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Requires a Motion to Add New Business

July 11, 2019

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee
Committee Room 1, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N2

Re: Accessibility and Safety at the Toronto Raptors Parade and Rally

Background:

On Monday, June 17, 2019, the City of Toronto and MLSE hosted a victory parade and rally, in celebration of the Toronto Raptors' historic NBA Championship win. While the intention of the event was to allow space for all fans to participate in cheering on the team, overcrowding and a lack of clear pathways significantly affected accessibility for fans with disabilities, as well as safety for all participants.

The City has an obligation to ensure that events of this nature follow the provincial guidelines for planning accessible events. Access Ontario directs that consideration be given to concerns such as, accessible parking, accessible transportation, pathways and barriers, washroom access, and seating. While accessible areas were set aside, in front of the mainstage, and on the roof of the skating building, the overcrowding, lack of proper wayfinding and clear pathways, meant that these areas were not truly available to those who needed them.

Mayor Tory has stated publicly that the City Manager would be working with the Police, the TTC, other City divisions and Toronto sport's teams to review the planning protocols for the event, and identify areas of deficiency. It is imperative that improved accessibility planning be included in this review. Events that are planned with accessibility as a core principle must necessarily include protocols that increase safety for all participants. Clear pathways would have allowed for improved emergency response. Comprehensive crowd management may have ensured that area transit remained accessible for all users, and that the unfortunate incidents of stampeding and trampling were mitigated. With the overall safety implications and equitable access in mind, I ask that the City take steps to incorporate improved accessibility planning into future events.

Recommendation:

1. The Executive Committee direct the City Manager to include, in the review of the Raptors Parade and Rally, a comprehensive analysis of the accessibility considerations, and improvement opportunities for future events; such analysis to be completed in consultation with the People Equity and Human Rights Division, as well as the Social Development and Finance Administration's Community Crisis Response Program.

Respectfully Submitted,

City Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam
Ward 13, Toronto Centre

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