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Communication

Inclusion and Community Outreach

Advisory Committee – June 16, 2025

Item No. 2

Commemorating the Nova Exhibition

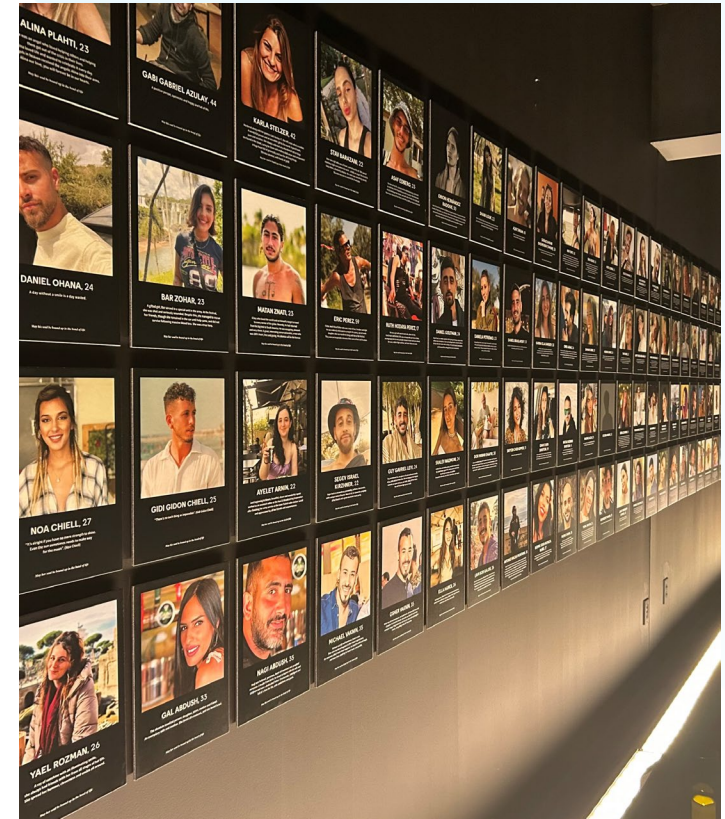
**Inclusion and Community
Outreach Advisory Committee
June 2025**



Background

Purpose

- ▶ To share key highlights and reflections from the City of Vaughan's visit to the Nova Exhibition in Toronto on May 16, 2025.



Memorial wall honouring victims of the Nova Music Festival massacre

Supernova Festival Tragedy

October 2023

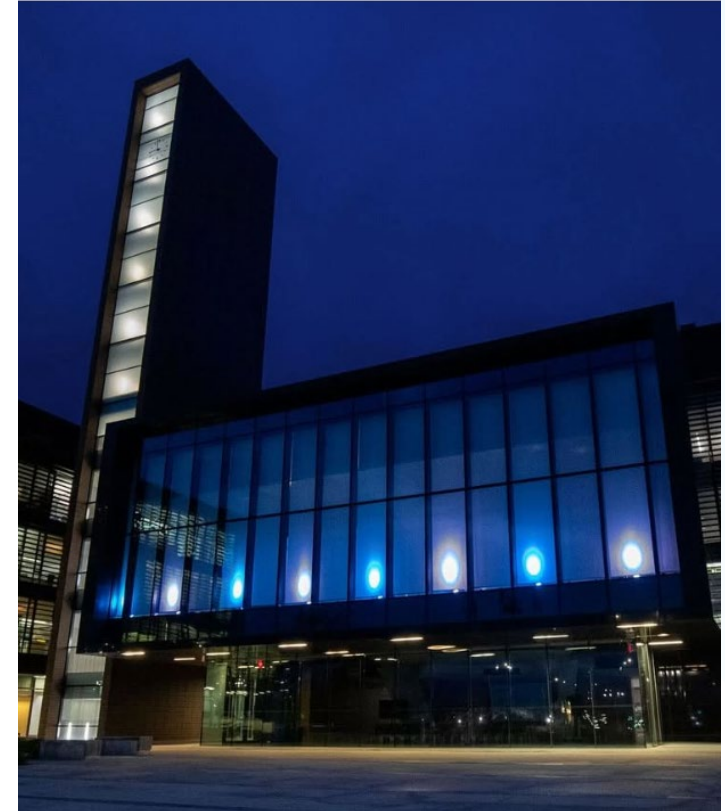
- ▶ The Supernova festival in Israel was a celebration of music, unity, peace, and love, became the deadliest concert attack and the worst civilian massacre in Israel's history.



The Nova Music Festival – A celebration of peace, interrupted by violence

Vaughan's Response to October 2023

- ▶ Members' Resolution (October 2023) Solidarity with Israel
- ▶ Member's Resolution (May 2024) Protecting Vaughan's Vulnerable Social Infrastructure
- ▶ The City of Vaughan became the first jurisdiction in Canada to introduce this type of bylaw.



Blue and white illumination at Vaughan City Hall in solidarity with Israel.

Nova Music Festival Memorial Exhibition

- ▶ Honours victims of the Oct 7, 2023 terrorist attack:
 - 410 killed (incl. 4 Canadians)
 - 43 abducted (22 still held)
 - 3,750+ survivors affected
- ▶ Recreates the festival's spirit of peace and love.
- ▶ Launched in Tel Aviv; toured major U.S. cities.
- ▶ Open in Toronto: April–June 22, 2025.
- ▶ A powerful tribute to lives lost and ongoing struggles of survivors and families.

Purpose of the Nova Exhibition

- ▶ Honour victims, hostages, and survivors
- ▶ Educate the public on the Oct 7 terrorist attacks
- ▶ Raise awareness of the lasting impact on the festival community
- ▶ Offer space for reflection and mourning
- ▶ Support healing via donations to the Tribe of Nova Foundation



Inside the Exhibition Experience

- ▶ **“Lost and Found” Display:** Personal items recovered from the site
- ▶ **Memorial Wall:** Candle-lit tribute with names and faces of victims and hostages
- ▶ **Survivor Testimonies:** Firsthand, emotional accounts
- ▶ **Immersive Installations:** Burned cars, bullet-riddled portapotties, and artifacts from the attack
- ▶ **“Return to the Light”:** Healing circles, public art, and the Nova Heaven project at Burning Man



Burned car recovered from the Nova Music Festival site

Journey Through the Exhibition

- ▶ Visitors explored four zones:
 - Festival Spirit
 - Remembrance
 - Education
 - Healing
- ▶ Concluded in the Healing Room with testimony from Omri Rahoum, a survivor of the Oct. 7 terrorist attack



Memorial table for written tributes and reflections

Impact

Rising Antisemitism

The City of Vaughan's Commitment

- ▶ Post–Oct 7, antisemitic incidents surged across Canada, including Vaughan
- ▶ **6,219** incidents in 2024 documented by B'nai Brith Canada
 - 7.4% increase from 2023
 - 124.6% increase from 2022
 - Avg. 17 incidents per day
 - In-person harassment 58.8% increase (2022–2024)
- ▶ Vaughan is home to one of Canada's largest Jewish communities
- ▶ Guided by the City's [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2022 to 2026](#)

Antisemitism has no place in Vaughan

Combating Antisemitism

- ▶ **Jan 27, 2020:** First Canadian city to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism
 - Proclaimed International Holocaust Remembrance Day
- ▶ Each May, the City recognizes Jewish Heritage Month and holds an annual flag-raising ceremony to mark Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day).



Flag-raised to mark Yom Ha'atzmaut

Combatting Antisemitism

- ▶ Other recent initiatives:
 - **February 26, 2025:** Vaughan City Hall illuminated in orange in memory of the Bibas family
 - **March 6, 2025:** Mayor attended the National Summit to Combat Antisemitism in Ottawa
 - **April 24, 2025:** Hosted Yom HaShoah commemoration at City Hall
 - **May 22, 2025:** Participated in the CJPAC Action Party
 - **May 2023, 2024, 2025:** Mayor attended the Annual Walk with Israel
- ▶ Ongoing partnerships with Jewish organizations to promote inclusion and safety



Illumination Vigil at Vaughan City Hall for the Bibas Family



Thank you!

Inclusion and Community Outreach
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Dr.
Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1

vaughan.ca