

EX14.1.6

June 22, 2020

SENT VIA EMAIL

Mayor John Tory and All Toronto City Councillors
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON

Dear Mayor Tory and City Councillors,

Re: CafeTO and Toronto Patio Concerns

On behalf of Toronto's 83 BIAs, we are writing to express our desire for more resources for the CafeTO program, as well to note the lack of cooperation being offered by Municipal Licencing Services staff to consider alternative patio locations, when CafeTO curbside or boulevard spaces are not possible or applicable. This is an extraordinary time and demands an extraordinary response. Once Toronto moves into Phase 2, our food handling businesses will depend on some form of outdoor dining space, in order for them to survive. Some of our restaurants have not operated in any capacity since mid-March thru no fault of their own.

We are urging the following actions:

- Make CafeTO an emergency Council item and get it passed soonest, so that there are no or minimal delays once Toronto moves into Phase 2. Every additional day it takes is yet another day of lost business to our members. To that end we respectfully ask that more staff resources be allocated to the initiative so that we can support the demand for this program as there is no doubt that a wealth of applications are being submitted including those from BIAs.
- Instruct Municipal Licencing staff to be more flexible and assist in finding patio space solutions. It is our understanding that what is coming before you is a very slightly modified version of existing Private patio regulations. We need some creativity. Some members have space available on side street flankages, rear parking lots and roof tops, but MLS staff are refusing to give these options consideration. We understand that some Councillors do not wish to deal with public noise complaints, but we beg to differ, there is a very different consumer climate currently made up of citizens who want to support local business and want them to survive to keep their neighbourhoods vibrant. It is very short sighted to not at least allow this on a trial/pilot basis. Restaurants would still be held to account and follow strict guidelines as to when they must close the patios and if need be, not to play music after certain times of day or at all. They must be given a fair and broad opportunity to assist their survival.

A creative and forward thinking program has been promised, by the City, to the food handling businesses and we need the issue above resolved as quickly as possible. We need our Mayor, our Councillors and City staff to be flexible, responsive and helpful to our members if we expect them to survive and continue Toronto's reputation as a culinary mecca that reflects its ethnic diversity.

Thank you.

John Kiru
Executive Director, TABIA