

# Improving Accessibility in Shelters

Presentation to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee

April 19, 2018





# Overview

1. Shelter System Overview
2. Current Accessibility in Shelters
3. Work Underway to Improve Accessibility in Shelters
4. Next Steps

# Shelter System Overview

- 63 shelters city-wide
  - 53 operated by community partner agencies
  - 10 City-operated
- Five sectors of service
  - Single men, single women, youth, mixed-gender, and families
- Almost 30% increase in nightly shelter capacity since 2016
- System expansion underway and ongoing

# Current Accessibility in Shelters

- Disability does not discriminate, neither does homelessness
- Significant improvements required within the shelter system to meet different accessibility needs
- Limited number of shelter beds are truly accessible
  - Varies sector by sector
  - Some sites have accessible features but other building components limit accessibility

# Challenges with Accessibility in Shelters

- Physical infrastructure
  - Numerous older buildings - oldest building dating to 1850
  - Very few purpose built as shelters
  - Changes to physical space requirements
- Funding for capital repairs
- Changes in client population
  - Average age is increasing
  - Complexity of need increasing

# Work Underway to Improve Accessibility

- New and replacement shelters are being designed for accessibility for staff, clients and the public.
- New shelters planned for until the end of 2018 include:
  - Salvation Army New Hope – 60 beds for men opened in January
  - Youthlink – 51 beds for youth
  - 3306 Kingston Rd. – 100 beds for senior men
  - 731 Runnymede Rd. – 50 beds for men
  - 348 Davenport Rd. – 90 beds for women
  - Egale Canada – 30 beds for LGBTQ2S youth, and
  - Three additional sites to increase system capacity
- Mandatory training
  - More than just Ramps – Working with People with Disabilities

# Accessibility Audits

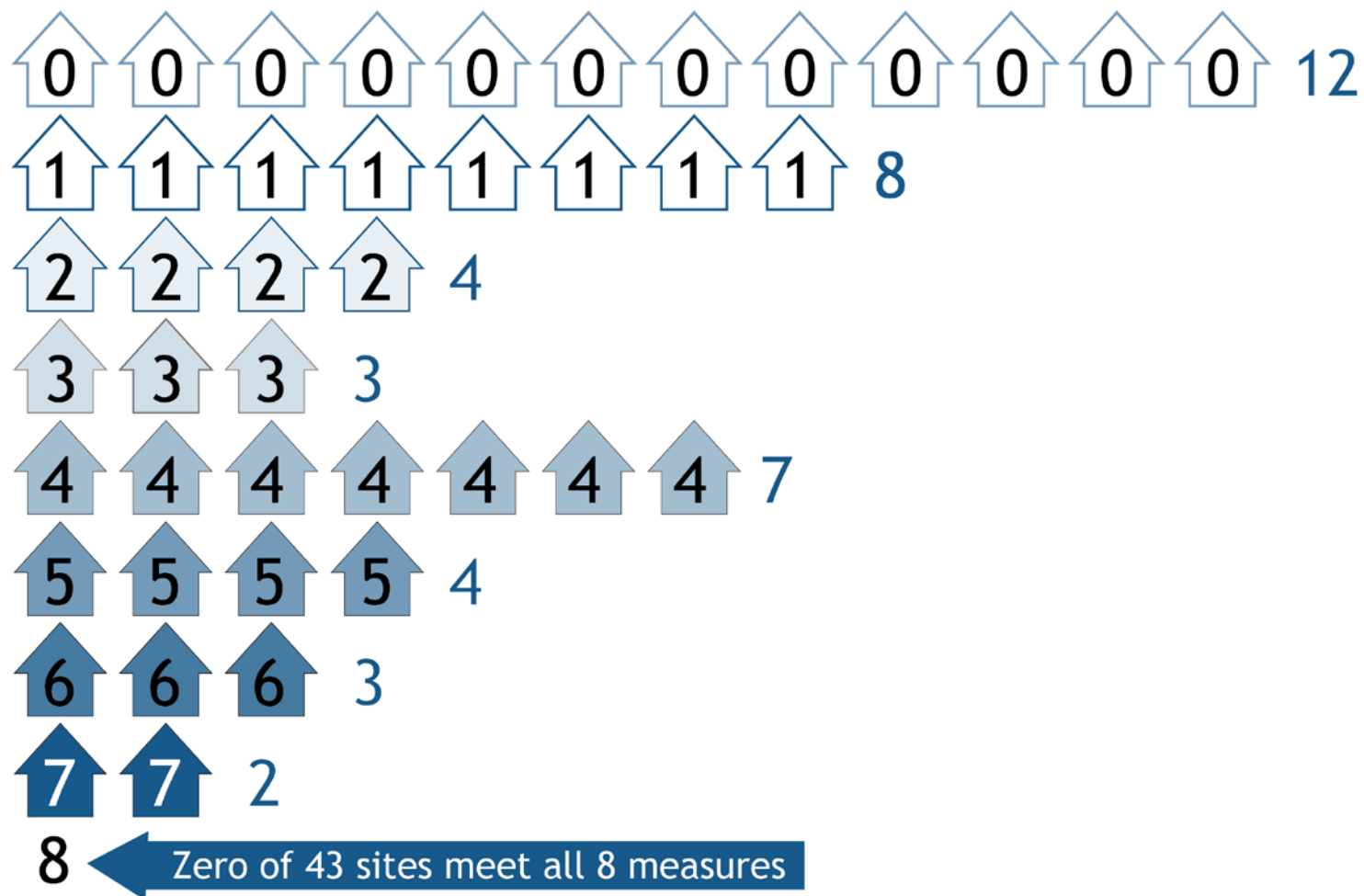
- Major accessibility audit project of the shelter system underway
- 2 main objectives:
  - Determine the accessibility compliance measures required for City-funded shelter facilities
  - Estimate the funding required and implementation strategy to maximize AODA compliance by 2025
- 43 accessibility audits were completed by consultants in 2016-17
- Review of remaining spaces to be completed in Q2 2018

# Accessibility Audits

- Each of the 43 sites were assessed in four categories
- Category 1 assesses eight different measures to establish a minimum baseline for accessibility.
  - Can a person enter the shelter?
  - Can a person use the facility for its intended purpose?
  - Can a person exit the facility?



# Results of Accessibility Audits



# Example 1



# Example 2



# Example 3



# Moving Forward

- Assess the overall compliance measures for the entire shelter portfolio (underway)
- Determine what upgrades are achievable and realistic and what is not
- Implementation strategies for both City-owned and community partner sites to be developed
  - Capital improvement funding will be specific to accessibility based on the audits
  - Capital funding budget request in 2019

# Moving Forward

