



**Canadian Union of
Public Employees**

34 St. Patrick Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5T 1V1
Tel: (416) 977-1629
Fax: (416) 977-9546
www.cupelocal79.org

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Tim Maguire

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Nancy Murphy

*Vice-President - Chief
Steward:*
Jason Desjardins

Vice-President Equity:
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- Nurses & Paramedical
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**

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February 13, 2015

Councillor Gary Crawford, Chair, and Members of the Budget Committee
c/o Clerk's Office
10th Floor, West Tower
City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor Crawford and Members of the Budget Committee:

RE: BU5.4 – 2015 Capital and Operating Budgets
*2015 Operating Budget Recommendations
Citizen Centred Services "A"
Shelter, Support and Housing Administration*

On behalf of CUPE Local 79 members who work in the City's shelters and hostels, I would like to comment on some of the elements proposed in the Staff Recommended 2015 Operating Budget for the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA).

The City's shelter system needs help – resources, more staff and facilities to meet the urgent needs of our homeless population. Keeping the homeless safe from harm and protecting people from our harsh climate conditions is our moral imperative as a City and for City workers delivering shelter services. The commitment to increase services for some of the most helpless victims of homelessness is overdue and desperately needed. Two 24/7 women's shelters and a shelter dedicated to LGBTQ2S youth were identified in 2014 as crucial supports that were missing from the system.

These enhancements were announced in the 2015 Budget, but we noted with concern that there were recommendations for service reductions in the Streets To Homes Program and the Parks Ambassador Program. After identifying the demand for emergency shelters, warming centres, more beds and the fact that the shelter system functions close to 100% occupancy night after night, any reductions in the shelters budget – based on budget numbers and not needs – seems heartless.

Another concern is the fact that any enhancements and increased capacity in the shelter system will not be directly operated by the City. The new facilities for women and LGBTQ2S youth should be under the direct oversight of the City.

These extremely vulnerable populations, who have been victimized on so many levels, must be cared for in facilities operated under the full control accountability of the City. City of Toronto shelters have developed their own standards and quality of care for the people who have nowhere else to turn. Our shelters take everybody; we just need more of them.

An example of the quality of City shelter services is Fort York Residence, which is an award-winning shelter and a role model of best practices for the shelter system. Why not use the expertise and the experience that the City has and operate the new shelters directly?

As the 2015 City Budget proceeds through consultations and Committees, please keep a careful eye on Shelter, Support and Housing to ensure there are no reductions in service, and be mindful that the City should keep complete and careful control of the existing shelter system and any enhancements.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Maguire". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Tim Maguire
President