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April 22, 2025

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 Consultation Process for Proposed New Bylaw Addressing Impacts of Demonstrations Near Certain Locations**

Councillor Perks submitted an Administrative Inquiry to seek information on the City's consultation process on a proposed new bylaw addressing impacts of demonstrations near certain locations, such as places of worship, faith-based schools and cultural institutions. This letter provides a response to this request.

Introduction

At its meeting on December 17 and 18, 2024 ([2024.CC24.2](#)), City Council adopted the following:

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.

On March 17, 2025, the City launched public consultation on a proposed bylaw. The City is taking a multi-pronged approach where the public can provide input to the City through an online survey, written submissions, and/or public sessions until May 1, 2025. The public session approach includes community-focused engagement throughout April, as well as two facilitated virtual public sessions scheduled for April 22, 2025 and April 30, 2025. Information

on the public consultation, including registration for the facilitated virtual public sessions, is available on the City's webpage at [toronto.ca/PublicConsult](http://toronto.ca/PublicConsult).

## Response

Please find below responses to each of the questions submitted.

## **Survey**

*1. What measures, if any, has the City implemented to ensure that survey results are not skewed by non-residents' input or by multiple survey submissions made by the same individuals?*

The purpose of the survey is to gather an understanding of the public's experience with demonstrations. The survey does not collect location-specific data to ensure anonymity and privacy and is aligned with City Clerk's Information Management recommendations and the City's Data for Equity Strategy, which state that the minimum amount of data should be collected in demographic questions and that demographic questions be optional for respondents.

The survey does not restrict submissions to only one response per IP address as this may unfairly restrict participation from those accessing the survey from locations such as libraries, as well as more than one member of the same household. IP addresses are considered personal information. The survey includes a mix of closed and open-ended questions to allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

The City acknowledges there are limitations to surveying, which is why other methods to collect feedback are being undertaken through a multi-pronged approach. The survey respondent data will be balanced with other public consultation methods of data collection, such as the written submissions, as well as the public and community-focused sessions.

*2. What is the city's standard for collecting data regarding if a person resides in Toronto as part of any public engagement survey and does this survey meet that standard?*

Collection of demographic data is informed by the City's Clerk's Office Information Collection Unit and the City's Data for Equity Strategy. The City Clerk's Office Information Collection Unit reviews staff-developed surveys and makes recommendations to identify privacy risks and ensure there is no collection of personal information and/or that the survey results cannot be linked to an individual in a personal capacity. These recommendations are based on the business need for the survey identified by a City division.

The City Clerk's Office recommendation is to collect the minimal information required to accomplish what is needed in the survey. The City Clerk's Office reviewed this survey to ensure alignment with City standards and compliance with required legislation.

*3. It is often a City process to collect at least the first 3 letters of a postal code. Who designed the survey, including the decision to not collect any kind of information regarding a respondent's place of residence? If a combination of City Staff and outside consultants, please enumerate all parties.*

The survey questions were drafted by and with feedback from City staff in divisions with the applicable subject-matter expertise, including the City Manager's Office, Legal Services, and Social Development, Finance and Administration, as well as review from People and Equity and the City Clerk's Office Information Collection Unit.

*4. Who drafted or selected the questions for the survey? If a combination of City Staff and outside consultants, please enumerate all parties. Who approved the final survey questions?*

The survey questions were drafted by and with feedback from City staff in divisions with the applicable subject-matter expertise, including the City Manager's Office, Legal Services, and Social Development, Finance and Administration, as well as review from People and Equity and the City Clerk's Office Information Collection Unit. The survey was approved by the City Manager.

*5. Who drafted and approved the website 'Background' section? If a combination of City Staff and outside consultants, please enumerate all parties.*

The website was drafted by and with feedback from City staff in divisions with the applicable subject-matter expertise, including the City Manager's Office and Strategic Public and Employee Communications. The website was approved by the Deputy Chief of Staff, Strategy and Integration.

*6. On such a critical matter, which directly involves freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly –rights enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms – what was the role of City Legal in designing and vetting the questions on the survey, including all of the questions that solicit feedback about how individuals 'feel' about fundamental freedoms protected in the Charter?*

Legal Services reviewed and provided input into the survey questions. As part of the project team, Legal Services is providing input on aspects of the public consultation.

*7. How were email addresses added to the list that would be contacted directly regarding the survey?*

The City developed a comprehensive communications plan to ensure public awareness of the various opportunities to participate in the public consultation. The multiplatform plan included outreach and engagement with community partners and stakeholders, distribution of messaging through City-issued newsletters such as CultureTO, along with paid and organic social media and multicultural ad placements.

In addition, as residents and organizations reached out to the City for information on the consultation, the links to the consultation website and survey were provided in response.

## **In-Person Consultation Meetings**

*1. How many in-person consultation meetings have been scheduled, and are planned as part of the “Public Consultation for a Proposed Demonstrations Bylaw to Protect Vulnerable Institutions”? How was this decision made?*

The public consultation approach includes community-focused sessions throughout April, as well as two facilitated virtual public sessions scheduled for April 22, 2025 and April 30, 2025. Several community-focused sessions have been confirmed and are being conducted, with additional sessions continuing to be scheduled. The community-focused sessions may be held in-person or virtually based on the request of the community participants. An inventory of consultations conducted as part of this work will be included in the report to Council.

The public consultation approach was approved by the City Manager, informed by feedback from City staff in divisions with the applicable subject-matter expertise, including the City Manager’s Office, Legal Services, and Social Development, Finance and Administration.

The nature of the subject matter of the public consultation required careful consideration of the most appropriate spaces and methods to facilitate safe and constructive discussions. With advice from a procured external consultant, several considerations have been factored into the development of the consultation approach including inclusivity and safety, as well as access and privacy. The approach also prioritizes providing safe spaces for the public to provide feedback. The virtual format of the public sessions was determined as the optimal approach to ensure a safe, inclusive and constructive space for the public to provide feedback.

*2. Were any of these meeting conducted ‘by invitation only’?*

The community-focused sessions are being organized through two channels. Based on feedback from Social Development, Finance and Administration, outreach to Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving communities, and community groups and organizations was conducted to determine interest in participating in the public consultation. If interest in participating is confirmed, a dedicated session is scheduled. Additional outreach to civil liberties groups, faith-based groups, human rights groups and other community groups that have expressed interest in providing feedback is also being undertaken to organize dedicated sessions.

Registration for the facilitated virtual public sessions is open and available at [toronto.ca/PublicConsult](https://toronto.ca/PublicConsult).

*3. Who made the decision to conduct the meetings this way? Please list all City staff who approved the consultant’s plan.*

The public consultation approach was approved by the City Manager, informed by feedback from City staff in divisions with the applicable subject-matter expertise, including the City Manager's Office, Legal Services, and Social Development, Finance and Administration.

The decision to have community-focused sessions was made in consideration of the complexity and sensitivity of the topic, and to ensure that the diverse concerns of communities are heard. To ensure the comfort and safety of participants, an external facilitator is being used for all community-focused sessions, as well as the facilitated virtual public sessions.

*4. Who determined who would be invited to these meetings? Was anyone added to the list of invitees at any point, if so, who requested that addition?*

The public consultation approach was approved by the City Manager. Outreach to organizations for community-focused sessions is being coordinated by City staff in the City Manager's Office, with suggestions from Social Development, Finance and Administration and advice from a procured external consultant. The community-focused sessions are designed to ensure the City receives input from communities, including Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving communities, and community groups and organizations, including civil liberties groups and faith-based groups. Additional groups that have requested engagement sessions are being added.

## **Consultant Selection & Procurement**

*1. What was the date when the contract was awarded to the consultant and who signed on behalf of the City?*

The procurement process was by Request for Quotation (RFQ) and Divisional Purchase Order (DPO), in accordance with the Procedure for Using Divisional Purchase Orders (DPOs).

The RFQ included an overview of the required skills and competencies, the scope of services and budget, City and vendor responsibilities, and deliverables. The RFQ document is attached to this response.

The RFQ was signed off by the Deputy Chief of Staff, Strategy and Integration and was issued on March 12, 2025 and closed on March 20, 2025. The resulting DPO for the successful bidder was issued on March 24, 2025.

*2. How was the consultant selected and what other work has this consultant undertaken for the City dealing with issues of heightened sensitivity, or complex constitutional issues?*

The procurement process was by Request for Quotation (RFQ) and Divisional Purchase Order (DPO), in accordance with the Procedure for Using Divisional Purchase Orders (DPOs).

Requests for quotation were sent to 11 prospective vendors, including 2 vendors on the Diverse Suppliers List. The successful bidder was the vendor with the lowest cost quotation that met the requirements of the RFQ. The RFQ document is attached.

The key requirements of this RFQ included:

- Demonstrated experience in community development and engagement with City divisions, community-based organizations, and community initiatives, with a focus on the participation of Indigenous and Black and other equity-deserving communities as well as community groups and organizations, civil liberties groups, faith-based groups, and human rights groups.
- Demonstrated experience with developing and providing safe spaces for community engagement and in-depth exploration of sensitive topic areas with diverse communities.
- Demonstrated experience in working with diverse groups that include Persons with Disabilities, Indigenous, Black, Racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ communities, including:
  - Demonstrated commitment to anti-racist/anti-oppressive practices, with specific focus on Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities.
  - Demonstrated commitment and practice of an Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Indigenous Racism analysis.
  - Agreement to comply with City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy, and the City's Vision Statement of Access, Equity and Diversity.

*3. Please provide a copy of requirements, solicitation document, or similar, for the selection of the consultant for the public consultation.*

The RFQ document is attached.

*4. What information or direction was given to the consultant regarding constitutional issues and the legal aspects of the potential bylaw?*

The consultant was provided with City Council's direction ([2024.CC24.2](#)):

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.

The consultant is aware that the proposed bylaw must comply with the Canadian Constitution, in particular, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The consultant's role does not include limiting or vetting the constitutional feasibility of public feedback.

Sincerely,



Paul Johnson  
City Manager

cc:

Jean Abou Saab, Interim Chief of Staff, City Manager's Office

Mary Madigan-Lee, Chief People Officer, People and Equity

Julia Oosterman, Chief Communications Officer, Strategic Public and Employee  
Communications

Mohamed Shuriye, Acting Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration

Wendy Walberg, City Solicitor, Legal Services