

From: [Angie Conte](#)
To: [Community Development and Recreation Committee](#)
Cc: [Tim Maguire \(President\)](#)
Subject: My comments for 2017.CD24.7 on November 20, 2017 Community Development and Recreation Committee
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:22:57 PM
Attachments: [Local 79 Council Briefing - Nov 2017 - Shelter Infrastructure Plan and Progress Report .pdf](#)

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the November 20, 2017 Community Development and Recreation Committee meeting on item 2017.CD24.7, 2018 Shelter Infrastructure Plan and Progress Report

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

Hi Carol, please accept the attached communication on behalf of Tim Maguire, President, CUPE Local 79.

Thank you,

Angie Conte

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Council Briefing Note

Brought to you by CUPE Local 79

CD24.7 2018 SHELTER INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN AND PROGRESS REPORT

Summary

The Shelter Infrastructure Plan shows that although some progress has been made with the opening of 201 new beds in the 2016-2018 period, there is still a long way to go to keep up with growing shelter demand, and find new shelter sites to relocate an additional 488 beds in existing shelter programs. The City also needs to do more to address current crowding in shelters and use caution when making systems changes as the province seeks to fragment services in other areas of the city.

Local 79 respectfully recommends that the Committee

1. Include in the 2018 Shelter Infrastructure Plan the opening of 1000 new shelter beds to meet the standard of 90% shelter occupancy across all sectors. This must include low-threshold, harm reduction focused shelters.
2. Direct staff to complete its long-term sustainable plan for staffing in shelters as part of the 2018 budget process.
3. Direct staff to include a plan to deal with overcrowding and understaffing at the Assessment & Referral Centre located at 129 Peter Street.
4. Direct staff to include investments in new family shelters parallel to funding of the new ARC so families accessing this service will have housing to be referred to.
5. Direct staff to include and consult with Local 79 on staffing models and training as the City develops implementation of its new service model in the five pilot shelter sites.

Discussion

Toronto's homeless are under-housed and understaffed.

- More than 5,000 people use Toronto's shelter system on any given night.
- Shelters are consistently above the 90% occupancy rate set by Council.
- At the end of Q2 2017, shelter use by families had gone up 50% from the previous year.
- The last reported staff vacancy rate was sitting at almost 10%.

In April 2017, Council approved the use of \$3 million gross from the Social Housing Reserve Fund (CD19.11) to address capacity during the 2017 – 2018 winter season when shelter occupancy rates go above the 90% threshold. At present, shelters are full and operate at nearly 100% capacity every night. The City must address demand now by opening 1000 new beds to relieve crowding in existing shelters and bring occupancy rates down. CD19.11 also directed staff to report back on a long-term sustainable plan for staffing in shelters consistent with the City's average gapping rate. This has yet to be completed and should be included as part of the 2018 budget process.

The staff report recommends opening a new Assessment and Referral Centre (ARC) directed at families. The City's current ARC located at 129 Peter Street is already operating beyond its scope and capacity. Front-line staff report up to 80 clients sleeping there per night – in a 40 bed space that is not designated, nor equipped to be, a shelter. Overcrowding has led to serious health and safety issues where individuals are sleeping on the floor and in chairs, and conditions lead to health issues and infectious disease outbreaks.

The City needs more shelters and long-term affordable housing. The City should not open new ARC sites without equal investments in shelters to which families can be referred. Currently, there is a zero net increase of new beds beyond 2018. Moreover, the city needs a mix of both purchase of service agreements, and new directly operated shelters.

The staff report also outlines ongoing work with health and shelter sector partners to develop a health services model that will address clients' health care needs, and enhancements to the SSHA case management service model to help move people into permanent housing more quickly. The City needs to be cautious of any changes it is considering within or in connection to the LHIN's, where the province is looking at fragmenting services in other areas of the city such as Public Health. In addition, Local 79 and front line staff need to be included in the development and implementation of service model planning. Through our member engagement and labour management processes, staffing and scheduling continue to be identified as top priorities for shelter workers in SSHA.

For further information please contact:

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