

Mississauga Coun. Jim Tovey dead at 68

Peel Brios.

TOVEY, Jim

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Mississauga councillor and visionary behind the city's waterfront redevelopment, Jim Tovey, has died.

"Mississauga has lost one of its greatest champions today," said Mayor Bonnie Crombie in a statement issued Jan. 16.

The Ward 1 councillor passed away suddenly on Jan. 15 at the age of 68. He died while driving home from a City of Mississauga planning and development committee meeting, according to a well-placed source.

Peel regional police Const. Lori Murphy confirmed police responded to an incident just after 10 p.m. on Monday night, Jan. 15, at the intersection of Hurontario Street and Mineola Road, after a vehicle went over the centre median and came to a sudden stop.

Police and Peel Region paramedics said the driver had no vital signs. He was taken to nearby Mississauga Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Neither police nor paramedics would confirm the identity of the driver. However, multiple sources confirmed it was indeed Tovey and he appeared to be returning home from a planning meeting.

A former Citizen of the Year in 2009, Tovey was the mastermind behind the Lakeview waterfront redevelopment. Working with residents in his ward, he drafted a vision to reclaim access to the city's waterfront and establish sustainable, mixed-use communities for those living within Ward "1-derful," as he called it.

"Jim was a community builder whose legacy will live on



Bryon Johnson/Metroland

Coun. Jim Tovey passed away suddenly on January 15. In this photograph, he is thanking the community for their tireless efforts in helping to create the vision for Mississauga's waterfront redevelopment.

through the growth and redevelopment of the waterfront, in particular the revitalization of Port Credit and the development of the Lakeview lands," noted Crombie.

Born in Malton, Tovey was a vocalist for 15 years before beginning a career as a carpenter and heritage restoration specialist. He moved to the southeast corner of Lakeview in 1989.

In 2008, he became president and founder of the Lakeview Ratepayers Association, which became the first citizen group

in North America to create a community-driven master plan for the Lakeview neighbourhood. His work on the Lakeview redevelopment has received two national awards for urban planning.

Tovey was also instrumental in ensuring the Ontario government did not build a gas plant along the eastern waterfront in Mississauga.

"He has been a strong advocate for so many great initiatives in the city," said city manager Janice Baker.

Tovey was elected Ward 1 councillor in 2010. He also served as Region of Peel councillor. In 2012, he received the Queen's Jubilee Medal for his commitment to championing a sustainable waterfront and serving his constituents.

An ardent defender of the Great Lakes, Tovey also took on the Donald Trump administration after it sought to eliminate funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Tovey, alongside Crombie, moved a resolution to reinstate

funding for the GLRI to ensure residents across the province would have access to clean drinking water.

"It is a shock to all of us to learn about the passing of Coun. Tovey," said Baker. "Coun. Tovey worked together with staff to make this city a more livable, vibrant and connected community."

Tovey leaves behind his wife Lee and his son Daniel, as well as a grandson.

"Jim, you are forever in our hearts and your work will live on for generations to come," said Crombie.

Funeral arrangements will be determined over the next few days.

The city will lower flags to half-mast at all city-owned facilities. A book of condolences will be available at the Mississauga Civic Centre starting Wednesday, Jan. 17.

The process for filling council vacancies is determined in the Municipal Act, 2001. Council must declare the office vacant within the next two council meetings. Once declared, council will have the choice to either fill the vacancy by appointment or hold a by-election. The decision must be made within 60 days.