



Board of Health
City of Toronto
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

March 24, 2026

Attention: Chris Moise
Chair
By email: boh@toronto.ca

**Support for Agenda Item 2026.HL31.3 at the Board of Health –
March 30, 2026**

Dear Chair Moise and Members of the Board of Health,

This letter is submitted to support the Medical Officer of Health's recommendation to extend the Community Outreach, Response and Engagement (CORE) Pilot in the Yonge and Dundas area of downtown Toronto until Q3 2027.

Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (DYBIA), with a membership of some 2,000 businesses and commercial property owners, and a combined commercial property value of \$7.2 billion, is one of the City's largest BIAs. We note that the business community in Downtown Yonge generates an estimated \$850 million a year in fiscal revenue for different levels of government, including *inter alia*, commercial property taxes.

DYBIA takes a very intentional and collaborative approach to community safety and well-being – and has done so for more than a decade. For instance, we have funded a full-time outreach program since 2018; and since 2021, we have coordinated a weekly partnered outreach program with some eight (8) partner agencies, striving to provide wraparound services to clients on-street.

DYBIA would like to acknowledge that in a neighbourhood where community safety and well-being have been a concern in recent years, the CORE Pilot has made a significant impact on both access to services for their clients on street, as well as a sense of care and safety in the broader community.



The Medical Officer of Health outlines clearly and extensively the benefits of the CORE Pilot on people experiencing vulnerability and homelessness in her report *Health Impacts of Homelessness and Update on the Downtown CORE Pilot*, dated March 12, 2026.

In addition, DYBIA would like to underscore the heightened sense of care and safety the CORE Pilot brings to the wider neighbourhood.

Since 2018, DYBIA has undertaken an annual *Safe & Inclusive Neighbourhood Survey* to assess levels of perceived and actual community safety and wellbeing in Downtown Yonge among employees, residents, students, visitors and business owners. In 2025, the survey – which was undertaken in September 2025, just eight (8) months into the CORE Pilot - asked about awareness of, and interaction with, the CORE team.

The survey found that the CORE Pilot was known to 21% of all survey respondents and 5% had interacted with the team.

CORE team: Awareness & Interaction 2025

	Business owner	Commercial property owner	Employee	Resident	Student	Visitor
Interaction	14.3%	33.3%	10.7%	1.5%	0%	0.6%
Heard of	21.4%	62.5%	27.9%	21.2%	21.7%	14.4%

We believe this highlights the positive impact being made by the CORE Pilot on clients and community alike.

More broadly, DYBIA is dedicated to working collaboratively with the City of Toronto, among others, on initiatives that further community safety and wellbeing in Downtown Yonge and the wider downtown, including:

- Participating in the CORE Advisory Committee since its inception in 2024;
- Co-Chairing the City’s Downtown East (DTE) Leadership Table since 2025;
- Participating in the DTE FOCUS table as an outreach provider;
- Regularly attending and working with the Yonge-Dundas Safety Network since its inception; and



- Partnering since 2023 with SafeTO on the SafeTO BIA program, which is funded through the City, but based at DYBIA.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter in support of the Medical Officer of Health's recommendation to extend the Community Outreach, Response and Engagement (CORE) Pilot in the Yonge and Dundas area of downtown Toronto until Q3 2027.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pauline Larsen', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Pauline Larsen

Executive Director & Chief Operating Officer

