

June 14, 2024

Executive Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: EX15.4 - A Governance and Operational Review of Sankofa Square (formerly Yonge-Dundas Square)

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Executive Committee,

I'd like to express sincere gratitude to the City Manager's Office for their comprehensive consultation efforts with board members, staff, and stakeholders. Their findings emphasize the need for multi-year strategic planning, safer, more accessible spaces for organizations of all sizes, and a revitalization of Sankofa Square — not just physically, but culturally.

Having persistently worked towards making public spaces and assets within my ward accessible, vibrant, and governed through an equity lens since my election, I aspire for a future where the Square is a vibrant hub bustling with life 365 days a year—markets, buskers, festivals, performances, and more, alongside an environment that is affordable, accessible, clean, well-maintained, and financially sustainable. As we strive towards this vision, our staff recommendations form a strong foundation.

However, the road to success also requires us to delve deeper. Sankofa Square must serve as an anchor and thrive as a community hotspot. I believe we must offer the Board of Management a more defined mandate and objectives and that we need to also explore other potential non-tax based revenue streams.

While there is a great deal of work ahead of us, the synthesis of staff recommendations and my additional recommendations below set a strong path forward. They align with our objectives of striving for greater access, and equity in public spaces. I strongly urge each of you to consider and lend your support to all these recommendations which were drafted with the support of staff from the City Manager's Office and Toronto Building.

Together, we can support the transformation of the Square into an inclusive, vibrant heart of our city.

Recommendations:

1. City Council authorize the City Manager, in consultation with the City Solicitor, to amend the Relationship Framework for City of Toronto with Yonge-Dundas Square Board as follows:
 - a. amend section 1.1, Background, to reflect City Council's decisions on the renaming of Yonge Dundas Square to Sankofa Square, including the objectives and process that led to the decision;
 - b. amend section 2.1, Mandate of the Yonge-Dundas Square Board, by deleting paragraph c) "to develop a sponsorship program" and substituting "to develop a 5-year strategic plan";
 - c. amend Item 3.1, Matters Requiring Council Approval, by adding "any naming, renaming, or corporate naming" of the Square;
 - d. amend Article 3.2 – Matters Delegated to the Board as set out below:
 - i. delete paragraph b) and replace it with "developing a long-term needs assessment with regard to capital maintenance and repairs of the Square";
 - ii. amend paragraph d) to add the words "giving consideration to matters of community access, inclusion and affordability" after the words "fees and charges";
 - iii. amend paragraph e) to add the words "and developing a strategic plan and updating that plan every 5 years" after the words "every year"; and
 - iv. add the following new paragraph:
 - h. establishing performance objectives and conducting an annual performance evaluation of the General Manager.
 - e. amend Article 5, City Board, to reflect the current composition and membership of the Board and the City's public appointments policy; and

- f. amend Article 8.1.4 to add the words “and provides training to the Board on City of Toronto priorities and policies as required by the City or requested by the Board” after the words “including the Board”.

Respectfully submitted,



Chris Moise
City Councillor
Ward 13 - Toronto Centre

CM/tj