



To: Economic and Community Development Committee / City Clerk

Re: Item 2026.EC29.12 — Community Engagement Process to Assess Local Community Support for Echoes and Nighttime Closure of Barbara Hall Park

Clerk's note: Please attach this submission to Item 2026.EC29.12 and cross-post it to any new business item on The AIDS Memorial or Echoes that is introduced at the June 9 meeting of the Economic and Community Development Committee.

Dear Councillor Bravo and Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

On behalf of the Community Alliance for Accessible Treatment (CAAT), I am writing in support of The AIDS Memorial Project's Echoes proposal and to urge the Committee to separate the future of The AIDS Memorial from the debate regarding fencing or nighttime closure of Barbara Hall Park.

CAAT is a community-based organization that works to improve health equity, access to care, and community capacity among people living with and affected by HIV, with a particular focus on immigrants, refugees, newcomers, racialized communities, and people facing multiple forms of marginalization. For many of the communities we serve, The AIDS Memorial is more than a physical space, it is a place of remembrance, reflection, education, and recognition of the countless lives lost to AIDS, as well as the resilience and contributions of people living with HIV today.

The AIDS Memorial should be considered on its own merits as a site of public memory, mourning, dignity, and recognition. It should not be embedded within an agenda item framed around crime, disorder, enforcement, or public safety concerns. Even if recommendations related to fencing are amended or removed, the public record would continue to associate the memorial with a narrative that risks reinforcing stigma and undermining its significance.

Echoes represents a thoughtful, community-led vision for restoring and expanding The AIDS Memorial. The proposal reflects years of engagement and has received broad support from HIV organizations, community leaders, advocates, and residents across Toronto and beyond. This level of support demonstrates a clear community consensus regarding the importance of preserving and strengthening this historic site.

CAAT respectfully urges the Committee to:

- Support a new and separate business item on The AIDS Memorial and Echoes;
- Recognize The AIDS Memorial (Toronto) as a memorial of national significance;
- Endorse Echoes as the principal framework for the restoration, expansion, interpretation, and long-term recognition of The AIDS Memorial;
- Direct Parks and Recreation staff to continue working with people living with HIV and affected communities to integrate Echoes into the final design of the memorial;

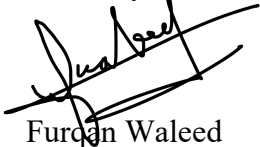


- Remove Recommendation 1 from EC29.12 so that The AIDS Memorial is no longer linked to the debate regarding fencing or nighttime park closures; and
- Reject approaches that displace unhoused individuals and people experiencing mental health challenges rather than addressing the underlying conditions and supports required.

The AIDS Memorial belongs to a community that extends far beyond any single ward. It reflects the history, grief, resilience, and ongoing contributions of people living with HIV across Toronto, Ontario, and Canada. We encourage the Committee to treat this memorial with the respect it deserves by allowing it to be considered independently and through a process that honours its significance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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Executive Director

Community Alliance for Accessible Treatment



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