams said that, in accordance with the Municipal Act, he took a "broad and liberal interpretation" of city policies, through which he determined the crowdsourcing campaign violated the spirit and intentions of the gifts policy.

She also accused the mayor of accepting "all kinds of gifts and benefits from developers," but declined to provide any evidence because she suspects it would be "wiped under the carpet" by the integrity commissioner.

Ashe eventually responded. "It's mind-boggling that she uses the word corruption at the same time she stuffs her pockets with cash."

Robinson's eighth suspension will go into effect once her current suspension lapses. It will run from Feb. 19 to May 19.

City of Pickering citizens commented on social media... Terry Trent, stated. "This is an assault/violation against every hard working woman out there. How dare they show such lack of compassion. How dare fellow council turn a blind eye. The fellow female council members are an embarrassment to all women. They should be more supportive. Lisa appears to have character and resilience. For asking the right questions she is penalized."

Mr. T, I was a former council member. I know first hand how some new politicians may be isolated for their views and line of questioning. Unfortunately in this case. It is an extreme. Mayor Ashe should have used more of that he complains against Robinson and diffused this before getting to the point that it is not at. I personally believe that it is an embarrassment to our City. I hope he realize (Ashe), that he may also be in violation of policy for not intervening and helping out a new member of council. These attacks are making our city look bad.

Heather May, stated. "This incident(s) at the City of Pickering border on abuse. A single mother being attacked using all the legal tools at the City disposal. This is shameful and I am sure during the next municipal election their actions will not be forgotten."

New Report Finds GTA Would Unlock Nearly \$1 Billion in Savings Through Uniform Road Paving Standards

New analysis shows standardizing asphalt mix specifications across the Greater Toronto Area would boost productivity, protect local jobs, and deliver safer, longer-lasting roads without raising taxes. As municipalities across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) face mounting budget pressures, a new report from the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis (CANCEA) shows that a simple change — standardizing asphalt mixes across the Greater Toronto Area — would unlock nearly \$1 billion over the next decade. Municipalities spend an average of 7.7% of their annual capital budgets on paving and repairing their roads and each uses their own asphalt mix design. Those variations require suppliers to change materials, equipment, and testing procedures — sometimes dozens of times a day — leading to higher costs, lost productivity, and more waste. This is especially true in the GTA, where suppliers and contractors serve multiple municipal and regional markets that collectively require more than 300 different asphalt mix designs.

Commissioned by the Toronto Area Road Builders Association (TARBA), the landmark study, "Impact of Non-Standard Asphalt Mix Policies in the Greater Toronto Area," reveals that efficiency gains from standardizing municipal asphalt mixes and testing standards could pave 1,800 additional lane-kilometres of road — without a single new tax dollar — while protecting more than 3,000 local jobs and \$140 million in wages. "Municipalities are facing rising construction costs, infrastructure deficits, and tighter budgets," said Raly Chakarova, Executive Director of TARBA. "We can't afford inefficiencies built into the system itself. Harmonizing road building standards is a simple, evidence-based way to make every infrastructure dollar go further — building safer roads, supporting local jobs, and delivering more for our communities — without asking taxpayers for a penny more."

KEY REPORT FINDINGS

Unlock nearly \$1 billion: Harmonizing asphalt standards within the GTA alone would unlock nearly \$1 billion in value over the next decade. Inaction is costly: Failure to standardize will drain more than \$500 million from municipal budgets in the next 10 years — money that could have paved more than 1,000 lane-kilometers — while a slow roll-out would forfeit 40% of potential benefits forever.

Boost for small businesses: Cutting red tape and uncertainty reduces risk and waste, creating a more level playing field that boosts productivity and competitiveness for small and medium-sized businesses, who make up more than half of the asphalt industry in the GTA.

Protecting local jobs and wages: Harmonization protects more than 3,000 GTA jobs and \$140 million in wages, keeping economic benefits within the communities where asphalt is produced and laid.

Bigger gains through broader standardization: Extending harmonization throughout all aspects of road building and procurement would unlock \$11.7 billion in broader gains, help reduce the growing infrastructure deficit, and deliver safer, high-performing roads.

"This study shows asphalt harmonization is about economy-wide efficiency, not new public spending," said Paul Smetanin, President and CEO of CANCEA. "It lets producers raise productivity and helps municipalities complete resurfacing and repairs more quickly, with no added cost to residents."

While provincial standards exist and are managed through the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and the Municipal Engineering Association, Ontario's 444 municipalities have discretion in their implementation and have instead amassed hundreds of varying requirements for how to build and procure similar use projects, like roads, bridges, sewers, and water mains. These differences cost taxpayers millions of dollars more, while reducing quality and productivity and increasing waste and carbon emissions. When every municipality builds to the same proven standard, Ontario gets safer, greener, more cost-effective roads — faster.



The War Amps

The Key Tag Service protects your keys and has been supporting child amputees for 50 years!







Order free key tags at waramps.ca