

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM11.37	ACTION			Ward: All
---------	--------	--	--	-----------

Keeping Toronto Safe from Hate - by Mayor Olivia Chow, seconded by Councillor Frances Nunziata

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Mayor Olivia Chow, seconded by Councillor Frances Nunziata, recommends that:

1. City Council condemn in the strongest possible terms all forms of hate, including Antisemitism and Islamophobia, and restate its commitment to an inclusive and welcoming city for all Toronto residents.
2. City Council direct the City Manager, in partnership with the relevant divisions, and the Toronto Police Services Board to create an anti-hate package of information available online by October 20, 2023, and shared directly with community organizations, places of worship, religious schools and daycares, such package to include information on:
 - a. hate crimes and how to report hate-crimes and activities;
 - b. City policies related to hate including Toronto Corporate Security's hate event response plan and hate activity policy;
 - c. any best practices on urban design options, lighting, and other measures that promote safety;
 - d. information on support resources available to communities experiencing hate, such as those made available through the Toronto For All public education initiative; and
 - e. any funding or supports that may be available for measures to ensure spaces are safe.
3. In recognition of rising hate and to foster a sense of safety and belonging, City Council request the Toronto Police Services Board to create community safety zones, aligned with their predetermined areas of critical infrastructure and potential targets that are inclusive of areas surrounding places of worship and cultural and religious daycares and schools recognized as a potential target for hate where they will offer to consult with organizations in those areas about steps that can be taken to be and feel safe from hate.

4. City Council request the Toronto Police Services Board to provide an update to the Mayor and Members of City Council on the work of the Toronto Police and the Hate Crimes Unit and post it publicly on their website, this should include information on work:

a. to protect and promote a sense of safety in predetermined areas of critical infrastructure and potential targets including places of worship and cultural centres including schools and daycares;

b. with the Neighbourhood Community Officers, Community Partnerships and Engagement Unit, and the Chiefs Community Consultative Committee in community outreach with community leaders, business owners, media, religious institutions and others in response and dissemination of information related to hate-related incidents; and

c. partnering with the Minister of Attorney General's Hate Crime Working Group and other intergovernmental bodies on hate-related crimes and incidents.

5. City Council direct the City Manager, in partnership with Toronto Police Services, the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, the Executive Director, People and Equity and the City Solicitor to work with local community organizations to enhance and improve safety and security in community safety zones (community areas at risk of hate-related activities), including all places of worship, and cultural centres including schools and daycares.

Summary

Toronto is a caring place and through a continued commitment we are always working to ensure our city is increasingly safe and welcoming. Our empathy, compassion and the harmony in which we live are a beacon to millions from around the world, who seek Toronto out as a place of hope. A place they can feel safe, where they can be free to celebrate their culture, their identity, and to worship without fear for their safety.

We also know that there have been rising levels of hate the last few years and as a city, we are often on the front lines of addressing it. Members of Council know the needs of their residents and work closely with communities and civil society to help foster a feeling of belonging. We are all committed to creating a city free from all forms of discrimination and racism. As is shown through our Toronto for All campaigns that focus on a number of topics including Anti-Black racism, Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and intimate partner violence. The City also has a Hate Activity Policy which condemns the promotion of hatred and promotes an environment without hate.

Hate crime is a criminal offence in Canada. Toronto is committed to human rights and condemning hate in all its forms and so we, as a City, are committed to ensuring our spaces are not used to promote hate towards any group of people. We work hard to protect people's fundamental rights to freedom of thought, expression, religion, peaceful assembly and association, while also working to ensure our public spaces are not used to promote hate towards any group of people.

When ongoing global events unfold, as we witnessed over the weekend, with kidnappings, murder, and targeted violence we know that there can be a shocking rise in acts of hate. In these times many in Toronto are left feeling targeted and unsafe for who they are and/or what community they may belong to. They feel increasingly unsafe attending places of worship, community spaces, workplaces or religious schools. This eats away at our social cohesion and sense of belonging in our city and collectively harms us.

We must do everything we can in these times to ensure Toronto can remain a place where everyone belongs and where people can live without fear.

This motion is urgent because it contains time-sensitive requests for action against hate.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM11.37