



Councillor
James Pasternak
York Centre

Toronto City Hall

City Hall, 100 Queen St. West, 2nd Floor, A22
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

March 12, 2025

John Elvidge
City Clerk
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West.
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Re: The growing crisis of public safety in the City of Toronto and the urgent need to seek clarity on the date city staff will present long overdue “bubble zone” by laws to Toronto City Council and protect the Charter rights of those trying to access faith-based and other vulnerable institutions.

Dear Mr. Elvidge,

I am submitting this Administrative Inquiry (under Municipal Code S27-7.11) to obtain information, updates, and details on the decision to postpone a report back to City Council with by laws to protect places of worship, faith based schools, other vulnerable institutions, protect charter rights, and keep the City of Toronto safe from hate. In December 2024, City Council directed staff to prepare and present “Bubble Zone” by laws by the end of March 2025. Councillors have been told this deadline will be missed.

On October 11, 2023, Council adopted MM 11.37, “Keeping Toronto Safe from Hate,” which in part directed city staff to “work with local community organizations to enhance and improve safety and security in community safety zones (aka Bubble Zones), including all places of worship and cultural centres including schools and daycares.”

When no update or report was brought back to Council, a motion was presented to Council in May 2024, to request the Province of Ontario to pass “bubble zone” legislation. Such legislation is in place to protect frontline health care workers and abortion clinics.

On December 18, 2024, Toronto City Council in a 17-5 vote adopted the following motion (CC 24.2) City Council direct the City Manager, in consultation with the City Solicitor, applicable City divisions, the Toronto Police Service and other applicable stakeholders, to report to City Council in the first quarter of 2025, informed by public consultations and a constitutional legal expert opinion on the Charter Rights implications from the City Solicitor, with a proposed by-law, with an emphasis on protecting vulnerable institutions such as places of worship, faith based schools and cultural institutions, that supports the City’s commitment to keeping Torontonians safe from hate and protects Charter rights that address impacts of demonstrations that target people based on their identity as prohibited under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Toward the end of February 2025, media reports stated that the report on recommended actions to address community safety and respond to demonstrations will require additional time to complete. It will not be presented to City Council until after the deadline of the end of March 2025.

This delay is alarming for those who remain unable to engage in their daily routines without having to worry about harassment, demonization, and incitement from hateful mobs. Several municipalities in

Ontario have promptly taken action to protect their residents by introducing by laws to protect those trying to access places of worship, faith-based daycares and schools, and vulnerable institutions. The City of Toronto's response, however, is inadequate. It seems Charter rights are for the angry mobs and not those wishing to go about their daily lives in peace and security and without harassment, incitement, intimidation, and being targeted for hate.

The threats to Toronto's faith based and vulnerable institutions continue. On July 31, 2024, an angry mob reached the doors of Pride of Israel synagogue while a community commemoration event was taking place. On August 18, 2024, the Friends of Jesus Christ Church needed a massive police presence to keep protestors away from this peaceful event. On October 10, 2024, a mosque at Kennedy Road and Lawrence Avenue East was threatened when an individual entered chanting racist threats during prayers. On October 12, 2024, Bais Chaya Mushka, a Jewish girl's school, had shots fired through its front window for the second time. A third shooting occurred shortly thereafter. On November 3, 2024, worshippers at the Hindu Sabha Temple in Brampton were attacked by protestors. Earlier this year a violent protest took place at the Beth Avraham Yoseph synagogue in Vaughan, where protesters called for a worldwide intifada and told supporters of the synagogue to "Go Back to Europe." Children trying to enter a Jewish community daycare in downtown Toronto required a police escort and were subjected to vile racist screams and taunts. These incidents are alarming for the whole region and have damaged the Greater Toronto Area as a safe place for all faiths. It seems the City of Toronto does not recognize this emerging crisis and is not willing to take urgent action.

There is an urgent need to have the following questions answered.

1. What are the ongoing challenges in the public and legal consultation process that have caused this report and proposed by law to be delayed?
2. Which "divisional partners" provided advice to the City Manager's Office suggesting that this consultation process required a more "robust and comprehensive" approach?
3. What is the critical path and plan for obtaining public input for the drafted "bubble zone" by laws requested by Council?
4. When will the City Manager and the Chief Solicitor present "bubble zone" by laws to Toronto City Council for consideration?

Sincerely,



Councillor James Pasternak

Toronto - Ward 6, York Centre
Chair, North York Community Council

