RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE FUNDING MODEL FOR EMERGENCY SHELTERS

The Housing Opportunities Toronto Affordable Housing Action Plan, approved by Council on August 5, 2009, requests that the Provincial government "implement a new funding model for shelters which supports a Housing First approach and provides flexibility in the use of shelter funding to establish a permanent program to provide shelter clients with housing supports in the community, similar to the Hostels to Homes pilot" (Recommendation 14).

The following recommendations regarding the funding model are consistent with the HOT plan actions. These recommendations were developed through the review of the per diem funding model and are based on the Alternative Model for Emergency Shelter Funding report, produced by Consulting Matrix in 2007 as well as feedback from the consultations with shelter providers.

1. The Province should eliminate the per diem model of funding and replace it with a flexible, uncapped annualized funding program that supports a Housing First approach and enables people to move more quickly from shelters into housing.

2. The new provincial funding model should be designed to cover actual shelter operating costs and not be occupancy driven.

3. The new provincial funding model should retain the open-ended nature of current shelter funding so that municipalities have the flexibility to respond to unexpected increases in demand due to increased homelessness or unforeseen emergencies that result in homelessness.

4. The new provincial funding model should provide ongoing stable funding at a level that adequately covers the costs of food, board and lodging as well as the specialized counseling, mental health, addiction and other support services required by homeless single adults, youth and families with children.

5. The new provincial funding model should provide permanent, sustainable funding for a program similar to the Hostels to Homes pilot, to enable agencies to provide clients with housing supports in the community.