

# Community activist is Citizen of the Year

By JOHN BKILA

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Lakeview community activist Jim Tovey is Mississauga's 2009 Citizen of the Year, but he's sharing the credit

with his neighbours.

"I'm really thrilled and feel very privileged ... this is the highest honour a citizen can achieve," said Tovey, who will receive the Gordon Shipp Award, May 21, at 4 p.m. in a ceremony to be held in the Great Hall of the Mississauga Civic Centre. "But really, this award is one for the (Lakeview) community and I accept it on their behalf."

Tovey added that being named Citizen of the Year doesn't mean his work is over.

"The challenge for me now is to show that I've earned this award," he said.

The Harold Shipp Award is presented annually to a Mississauga resident deemed to be a model of leadership and dedication in serving their city.

Irene Gabon, a Sherway resident who has known Tovey for seven years, nominated him as Citizen of the Year. She said the honour is well-deserved.

"He's a unique person because he just didn't complain about what was happening around him, he created a solution," she said. "He's a very dedicated man. The guy doesn't fall back, he keeps going forward."

Born in Malton in 1949, Tovey moved to Lakeview with his wife, Lee, in 1989 and immediately became involved in his new community, quickly getting up to speed on key issues such as planning, pollution and healthcare.

In 1994, while walking his dog near industrial plants, Tovey was

struck by a vision of how the south-east Mississauga community could be transformed.

Eleven years later, his efforts culminated with the closing of Lakeview

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Generating Station, ridding the area of much pollution, and the creation of a plan to redevelop the City's waterfront, which he and the group of neighbours dubbed the "Lakeview Legacy" project.

The bold plan would make view a "destination landscape." plan met provincial density requirements but was also a sustainable and pedestrian-friendly scheme with a mainstreet boulevard park and

continuous access to the waterfront that "put the lake back in Lakeview," Tovey said.

The vision captured the imagination of residents and local politicians, who unanimously approved it, paving the way for the elimination of the Lakeview site as a possible site for any new power plant.

When George Smitherman announced last July that no new power plants would be built, he singled out Tovey and local ratepayers

for their influence.

The first step of the process began in 2005, when Tovey revived the defunct Lakeview Ratepayers Association. After three years as president, he transformed it into one of the City's most effective community advocacy groups.

In 2004, Tovey was appointed to the Heritage Advisory Committee. He is now vice-chair. He's also a strong advocate for Heritage Mississauga.

Tovey has been Mississauga's representative at the Provincial Heritage Conference since 2005. He received a special recognition award from Heritage Mississauga this year for his efforts.



Jim Tovey