Incumbent Council Members confirm opposition to Bradford's water corporation

TORONTO (October 21, 2026) — The workers who operate, maintain and protect Toronto's drinking water are warning that City Council should not give up control of Toronto Water an unelected, unaccountable Board.

TCEU Local 416 which represents many of the frontline workers who operate and maintain Toronto's water and wastewater system, has confirmed that 15 incumbents are committed to keeping the system publicly accountable and under democratic control.

These incumbent Councillors expressed concern about handing over Toronto's drinking water system to Provincial control, removing Toronto's say over rates and planning, and increasing debt to pay for critical water infrastructure, which will ultimately lead to higher water bills.

Toronto residents expect water services to be safe, reliable and publicly accountable. Keeping decisions about rates, infrastructure investments and service delivery in the hands of elected City Councillors helps ensure residents have a direct voice in how this essential public service is managed.

Current Members of Council who support maintaining City Council's authority of Toronto Water decisions, rates and infrastructure investments include:

Amber Morley (Etobicoke-Lakeshore), Gord Perks (Parkdale–High Park), Anthony Perruzza (Humber River Black Creek), Alejandra Bravo (Davenport), Ausma Malik (Spadina-Fort York), Josh Matlow (Toronto—St. Paul's) Chris Moise (Toronto Centre), Paula Fletcher (Toronto–Danforth), Jon Burnside (Don Valley East), Shelley Carroll (Don Valley North), Parthi Kandavel (Scarborough Southwest), Paul Ainslie (Scarborough Guildwood), Nick Mantas (Scarborough Agincourt), Michael Thompson (Scarborough Centre), Jamaal Myers (Scarborough North), and Olivia Chow (Mayor)

QUOTES

"Using debt to pay for water infrastructure is a bad idea. It will cost Torontonians more in the long run" said incumbent Jon Burnside, running for re-election in Don Valley East.

"Toronto's water belongs in public hands. We all rely on our water to be clean and safe every day. Giving up local control means less accountability for this essential service and opens the

door to privatization. We can't afford not to protect our water" said incumbent Alejandra Bravo, running for re-election in Davenport.

"Our members are the people who operate, maintain and protect Toronto's drinking water system every single day. They've been raising concerns about this proposal because they understand what's at stake. If Toronto gives up local control of Toronto Water, public accountability, affordability and local oversight will all be at risk. We're pleased that a majority of incumbent councillors are standing with us to keep Toronto's water public and accountable to the people who rely on it" said Domenic Maugeri, President of TCEU Local 416.

BACKGROUND

In November 2025, the province passed the Waste and Wastewater Public Corporations Act (Ontario) which gives creation of business corporations to deliver water services to residents of Ontario.

A recent legal opinion obtained by CUPE 416 states the following:

> *If a municipality creates a WWC, it risks giving up significant control over the way water and wastewater services are governed, owned and delivered, including control over the rates charged by the corporation for providing services to residents. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has extensive powers to regulate and determine the ownership of a WWC, the board of directors, the terms of its financing, the rates it can charge, and conditions on contracts it enters.*

Decisions made by Toronto Water currently require the approval of a majority of City Council. Under provincial legislation, a Waste and Wastewater Public Corporation is controlled by a Board of Directors appointed by the Province and does not guarantee Council representation.

Regarding public ownership, the legal opinion states:

> *City Council can pass a bylaw, but does not have the power to change or over-ride the Ministerial powers to intervene in WWCs. If the Minister decided to change the ownership or control of a WWC, they would have the power to do so. Further, new city councils or new provincial governments can always change the WWPCA to expressly permit private investment.*