

**Public Consultation for a Proposed Demonstrations
Bylaw to Protect Vulnerable Institutions**

City of Toronto

Discovery and Summary Report
May 12, 2025



Introduction

This document is a discovery and summary report outlining the collection of shared experiences, feedback and input emerging from public consultations from April 16 to May 5, 2025, regarding the City of Toronto's Proposed Demonstrations Bylaw to Protect Vulnerable Institutions.

Third-party, external consultant NBAU and its partner Narrative Research co-designed the public consultation process with the City of Toronto. These listening sessions were based on two formats of stakeholder engagement. The first was Community-Focused Discussion Sessions inviting community-specific groups and organizations to voice their experiences and input. The second was Public Consultation Sessions inviting the public at-large to share their feedback and perspectives.

Engagement Tactics

- Leverage public online survey interim results.
- Host two online Public Consultation Sessions – available to all Torontonians.
- Community-Focused Discussion Sessions engaging Indigenous, Black, equity-deserving community members, as well as community groups and organizations, unions and labour organizations, civil liberties groups, faith-based groups and human rights groups.

The discussions centered on a potential proposed bylaw regarding demonstrations near certain locations described as vulnerable institutions as per direction from Toronto City Council to City of Toronto staff. The format of these sessions was a listening model: facilitators posed open-ended questions and collected unfiltered feedback without offering policy responses or recommendations.

Questions were posed on topics including:

- Demonstrations
- Safety
- Vulnerable Institutions
- Barriers and Access to Certain Locations
- Charter of Rights and Freedoms

This report includes anonymized quotes and key themes of experiences, feedback and input. No individual names have been included in this report. However, organization names have been included with consent.

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1. Executive Summary

The Public Consultation Sessions and Community-Focused Discussion Sessions – both online and in-person – took place as listening sessions hosting members of the public, as well as community-specific equity-deserving groups, Indigenous community, Black community, 2SLGBTQ+ community, legal and civil liberties groups, human rights organizations, faith-based groups, youth, seniors, environmental sector, unions and labour organizations, and public transit advocates.

Methods:

1. Community-Focused Discussion Sessions: hosted and facilitated by NBAU with City staff in attendance only by request from the group. The sessions were:

- either in-person or virtual, depending on the preference of the group
- open conversations through a co-developed Discussion Guide with open-ended questions on the following topics:
 - demonstrations
 - safety
 - vulnerable institutions
 - barriers and access to certain locations
 - Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Community-Focused Discussion Sessions were held with directed outreach to Indigenous, Black, equity-deserving groups, 2SLGBTQ+, racialized communities, newcomers, youth, seniors, legal and civil liberties groups, human rights organizations, faith-based groups, environmental sector, unions and labour organizations, public transit and climate justice advocates. Some groups reached out directly to the City of Toronto to be included in a discussion.

2. Public Consultation Sessions: two virtual Zoom sessions took place on April 22, 2025 and April 30, 2025 that included:

- polls and open-ended chat questions to gather input on public's experience with and perspectives on demonstrations and vulnerable institutions;
- reflection on the online survey response data received to-date;
- open-ended questions on important considerations for the City in developing a proposed bylaw;

Registration for the Public Consultation Sessions was posted online on toronto.ca/PublicConsult and registrants were required to enter a Toronto postal code.

Results:

Voices were heard from 70 community groups or organizations, 108 representatives of those groups and 192 members of the public during a total of 18 sessions.

While a small number of participants expressed support, the majority of voices in both the Public Consultation Sessions and Community-Focused Discussion Sessions strongly opposed a potential proposed bylaw.

Although supportive of the goal of public safety, participants stated concerns that a potential proposed bylaw would:

- infringe on Charter-protected rights
- limit freedom of speech and peaceful assembly
- have enforcement issues
- disproportionately impact marginalized communities
- duplicate existing laws

Critical comments were made regarding unclear or vague terminology. Many participants emphasized that vigils, rallies and protests are peaceful, community-led tools for freedom of expression and not inherently threatening. Some participants stated that a potential proposed bylaw could be misapplied or be an over-reach by the City, and that the police already have broad existing powers to address safety concerns at demonstrations and protests.

Some participants supported the idea of protections around institutions facing hate or harassment. Largely, these voices were from faith-based communities. Others stated a potential proposed bylaw was reactionary and would suppress civic engagement rather than promote it.

Participants also called for alternatives such as public education, targeted community investments and clearer enforcement of current laws. The sessions largely reflected a unified defense of demonstration and protest as a democratic right, essential to accountability, freedom of expression, healing and social change.

2. Participation by the Numbers

Two Public Virtual Consultation Sessions	
Dates	April 22 and April 30
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• April 22: 123 Toronto residents registered; 61 participated• April 30: 251 Toronto residents registered; 131 participated

16 Community-Focused In-person and Virtual Discussion Sessions	
Timeline	April 16 – May 5
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 70 community groups or organizations• 108 individual representatives

3. Community-Focused Discussion Sessions: Summary of Participation

Overview

The 16 listening sessions hosting 70 community groups and organizations were broadly diversified in the outreach and gathering of multiple communities. These included Indigenous, Black, equity-deserving groups, 2SLGBTQ+, racialized communities, newcomers, youth, seniors, legal and civil liberties groups, human rights organizations, faith-based groups, environmental sector, unions, public transit and climate justice advocates.

Participants shared wide-ranging experiences and feedback on topics including Charter rights, the definition of vulnerable institutions, infringement of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, existing powers and laws, disproportionate impact to racialized and marginalized communities, constitutional challenge, police enforcement and penalties, implementation and the reasons why this potential proposed bylaw has emerged.

Participating Community Groups or Organizations

*two organizations chose to remain anonymous and are not included in this list.

2 Spirited People of the 1st Nations
Aboriginal Legal Services
ACORN Toronto
African-Canadian Coalition of Community Organizers
Anduhyaun Inc
Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts
ATU Transit Union Local 113
Beth Tikvah Synagogue
Bialik Hebrew Day School
Black Legal Action Centre
Call Auntie
Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration
Canadian Civil Liberties Association
Canadian Climate Challenge
Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs
Chapel in the Park United Church
ClimateFast
CUPE Local 79
David Suzuki Foundation
ENAGB Youth Agency - "Eshkiniigjik Naandwechigegamig – A Place for Healing Our Youth" – "Aabiish Gaa Binjibaaying – Where Did We Come From?"
Fridays for Future Toronto
Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Homes

Greenpeace Canada
Harriet Tubman Community Organization
Health Workers Alliance for Palestine
Hillel Ontario
If Not Now
Independent Jewish Voices
International Muslims Org
Islamic Foundation of Toronto
Islamic Society of North America
Jewish Faculty Network at York University
Jews Say No to Genocide
Kehillat Shaarei Torah, Toronto synagogue
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services
Leo Baeck Day School
LGBT Youthline
Madina Masjid - Jamiatul Muslemin of Toronto
Miles Nadal JCC
Miziwe Biik Development Corporation
National Council of Canadian Muslims
Ontario Federation of Labour
OPSEU
Paul Penna DJDS
Prosserman JCC / Schwartz-Reisman Centre
Queers for Palestine
Ripple Effect Circle
Scarborough Muslim Association
Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!)
Tanenbaum CHAT
The 519
The Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto
The Neighbourhood Group
Toronto & York Region Labour Council
Toronto & York Region Métis Council
Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC)
Toronto and Region Islamic Congregation Islamic Centre
Toronto Centre for Palestine
Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre
Toronto Environmental Alliance
Toronto Islamic Centre
TTC Riders
Ubuntu
UNITE HERE 75
United Steel Workers Toronto Area Council
Urban Indigenous Education Centre
Wigwamen Incorporated
World Beyond War

Voices at a Glance

Broad Opposition

Across all sectors – labour, youth, faith-based, LGBTQ+, environmental, Indigenous, and racialized communities – participants opposed a potential proposed bylaw.

Faith-Based Community of Support

The singular community voice of support for a proposed bylaw was from representatives of Jewish groups or organizations. However, voices within that one faith-based community were divergent. In fact, several were opposed to a potential proposed bylaw.

Charter Rights at Risk

Widespread concern that a potential proposed bylaw would infringe on rights to protest, especially for those without institutional power.

Disproportionate Impact

Marginalized and equity-deserving groups could bear the brunt of enforcement, compounding existing systemic inequities.

Distrust of Process

Criticism of the consultation timeline and transparency.

Alternative Solutions

Public education, improved policing responses and non-legislative tools over restrictive bylaws.

High Legal Risk

Legal experts, civil society representatives and union leaders stated that a potential proposed bylaw would most certainly face constitutional challenges.

Defense of Protest

Demonstrations were described as a vital, empowering tool for social change and community expression – not a threat.

Key Findings

Demonstrations

- “A protest is a public collective expression. By definition, it will be disruptive. That does not make a protest unpeaceful.”

Participants across nearly every session reiterated that demonstrations – including vigils and rallies – are a vital form of civic expression. Many described these actions as essential to community healing, justice work and advocacy. Indigenous community representatives shared experiences as defenders of land and participating in protest marches and vigils in front of religious institutions.

- “We’re fighting for the right to be heard, and this is silencing us.”

Several participants highlighted that their demonstrations are consistently peaceful and rooted in education. Others acknowledged that while protests can be disruptive, it is sometimes necessary to draw attention to urgent injustice.

Some participants advocated for greater regulation of demonstrations that create fear or incite hate near places of worship or faith-based organizations.

- “We certainly had hate-filled signs. After October 7, there was defacement of hostage kidnapping signs in this neighborhood, creating quite a sense of fear.”

Vulnerable Institutions

- “This is a slippery slope, and it feels like it’s pointed directly at us.”

The term “vulnerable institutions” was a frequent point of debate. Many questioned its vagueness, asking for clearer definitions or criteria. While participants agreed that spaces like hospitals, schools and places of worship require protection, several warned that overbroad definitions could open the door to restricting protest near any institution that claims harm.

- “Any of our properties are close to ‘vulnerable institutions’. We wouldn’t be able to protest anywhere.”

Legal advocates and civil liberties organizations emphasized that defining vulnerability must be done with precision to avoid infringing on Charter-protected rights. Others expressed support for identifying institutions vulnerable to hate-based targeting, particularly in light of increased antisemitism, Islamophobia and anti-2SLGBTQ+ in public discourse.

- “People are vulnerable. Not institutions.”

Cultural Institutions

The broad and vague nature of the term “cultural institution” was stated as problematically subjective. An Indigenous voice took issue with the term “institution” as offensive, colonial terminology.

Safety

- "We need to balance safety and freedom. That includes the perception of safety, but also the right to dissent."

Safety emerged as a central concern from both perspectives: participants sought protection from hate-motivated demonstrations, but also protection of the right to safely protest. Many described feeling intimidated by loud, aggressive protests – particularly those targeting specific communities. However, others expressed fear that a potential proposed bylaw could be used to suppress marginalized voices.

- "Safety has been weaponized."

A key theme was the need to protect children, clients and vulnerable service users – especially at schools, health centres and faith-based organizations. Some also stated that police enforcement could disproportionately affect racialized communities.

- "More police means more danger, not more safety – especially for queer and trans folks. We're vulnerable, too. Who protects us from the police?"

Charter of Rights and Freedoms

- "This is a slippery slope, when you start writing bylaws against human rights and freedoms."

Participants referenced Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which protects freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. Many participants stressed that a municipal bylaw must not override federally protected rights.

- "Passing this bylaw will create more legal battles than safety – it's going to clash with the Charter of Rights."

Others stated that the Charter's guarantees must be balanced with public interest, and that existing criminal law already provides mechanisms for dealing with harmful or violent protest. Many voiced that the City would be setting precedent for overreach, especially in politically charged contexts.

- "Why is this bylaw even necessary if we already have protections against hate and violence in the Charter and Criminal Code?"

Distance and Noise

What constitutes "near" a vulnerable institution was a frequent discussion. Participants sought clarity on distance; some supported a fixed buffer (e.g. 100 metres, similar to other cities), while others suggested that context, not fixed distance, should guide enforcement. Some noted that aggressive use of megaphones, sirens and chanting – even from a legal distance – can be deeply disruptive or traumatizing. Addressing noise and intent as much as geography was suggested to be included for discretion and review.

Existing Laws and Police Powers

- “It is incorrect to say that police are powerless at protests in absence of physical violence. They can and should intervene in case of threats to physical safety. They do not need a new bylaw to do that.”

A common statement was that current laws addressing unlawful, illegal, hate-based activities are sufficient. There is no need for further redundant or overreaching powers.

- “Who holds the City accountable when it misuses its own laws?”

Enforcement and Implementation

- “The bylaw is only good as its enforcement – that is the key.”

Participants stated the importance of how, if passed, a potential proposed bylaw would be set in place. Several voices stated how impossible such a bylaw would be to enforce and the unrealistic financial resources it would cost to the City and taxpayers.

- “There must be a clear complaint and enforcement process.”

Alternative Approaches and Solutions

“To truly protect vulnerable institutions, fund education, awareness and community responses – not restrictive laws.”

Several voices stated that the City would do well to use its resources in other more meaningful and effective ways such as education and awareness. Participants also cited issues of homelessness, poverty, discrimination as factors that require more urgent attention.

Verbatims

Youth Community

- “This is teaching our children that their voices don’t matter.”
- “Why is this bylaw important right now? There are already laws against violence and hate speech – why do we need another one?”
- “People are more vulnerable than buildings. That’s where protection needs to start.”
- “This bylaw could be used against the very people it claims to protect.”
- “If you want to support vulnerable communities, give us housing and food – not fines.”
- “Youth under the age of 18 don’t have the right to vote. So protesting is how they get their views heard.”

2SLGBTQ+ Community

- “Vigils are part of being a community – mourning and protesting are very different.”
- “To truly protect vulnerable institutions, we need to fund education, awareness and community responses – not restrictive laws.”
- “There’s a big difference between feeling unsafe and being unsafe.”
- “Even LGBTQ+ folks might need to protest against LGBTQ+ institutions that aren’t serving them.”

Indigenous Community

- “This diminishes self-determination. Consultation doesn’t mean consent. This form of consultation is not respectful.”
- “Find pathways forward. Every day the City makes decisions that affect us, without us.”
- “We will not allow bylaws that stop our ability to gather and demonstrate.”
- “This is an extremely dangerous way to go. There are other ways.”
- “We stood in front of those Catholic churches – not to harm, but to defend the rights of our people and the spirits of the children who never made it home.”
- “Our names will be on the line. I’m not looking forward to that. But we’re going to continue defending the land.”

Black Community

- “Protesting is the only way that we can be heard. Why are they trying to take away our spaces?”

- “This is a bandaid for a bigger problem. This isn’t about safety – it’s about silencing us.”
- “Why are religious institutions being protected when they’ve historically been the oppressors?”
- “As an African, I do not have the luxury to protest without fearing for my life.”
- “Why now? What is happening –or about to happen—that this bylaw needs to be rushed through?”

Faith-Based Community

- "Everyone has the right to protest – but that doesn’t mean it has to be in front of a synagogue."
- "The bylaw wouldn’t prevent protest – it would relocate it."
- “We support the bylaw, but access and safety must come first.”
- “This is not about safety – it’s about controlling who gets to speak and who doesn’t.”
- “This is giving special protection to some, while opening others up to danger.”
- “If this is truly about safety, where was the consultation with the Muslim community before now?”
- “The City should not sacrifice civil liberties to give a false sense of security.”
- “We stand against hate, but we also stand for freedom of expression. The two are not mutually exclusive.”
- "This is not written for another community – this is an attack on the Muslim community."
- "You cannot infringe on someone else’s rights because you are uncomfortable but still safe."
- "Fascism."
- “We certainly had hate-filled signs. After October 7, there was defacement of hostage kidnapping signs in this neighborhood, creating quite a sense of fear.”

Unions & Labour

- “If this bylaw passes, we will challenge it in court.”
- “Our members don’t have the luxury of silence. Their lives and jobs are on the line.”
- “The most vulnerable aren’t institutions – they’re the people who work in them.”
- “This is a solution in search of a problem.”

- “Unequivocally unacceptable.”
- “It would be much more meaningful if the city came with evidence and information as to why the city is proposing this bylaw.”
- “This is violating workers’ rights and Charter rights.”
- “What is the evidence that there is a problem, why is there a need for this bylaw?”

Legal and Civil Liberties

- “It is incorrect to say that police are powerless at protests in absence of physical violence. They can and should intervene in case of threats to physical safety. They do not need a new bylaw to do that.”
- “Protests are a good thing. They’re a form of freedom of expression and a way to shape policy.”
- Bubble zone bylaws prohibiting offensive or disruptive – yet peaceful – protests unnecessarily limit constitutional rights.
- “A better use of resources would be to educate folks about the right way to protest – and what the consequences are.”
- “There is no constitutional right not to be offended in a democracy.”
- “Protest is a public expression. By definition, it will be disruptive.”
- “This bylaw is not only redundant – it may be unconstitutional.”

Education Sector

- “Why is this bylaw even necessary if we already have protections against hate and violence in the Charter and Criminal Code?”
- “It feels like this could be used to stifle protests that are inconvenient, not dangerous.”
- “We need to balance safety and freedom. That includes the perception of safety, but also the right to dissent.”
- “The law should protect both the vulnerable and the marginalized—without silencing either.”
- “This is being used to protect institutions, not people.”
- “This is creating a Toronto that only protects some, while further marginalizing others.”

Environmental Sector

- “The most vulnerable institution is democracy.”
- “This bylaw would make people feel less safe – not more.”

- “We’re fighting for the right to be heard, and this is silencing us.”
- “Our movement doesn’t work without the right to gather.”
- “There are already laws to deal with violence – this is about suppressing protest.”
- “The City wouldn’t have a climate plan if there wasn’t the right to protest. Earth Day started as a protest.”

4. Public Consultation Sessions: Summary of Participation

The following presents topline participation results of two online, poll and chat-based public consultation sessions conducted by Narrative Research in partnership with NBAU – third-party external consultants – on behalf of the City of Toronto on April 22, 2025 and April 30, 2025. The link to register for the online sessions was shared on the City's website, and anyone with a valid Toronto postal code was eligible to attend. A total of **123 Toronto residents** registered for the April 22 session (**61 participated**), and **251 Toronto residents** registered for the April 30 session (**131 participated**).

Each session lasted approximately 60 minutes. These sessions were designed to listen to experiences, feedback and input on a potential proposed bylaw. The format was comprised of in-session quantitative and qualitative polls, as well as questions posed to prompt written contributions via chat.

The sessions were hosted, facilitated and moderated by the consultants. City Staff from the City Manager's Office attended each session for the last quarter of the meeting to hear a summary of the session, answer questions and provide comments.

Noted: Qualitative techniques are used in consultation research as a means of developing insight and direction, rather than collecting quantitatively precise data or absolute measures. As such, results cannot be applied to the overall population under study and must be used as directional insight only. Caution must be used when reviewing tallies across sessions given the small sample sizes.

Overview

As with the Community-Focused Discussion Sessions, and consistent with all quantitative and qualitative data collected, the two Public Consultation Sessions yielded a dominant voice of opposition to a potential proposed bylaw.

Key Takeaways

Strong majority oppose a potential proposed bylaw

- Across both sessions, 77-90% of participants expressed strong opposition. However, it's important to note the potential for self-selection bias, as respondents who chose to participate in the sessions may not reflect the full diversity of perspectives across Toronto.

Opposition rooted in concerns about rights and redundancy

- Participants raised a wide range of objections, including threats to Charter-protected freedoms, the adequacy of existing laws and fears of inconsistent enforcement or political misuse.

Support primarily focused on religious community safety

- In contrast, support for a potential proposed bylaw was primarily grounded in concerns for the safety and well-being of faith-based communities facing targeted demonstrations and others attending places of worship.

Common topics of responses included:

- faith-based communities and religious institutions
- racialized communities
- police powers
- vulnerability of people, rather than institutions

Several of the polls yielded a significantly high expression of experience and views. Four of these include:

Poll 3: Personally, have you experienced challenges visiting and/or accessing institutions because of a demonstration in the area?

- **No: 83% (April 22); 90% (April 30)**

Poll 6: Generally speaking, to what extent do you support or oppose City Council adopting a potential proposed bylaw that restricts some activities within specific distances around “vulnerable institutions?”

- **Mostly or Completely Oppose: 91% (April 22); 92% (April 30)**

Poll 7: If the City were to adopt a distance-based approach for the potential proposed bylaw, what would be an appropriate distance?

- **No distance: 73% (April 22); 86% (April 30)**

Poll 8: Generally speaking, to what extent do you support or oppose City Council adopting a potential proposed bylaw addressing impacts of demonstrations near certain locations such as places of worship, faith-based schools and cultural institutions in Toronto?

- **Mostly or Completely Oppose: 86% (April 22); 91% (April 30)**

Key Findings

The following provides results of the online polls from each session, as well as a summary of the chat contributions.

Demonstrations & Safety

Poll 1: Personally, have you taken part in a public demonstration in the past few years	April 22	April 30
Yes	90%	92%
No	10%	6%
Unsure	0%	2%
Sample Size	41	106

Chat 1: Among those who have taken part in a public demonstration in the past few years, please tell us what participating in a demonstration means to you?

Perceptions include:

- Participation in a rally, protest, or march
- Opportunity to exercise one's rights and freedoms (i.e. from the Canadian Charter)
- Synonymous with democracy
- Opportunity to rally around shared opinions / in solidarity with others
- Opportunity to freely express your opinions / beliefs / show support for or against on a topic you care about / protest a topic you disagree with in a peaceful manner
- Aim is to spread awareness / education on a topic or make change
- Necessary for vulnerable / disadvantaged groups to make change, or to support / learn from such groups
- Often disrupts daily life in the name of change
- Way to be heard by people in positions of power

Poll 2: In general, how frequently do you personally encounter (not necessarily participate in) demonstrations in Toronto?	April 22	April 30
Often (weekly or more)	14%	21%
Occasionally (monthly)	55%	57%
Rarely (a few times a year)	31%	21%
Never	0%	0%

Not sure	0%	1%
Sample Size	42	104

Chat 2: What examples of demonstrations have you seen in Toronto?

Examples of topics of demonstrations include:

- Anti-genocide / Israel-Gaza / Pro-Palestine
- Climate change/environmental protection
- Abortion rights (for and against)
- Indigenous rights
- BIPOC rights / Black Lives Matter / Anti-police brutality
- LGBTQI+ rights
- Workers' rights
- Women's rights
- Cost of living / housing crisis / public services / anti-poverty / encampment protection
- Vigils for collective mourning
- Freedom Convoy against vaccine mandates
- Alt-right / white supremacy demonstrations
- Cultural rights demonstrations
- Animal rights
- Bike lanes
- Grassy Narrows
- Healthcare access

Locations of demonstrations include:

- "Downtown," for example, Bloor, Yonge, Dundas, University
- Bathurst and Sheppard (a known Jewish community)
- "Political buildings," for example, City Hall, Provincial Legislature
- "Squares" and "public spaces," for example, Queen's Park, Nathan Phillips Square, Yonge-Dundas Square / Sankofa Square
- International consulates, for example, US, Indian, Israeli (in the case of internationally motivated demonstrations)
- University campuses
- In front of synagogues, Jewish schools (others explicitly mentioned protests at faith-based institutions are rare)
- Outside workplaces (in the case of picketing)
- In cars / walking / marching / biking around / sit-ins (usually downtown)
- During political rallies / gatherings for other causes / counter protests

Poll 3: Personally, have you experienced challenges visiting and/or accessing institutions because of a demonstration in the area?	April 22	April 30
Yes	10%	7%
No	83%	90%
Unsure	7%	3%
Sample Size	41	99

Poll 4a: Has your experience with a demonstration ever caused you to reconsider visiting an institution?	April 22	April 30
Yes	12%	9%
No	88%	86%
Unsure	0%	5%
Sample Size	41	106

Poll 4b: Has your experience with a demonstration ever reduced your interest in attending programs at certain locations?	April 22	April 30
Yes	7%	6%
No	88%	83%
Unsure	2%	8%
Sample Size	41	106

Chat 3: What types of institutions have you experienced challenges visiting / accessing, if any?

Responses include:

- No institutions / never had an issue accessing an institution
- Toronto City Hall
- Establishments downtown (e.g. theatres, restaurants, shows, tourist attractions)
- TIFF cinema (during Ukraine-Russia War demonstration)
- Libraries (e.g. right-wing protests against Drag Queen Story Hours)
- Theatre showing October 8 Documentary
- Religious institutions / places of worship / cultural events (specifically, synagogues, Jewish places of worship / community centres)

Chat 4: In general, what do you experience when you come across a demonstration in Toronto?

Positive experiences include:

- Curiosity / interest / openness to learn what the protest is about
- Glad / proud people have the opportunity to be heard
- Solidarity / community / support
- Experience depends on who/what group is demonstrating

Neutral experiences include:

- Nothing, just walk past
- Seeing people with flags, signs, marching, chanting in the streets
- Minor inconvenience, not a huge issue / not bothered
- Look for people I know (when I am demonstrating)

Negative experiences include:

- Concern for safety / anxiety / fear / discomfort (e.g. when going to a Jewish place of worship / community centre, in the event of alt-right protests)
- Hearing hate speech / being intimidated

Chat 5: What ways can the City help to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to voice their views?

Suggestions include:

- No change, do not bring this bylaw into effect / allow peaceful protests to continue as is / do not create a bylaw contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Enforce / rely on hate incitement laws / anti-hate speech laws
- City should only get involved if laws are being broken
- Limit police presence, funding / ensure no misuse of policing power
- Continue the current levels of police presence / have police at larger protests
- Allow demonstrations that do not block entrances / exits
- Facilitate increased dialogue between groups so that public opinion / opposing sides are heard

- Community consultations, town halls, surveys, allow public to speak at Council meetings
- Do more to protect cultural communities (e.g. Jewish community) by limiting protests
- Ensure public is made aware of when and where protests are occurring in advance

Chat 6: What can the City do to keep Torontonians safe at or near demonstrations?

Suggestions / comments include:

- Nothing more, they are already safe / safety or lack-thereof is subjective / don't move ahead with this bylaw
- Reduce police presence / disallow police horses at protests / ensure police do their job without becoming over-zealous / danger at protests usually directed by police / address police brutality
- Ensure / allow demonstrations which are peaceful / well-organized
- Educate people about the difference between discomfort, fear, and feeling unsafe
- Have advance notice / communication / signage about where and when protests are taking place / provide community safety marshals
- Communicate that violence is not tolerated / Engage in de-escalation (e.g. using safety marshals rather than police, better de-escalation training from police)
- Have a controlled area where demonstrators can gather
- Provide easy access to medical support / EMS onsite
- Ban use of drones at demonstrations
- Demonstrations that do not meet the criteria for a peaceful rally should be dissolved by police
- Enforce existing hate-speech laws / criminal laws as needed
- Allow protests in public areas but not in front of religious institutions / schools
- More truthful / better awareness in media about what happens at demonstrations

Vulnerable Institutions

Chat 7: What do you think makes an institution “vulnerable?”

Responses include:

- Nothing, institutions cannot be vulnerable; rather, people can be vulnerable / dangerous, inappropriate to suggest otherwise
- Term vulnerable too subjective / vulnerable to what?
- Vulnerability of institutions should not be conflated with whether or not protesting should be allowed
- Institutions that have been the target of violent demonstration (e.g. abortion clinics)
- Buildings primarily for children (e.g. schools, daycares, community centres)
- Vulnerable refers to population who need protection (e.g. elderly, those living with a disability) / associated institutions with patrons in these groups (hospitals)
- Access to emergency services
- Defunding institutions makes them vulnerable

- Religious / ethnic institutions because it is clear what population is inside the buildings (however, some participants explicitly note that religious institutions should not be considered vulnerable)
- Institutions that require more resources than others to be protected from harm / manipulation
- Shelters / safe injection sites
- Institutions that have minimal power in society / that are under resourced (i.e. because of racism)
- Social media / fearmongering can contribute to an organization becoming vulnerable

Poll 5: Which of the following do you consider to be a “vulnerable institution” in Toronto that should be included in this potential proposed bylaw?	April 22	April 30
Child-care centres	25%	16%
City Hall or civic centres	5%	1%
Cultural centres	10%	9%
Faith-based schools	30%	10%
Museums and arts centres	5%	5%
Non-faith-based schools	25%	9%
Places of worship (e.g. church, synagogue, temple, mosque)	25%	9%
Post-secondary schools (college or university)	8%	7%
Public libraries	13%	4%
Recreation facilities (e.g. pool, community centre)	13%	3%
Other	68%	11%
None (option not provided on April 22)*	-	79%
Sample Size	40	104

*The option to select “None” was not provided during the April 22 session. This was an error that was corrected for the April 30 session. Several participants wrote in the chat on April 22 that ‘None of the above’ should have been provided as an option. In lieu, participants were invited to select ‘Other’ in the poll and write ‘None’ in the chat.

Chat 8: What other “vulnerable institutions” should be considered that weren’t listed in the poll?

Responses included:

- None / no other institutions / no institutions at all
- Don’t know / not sure without a definition of ‘vulnerable institutions’
- Commentary that the bylaw is specifically to prevent pro-Palestine protesters from demonstrating in front of synagogues that are participating in the illegal sale of stolen Palestinian land by Israel
- City Hall should not be on the list
- Abortion clinics
- Care facilities for the elderly / disabled
- Hospitals / emergency units
- Shelters / encampments / safe injection sites
- Street cars / public transit
- Jewish institutions (due to recent shooting, vandalism, arson, menacing demonstrators)

Poll 6: Generally speaking, to what extent do you support or oppose City Council adopting a potential proposed bylaw that restricts some activities within specific distances around “vulnerable institutions”?	April 22	April 30
Completely support	8%	7%
Mostly support	0%	0%
Neutral	3%	1%
Mostly oppose	13%	2%
Completely oppose	78%	90%
<i>Sample Size</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>111</i>

Poll 7: If the City were to adopt a distance-based approach for the potential proposed bylaw, what would be an appropriate distance?	April 22	April 30
Less than 10 metres	5%	5%
10-50 metres	13%	0%
51-100 metres	10%	7%

More than 100 metres	0%	2%
No distance (should not be distance based)	73%	86%
<i>Sample Size</i>	40	101

Chat 9: What factors did you consider when selecting the appropriate distance in the poll?

Reasons for selecting ‘no distance:’

- No restrictions should be placed on demonstrating (i.e. bylaw should not exist)
- The route / topic of protest are more relevant to the locations than distance
- Seems unworkable in Toronto (i.e. too many institutions too close to each other)

Reasons for selecting a distance:

- Enough distance to avoid stampeding, being pushed in a crowd, being shot at
- Enough space to not block access

Support / Opposition

Poll 8: Generally speaking, to what extent do you support or oppose City Council adopting a potential proposed bylaw addressing impacts of demonstrations near certain locations such as places of worship, faith-based schools and cultural institutions in Toronto?	April 22	April 30
Completely support	9%	8%
Mostly support	0%	0%
Neutral	5%	1%
Mostly oppose	9%	1%
Completely oppose	77%	90%
<i>Sample Size</i>	43	114

Chat 10: Why do you think that way?

Reasons for opposition:

- The necessary steps (permits, planned routes for marches) are already in place; current laws are sufficient; bylaw would be over-reach

- Restricting demonstrations is a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; concerns about this bylaw as a step towards fascism
- Current demonstrations are a non-issue / bylaw consultation is a waste of resources
- Double standard (e.g. bylaw now but a null response to Freedom Truck Rally / anti-vaccine protests) / concerns that such a bylaw would be applied inconsistently
- The right to peacefully protest Israel's actions in relation to Palestine outside a synagogue should be upheld; criticism of Israel / Pro-Palestinian rhetoric should not be categorized as hate / antisemitism
- In general, if a religious organization does something 'wrong' (e.g. violate international law, allow abuse, etc.), there should be accountability / should be allowed to protest
- Too vague to provide support
- Bubble-zones will cover too much of the City making it difficult to find allowable areas to protest

Reasons for support:

- Fear among Jewish community about going to the synagogue / other cultural institutions
- People should feel safe when practicing their faith