



Mayor John Tory and Members of Toronto City Council  
c/o City Clerk  
City Hall  
100 Queen St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

September 29, 2015

**Re: TE 10.121 Review of Liquor Licence – Muzik Clubs Inc.**

Your Worship and Members of Council,

I am writing in response to concerns raised by some Members of Council regarding the operation of Muzik Event Centre at 15 Saskatchewan Road at Exhibition Place. Most of these concerns appear to stem from the horrific and tragic assassination of a young man on August 4. Prior to that, we were unaware of any serious concerns from Council. In fact, **at the April 24 meeting of the Exhibition Place Board of Governors, Councillor Mike Layton said publicly that there are no complaints from the public about Muzik compared to other similar venues in the City of Toronto.**<sup>1</sup>

The communication from Community Council recites a list of occurrences that have been recorded on or near Exhibition Place. **Not one of these reports has attributed liability to Muzik.**

We do regular professional sound checks around the area to measure the impact of our operations. **These consistently report the greatest source of noise is the Gardiner Expressway and occasional trains.** It's also important to note we normally operate one night a week and are a small operation compared to the numerous tenants and events at Exhibition Place and Ontario Place that produce noise.

Like everyone, we were shocked and sickened by the targeted killing of a man on our patio, and even more so by the subsequent senseless murder of a young woman gunned down on Toronto streets outside Exhibition Place, despite the close proximity of dozens of police officers. This summer has been a frightening one for many of us in this city we love. The incidence of gun violence, targeted gang-related assassinations and attempted killings has touched too many neighborhoods. Violence on our streets, in our homes, outside our hotels, at our schools, in our restaurants, and in a number of Toronto's night clubs has shocked us all. But, it was the murders on August 4 that shattered our community at Muzik.

**The assassination on our patio was the first time such terrible violence has touched Muzik.** There have been shootings at Exhibition Place in the past, sometimes even close to

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<sup>1</sup> Board of Governors of Exhibition Place, Minutes of the April 24, 2015 Meeting  
<http://www.explace.on.ca/database/rte/files/1-Minutes%20April%2024-15.pdf>

our property. But, never before at Muzik. Not once, in over 10 years of operation serving more than two million patrons, has something like this happened before. Muzik is a place where people from all over Toronto, and in fact the world, come to celebrate important milestones: birthdays, engagements, victories in sport and business, or just the joy of being with friends. We have always prided ourselves on the exceptional experience we provide our patrons and we have always exceeded every municipal, AGCO and industry standard for security and safety. We continue to do so. However, the gunshots on August 4 prompted us to do even more.

Within hours of the gunshots, we retained independent experts to review our security plans and procedures, and to make recommendations for improvements. We reached out and met with the Toronto Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police and the AGCO to hear their recommendations. We listened, and we acted quickly to put in place those enhancements before we re-opened our doors.

We know gun violence is a widespread problem in our society and that this summer has been worse than usual in Toronto. We know it is, ultimately, impossible to prevent every determined attack – whether it's in a courthouse, fine dining restaurant, shopping mall food court or a night club. We know the parole system will sometimes fail to keep criminals away from public venues like ours. But, we have done and will continue to do everything we possibly can to keep our patrons safe while they are enjoying the best entertainment centre in Ontario.

**We have already addressed all of AGCO's recommendations**, however, if Toronto City Council feels it would like AGCO to conduct a further review, we have no objection. We are proud of what we've accomplished and always welcome the opportunity to present the facts.

As you may know, **our current lease requires us to operate a night club** – we are prohibited from offering other types of events. **We would like to change that.** We have repeatedly requested the terms of our lease be amended so we can move away from night club operations, and we continue to negotiate with the Board of Governors to this end. **Your support for that change would be appreciated.**

Respectfully,



Zlatko Starkovski  
Muzik Event Centre