

April 16, 2026

Mayor Olivia Chow
Members of Toronto City Council
100 Queen St. W., 2nd Floor
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of City Council:

RE: EC27.2 - REVIEW OF TORONTO'S STREET VENDING AND ARTISTS BY-LAWS

On behalf of the Toronto Financial District BIA, I am writing regarding Item EC27.2 and proposed changes related to street vending and artistic activity, specifically the allowance of amplified sound and expanded permissions in the public realm.

The Financial District BIA represents over \$18B in assessed property value in Canada's largest employment cluster and one of the most economically significant and heavily used urban environments in the country.

Our streets and public spaces must balance animation and cultural activity with the operational realities of productive office environments, high pedestrian volumes, critical infrastructure, and the operational requirements of major commercial properties.

While we support a vibrant public realm, we have significant concerns with the proposed revisions:

1. Amplification of Sound

Allowing amplified sound presents material risks in the Financial District. Our narrow rights-of-way and dense built form create an echo chamber that amplifies and prolongs noise. We consistently receive complaints related to busking noise without amplification, and introducing amplified sound will intensify impacts on business operations.

We do not support this change in the Financial District without a tailored, location-specific framework developed in consultation with the Financial District BIA and our property stakeholders.

2. Union Station as a Restricted Zone

Union Station is a critical regional transit hub serving hundreds of thousands of daily users and functioning as essential infrastructure for the city and region.

In line with policy for other public plazas, Union Station and its surrounding sidewalks should be designated as restricted areas where vending and amplified performances are not permitted.

3. Permit Approval and BIA Coordination

Given the direct operational impacts on adjacent properties, we strongly request that all vendor and busker permits be subject to advance review and approval by their respective BIA prior to issuance to ensure appropriate siting that does not conflict with property operations, loading, emergency access, or other operational requirements.

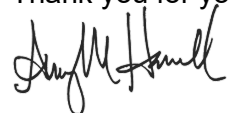
4. By-law Enforcement Capacity

Expanded permissions must be matched with meaningful enforcement, including proactive by-law officer presence to monitor high-volume areas and clear protocols for complaint response and compliance.

A balanced approach is essential. The Financial District BIA supports initiatives that enhance vibrancy and cultural expression, but these must be carefully calibrated to ensure they do not undermine safety, accessibility, and the economic functioning of Canada's most important business district.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with City staff and Council to develop a framework that reflects the unique conditions of the Financial District.

Thank you for your consideration.



Amy Harrell
Executive Director