



**Canadian Union of
Public Employees**

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Units
- Service Units

City of Toronto
- Full-Time
- Long-Term Care Homes
& Services Part-Time
- Recreation Workers
Part-Time
- Unit B Part-Time

*Toronto Community
Housing Corporation*

**SERVING OUR
MEMBERS
SINCE
1942**

July 3, 2013

Mayor Rob Ford, Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Ford and Members of the Executive Committee:

**RE: EX33.17 Update and Next Steps of Proposed Redevelopment of
Seaton House and Revitalization of George Street**

Local 79 would like to thank the Executive Committee and the Shelter, Support & Housing Administration (SSHA) Division for the opportunity to comment on the redevelopment of Seaton House. Our members deliver front-line services in the City's shelter system and they know all too well the many challenges that the vulnerable homeless population face.

This Report before the Executive Committee today from the Deputy City Manager, Cluster A and the Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer states:

"The proposed facility will not replace every one of the 543 shelter beds provided by the Seaton House facility. Approximately 100 beds would be replaced in the new shelter, with other shelter residents accommodated either in long-term care or housing with supports. As recommended in this report, other existing shelter beds will be replaced as most appropriate for shelter client's needs and in the context of the Housing Stability Service Plan, which will be presented to Council in the fall of 2013."

We understand the need for the revitalization of Seaton House, and the recommended development partnership between the shelter system and Long-Term Care Homes & Services may hold promise of an integrated model of care for some of the City's homeless.

However, we do have concerns about the reduction of the number of emergency beds, from 543 to 100, without a comprehensive plan to maintain shelter capacity during the short-term, (the transition through Seaton House Redevelopment), or the long-term.

Frankly, and with respect, this is not good enough for those Torontonians in need and for those in our communities. There are many questions that should be answered before support for the Seaton House Redevelopment is approved. Questions such as, but not limited to:

- Where will the remaining beds be transferred to?
- What will the capacity of the long-term care facility be?
- What are the projected emergency beds needed in order to cope with predictable conditions such as cold in winter and heat in summer or other unforeseen emergencies?
- What will happen to the O'Neill program at Seaton House that provides support to first-time homeless men, including newcomers?

The Staff Report recommendations to dramatically reduce the number of emergency shelter beds at Seaton House contradicts the April 2013 City Council decision that directed the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration to:

“on an interim basis, consider activating all of the 172 flex beds available throughout the shelter system, and open additional sites and beds as necessary, with the aim of achieving an occupancy rate no higher than 90 percent in the short term;”

Local 79 would like the Committee to withhold their support for this Report, as it stands, until the Housing Stability Service Plan is complete this fall that will hopefully provide a transition plan and long-term plan for the full 543 beds at Seaton House.

Local 79 welcomes any changes and improvements to the shelter system and services that would improve the lives of the homeless population, but we would also like assurances that the Seaton House Redevelopment does not leave anybody out in the cold.

Yours truly,



Tim Maguire
President