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May 21, 2024

Mr. John Elvidge, City Clerk
City Clerk's Office
100 Queen Street West
12th Floor, West Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Elvidge,

Re: Administrative Inquiry Regarding Yonge Dundas Square Initiative

Councillor Holyday submitted an Administrative Inquiry to seek information on the renaming of Yonge-Dundas Square. This letter provides a response to this request. It has been developed in collaboration with Yonge-Dundas Square Management.

Response

Please find below responses to each of the questions submitted.

1. What is the status of the adoption of the new name?

City Council on December 13, 2023 adopted [Item 2023.MM13.29, Confronting the Legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: Renaming Civic Assets Bearing the Henry Dundas Name](#) to rename Yonge-Dundas Square to Sankofa Square, and directed Yonge-Dundas Square to adopt the new name and to report back on adoption and implementation of the new name with the City staff report on the City's governance and operational review of the Square.

As directed by City Council, the Yonge-Dundas Square (YDS) Board approved the Square's name to Sankofa Square at its February 15, 2024 meeting. Further, the YDS Board held a special meeting on May 15, 2024 and adopted an implementation strategy to rebrand the Square with the new name and to report back to Council with the report on the Governance and Operational Review. The Board's adoption of the name and its implementation strategy will be brought forward in June to Executive Committee and City Council, in conjunction with the report from City staff on the governance of the Square.

2. What is the status of the design, fabrication, and installation of the new signage?

The “Yonge-Dundas Square” physical signage was decommissioned on May 13, 2024. Design and fabrication of the new signage will be undertaken in conjunction with re-branding to Sankofa Square. This will include brand strategy development and the design of a new brand identity (logo).

3. Is the new signage being fabricated in-house or externally? If external, how was the vendor selected?

New signage will be fabricated externally, as the ability to carry out this function does not exist in-house. The vendor will be selected by the Square by obtaining quotes from a minimum of three suppliers. Selection criteria will be based on cost, experience, and ability to meet production and installation timelines.

4. What is the total cost and amount spent to date of the design, fabrication, and installation of the new signage?

The cost to decommission current onsite signage was \$7,910. No other costs have been incurred to date. The Square estimates that the design, fabrication, and installation of new signage will cost in the range of \$105,000 to \$200,000.

5. Are there any additional costs associated with the renaming of the square, and what are they?

The Square has identified additional potential costs associated with renaming the Square, including:

- **Branding**: Development of the Sankofa Square brand including a brand strategy, brand identity, and supporting marketing, communications, and outreach campaign.
- **Programming**: Events and activations delivered in partnership with other festival and arts organizations including those that are active in the African-Canadian and other communities.
- **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion**: The Board supports accelerated investments in DEI in conjunction with renaming to support organizational strategy, Board and staff training, supplier awareness, talent development. These investments will help confront anti-Black racism and support reconciliation.

These elements are estimated to cost between \$300,000 and \$600,000 and may be scaled back based on the availability of funding raised by the Square through financial partners and in-kind support.

6. What are the specific funding sources of the new signage or additional costs?

As outlined in the [2024 Budget Notes for YDS](#), the 2024 Capital Budget for YDS includes \$105,000 for new signage, funded by Section 37 funds from the local ward. In addition, the 2024 Operating Budget includes \$230,000 for marketing, communication and a rebranding campaign for the new name, also funded by Section 37 funds from the local ward.

Any additional costs above the \$335,000 included in the 2024 Budget for YDS will be funded directly by the Square through third-party financial partners and in-kind support. If this funding is not available, the Board will scale back initiatives related to renaming to align with available funds. Any adjustments to funding requirements will be reviewed and considered as part of the 2025 budget process.

7. When is the new signage expected to be installed?

The new Sankofa Square signage is expected to be installed by the end of 2024.

Sincerely,



Paul Johnson
City Manager

cc:
Julian Sleath, General Manager, Yonge-Dundas Square
Stephen Conforti, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer