



EX 26.2.17

Date : June 19, 2017

To: City Council: Executive Committee

My name is Brian Davis from Houselink Community Homes and Houselink is one of the members of the Toronto Mental Health and Addictions Supportive Housing Network ("the Network") of whom I represent today. The Network is comprised of 27 organizations that operate both city and provincially funded supportive housing in Toronto to individuals living with persistent mental illness and/or addictions. Our collective portfolio is approximately 5,800 units across the city, and our centralized wait list is 12,300. We recognize the important role that Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) plays by housing many of the city's most vulnerable people, including those that fit our common population mandate.

Most of us own and operate non-profit housing, and we know the challenges of both running a viable housing operation and meeting the needs of tenants with complex health issues. With this in mind, we stand with you in your advocacy efforts to acquire a shared and sustainable funding commitment from the provincial and federal governments, along with the City making it a funding priority.

We are relieved to see that despite TCH's financial pressures outlined in the report, the City recognizes the value of retaining these homes and transferring them to either a non-profit or a land trust as **noted in recommendation #5**. It is stock that we will never have again if it is lost. Because these homes are mostly in rapidly gentrifying neighbourhoods, they also fit with the goal of the City to create inclusive communities. Though we've already lost some homes in the past few years, a number of our network members have very successfully used these homes to house individuals and families who need our supports, and fully integrate these households into the community.

We are in full support of **recommendation #6**, a decentralized and innovative approach to community development and local action plans. This speaks to the importance of creating strong local partnerships, especially with a new TCH being smaller with a narrower mandate.

We also support the retention and revitalization of TCH's rooming house stock, since rooming house stock makes up a significant component of a rapidly decreasing affordable housing stock in Toronto. For many individuals in Toronto living on ODSP or OW it is truly their only option. There are a number of our network members, who have extensive experience in working with rooming house operators, or operating multi-tenant homes.

The report identifies that 30% of the stock are bachelor units that are hard to rent resulting in higher vacancy rates and lost revenue. There are a number of critical partnerships between members of our network and TCHC high need sites that can be scaled up and replicated in other parts of the City recognizing there will be regional differences. These integrated partnerships attend to both standard property management performance indicators such as arrears and vacancy loss, as well as community and individual health outcomes. They typically involve individualized wrap-around supports for tenants, on-site staff, and a variety of programs that foster social connections and address the broader social determinants of health.

In summary, with shelters at 94% occupancy this past winter and our waiting list that has ballooned to over 12,000, we all need to act with a sense of urgency. Our members have expertise and resources that we are prepared to leverage to assist TCHC and the City move forward on this plan. We welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss how we can work with you to implement #5 and #6 as outlined in phase 1.

Thank-you

The Toronto Mental Health and Addictions Supportive Housing Network

The Members of the Toronto Mental Health and Addictions Supportive Housing Network:



Pilot Place Society

