

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM30.9	ACTION			Ward: All
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Requesting Funding Support from Federal and Provincial Governments for Enhanced Festival Safety and Security - by Councillor Mike Colle, seconded by Councillor James Pasternak

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Colle, seconded by Councillor James Pasternak, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Federal and Provincial governments to allocate additional funding for the creation of new funding programs for enhanced festival safety and security, similar to the Federal government's Canada Community Security Program and the Provincial government's Ontario Anti-Hate Security and Prevention Grant.

Summary

On April 26, 2025, eleven people were killed and dozens were injured when a black sport utility vehicle rammed into the crowd of festivalgoers at the Lapu-Lapu Day Block Party in Vancouver, British Columbia.

This horrific and terrifying tragedy calls attention to how local festivals immediately require additional and enhanced security measures to help prevent potential similar tragic incidents by helping to safeguard festival participants including attendees, visitors, festival crew, and volunteers.

While it is critical for festivals to implement improved security measures, such enhancements will lead to increased costs that require additional funding. Local festivals have already been facing growing financial risks in general due to decreasing sponsorship and other increased costs that ultimately put the ongoing viability of these events at risk and add undue financial burden on local municipalities.

The City of Toronto has stepped up by allocating enhanced funding for a total of \$3.85 million in 2025 including renewing the Special Events Stabilization Initiative which supported 81 local festivals in 2024, and the addition of the new Cultural Festivals Funding Program.

In addition, the City of Toronto and the Toronto Police Service will be co-hosting a Festival Safety Summit on May 26, 2025. While these are significant steps forward, bolstering festival safety and security necessitates intergovernmental cooperation and additional funding support.

The City of Toronto and Toronto Police Services can also review policies and protocols for operational issues such as “hostile vehicle mitigation” measures.

Strengthening security measures at festivals will not only help safeguard festivalgoers and staff, but also help sustain the festivals’ ongoing viability encouraging greater attendance, increased destination tourism generating significant sales tax revenue for the Federal and Provincial governments and most importantly, much needed support for local businesses.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM30.9