



Africans in Partnership Against AIDS (APAA) – Mission Possible

163 Queen St. E. 3rd. Fl. Toronto, Ontario M5A 1S1 Tel: (416) 924-5256

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 Africans in Partnership Against AIDS, I am writing to submit this public letter for distribution to the Economic and Community Development Committee as part of Item 2026.EC29.12.

Africans in Partnership Against AIDS endorsed The AIDS Memorial Project's *Echoes* proposal because APAA works at the intersections of HIV/AIDS, Black and African diasporic communities, newcomer experiences, and community-based care. The AIDS Memorial matters to our organization because it preserves the histories, grief, resilience, and leadership of communities impacted by HIV/AIDS, while ensuring that those stories continue to inform how we honour the past and support those living with HIV today.

We urge the Committee to separate the future of The AIDS Memorial (Toronto) from the debate about fencing or nighttime closure of Barbara Hall Park.

The AIDS Memorial should be considered on its own terms: as a site of mourning, naming, public memory, dignity, and recognition for people who died of AIDS and for people living with HIV today. It should not be embedded in an agenda item framed around crime, safety, disorder, and enforcement.

This distinction matters. Committee may amend or strike recommendations, but it cannot rewrite the summary text of the existing item. Even if the fence recommendation is removed, The AIDS Memorial would still remain attached in the public record to an item whose framing is fundamentally about public safety and park disorder. That is not an appropriate civic frame for a memorial to people who died of AIDS and those living with HIV.

Echoes is a community-led proposal for the restoration and expansion of The AIDS Memorial. It has been endorsed by more than 45 AIDS service and HIV/AIDS organizations from across Ontario and Canada, four leading local trans organizations, and the Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association. This is a broad and serious community consensus.



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We ask the Committee to:

- Support a new and separate business item on The AIDS Memorial and Echoes, introduced by a councillor other than Councillor Moise.
- 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 the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, to continue working with the HIV-positive community to integrate Echoes into the final design for The AIDS Memorial at Barbara Hall Park.
- Delete Recommendation 1 from EC29.12 so the existing item no longer uses Echoes or The AIDS Memorial as part of the debate over fencing and nighttime closure.
- Reject the proposed fencing or nighttime closure of Barbara Hall Park, and reject any approach that displaces unhoused people and people experiencing mental health crises instead of addressing the conditions they face.

Councillor Moise's motion created unnecessary harm by tying a broadly supported memorial proposal to a divisive park-closure debate. The community should not now be asked to accept that framing, nor should the repair of this situation be converted into political credit for the councillor who caused the problem.

The AIDS Memorial belongs to a much larger community than one ward. It holds the names, grief, memory, and history of people from across Toronto, Ontario, and Canada. There are people living with HIV, and people who have died of AIDS, in every ward of this city.

The Committee should do the right thing: separate the memorial from the fence debate, support a new motion on Echoes, and allow The AIDS Memorial to be treated with the respect it deserves.

Sincerely,

Fabian Fletcher

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Africans in Partnership Against AIDS

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