



A New Civic Movement for A Better Toronto

36 Toronto Street, Unit 850 | Toronto, Ontario | M5C 2C6

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December 15, 2025

City Council  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5H 2N2

To Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of City Council,

There is significant and growing public opposition to Item DM35.2, which would authorize the City to reimburse up to \$50,000 in legal expenses for third-party contractors or consultants defending themselves against litigation. The report further directs the City Solicitor to “vigorously oppose” what it dismissively characterizes as “nuisance legal proceedings.”

These proceedings were initiated by concerned residents of the New Toronto Initiative in south Etobicoke, who have filed a \$1 million lawsuit against the City of Toronto, Councillor Amber Morley, and consultant Bruce Davis of Public Progress. These residents are not outliers. They represent thousands of Torontonians living near proposed harm reduction shelter sites who have raised legitimate concerns about deeply flawed public consultation processes—processes led by Mr. Davis that restricted resident participation and show evidence of misfeasance of public office.

Consultants are retained at arm’s length precisely to protect taxpayers from legal and financial exposure. They are required to carry their own insurance so that liability, including defence costs, does not fall on the public. Item DM35.2 undermines this fundamental principle by proposing a taxpayer-funded bailout for consultants whose legal expenses are not covered by their insurers. This is improper and unjustifiable.

Furthermore, it is inappropriate and prejudicial to characterize active litigation as “nuisance.” Doing so demonstrates contempt for residents who have exercised their lawful right to seek judicial review and whose claims have not yet been heard by the courts. Only a judge, after evidence has been properly tested, has the authority to assess the merits of a legal claim. Councillors should exercise greater care and restraint when addressing matters of this seriousness.

For these reasons, I strongly urge Council to reject item DM35.2 and conduct a thorough review verifying that all contracted vendors have adequate insurance coverage for various contingencies. Council should not insulate City-appointed consultants from the consequences of their conduct at public expense. To do so would further erode public trust.

Thank you,

Daniel Tate  
Executive Director, IntegrityTO

cc: Civil society