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## **2019 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE**

### **Additional Information on Shelters and 24-hour Respite Sites**

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**Issue:**

At its meeting on February 13, 2019, Budget Committee requested that Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) staff report back to Budget Committee on the following:

- a. the number of shelter and respite beds added to the system in the last 4 years and projected to be constructed in the next 4 years and the associated costs and ability to fund these beds;
- b. shelter and respite system improvements over the last year to prepare for the 2018-2019 winter season;
- c. the total number of people moved from shelter to permanent housing over the last 5 years;
- d. the refugee/asylum claimant inflows and outflow to permanent housing over the last 18 months.
- e. the improvements to the central intake to ensure access to shelter beds; and
- f. shelter capacity in Toronto compared to local and international jurisdictions.

This briefing note responds to that request.

**Key Messages:*****a. Expansion of the Shelter System and 24-hour Respite Sites***

- City Council has invested significantly in expanding available shelter capacity.
- From January 1, 2015 to February 14, 2019, SSHA has added 2,825 beds to the shelter system.

<b>Permanent Shelter</b>	<b>Change in Capacity</b>
Co-Ed	219
Families	141
Men	62
Women	188
Youth	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>628</b>
Temporary Refugee Response	2,197
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,825</b>

Future development will focus on George Street Revitalization and the expansion of 1000 shelter beds as detailed below:

**GSR Transition Budget (Initial Approval date 2016, approved project \$80.1 M)**

Decommissioning of beds at Seaton House commenced in the spring of 2018, however, current plans require that the facility be available for Respite operations during the 2018 – 2019 and 2019 – 2020 winter seasons.

Current occupants of Seaton House are being assessed for housing supports and plans are ongoing to replace the 600 beds at Seaton House with 150 supportive housing units through Habitat Services and approximately 50 long term care placements.

Of the 400 beds required, 346 beds have been secured and will be operational as detailed below:

- 3306 Kingston Road – 40 beds operational during Q1 2019
- 31 Runnymede Road – 50 beds operational in Q1 2019
- 705 Progress - 96 beds in Q1 2020
- 2299 Dundas – 80 are anticipated to be operational in Q1 2020.
- 354 George Street 80 beds

**1,000 New Shelter Beds (Initial Approval date 2018, approved project \$168.4 M)**

This 3-year project undertakes the opening of 11 new emergency shelters at a total project cost of \$168.4M. The project assumes 880 beds in addition to 121 new beds in the following shelters (Youth Link – 51 beds, 3306 Kingston Road – 40 bed and Egale – 30 beds).

The following properties have been secured and design, construction and renovation are in progress with capacity and anticipated opening date for each shelter: specified:

- 545 lakeshore – 200 beds to expected to be opened in the spring of 2019
- 348 Davenport – A total of 81 beds by the end of 2019 (56 beds are already operational)

- 2671 Islington – a total of 90 beds by the end of 2019 (45 beds are already operational)

Work is underway to locate and secure the remaining 508 beds.

## **24 Hour Respite Sites**

24-hour respite sites operating continuously 7 days a week, 365 days a year beyond the cold weather season were approved in 2018. There are currently 805 spaces available across nine different locations.

### ***b. Preparation for the 2018-19 Winter Season***

- A comprehensive 2018/19 Winter Services Plan was developed to ensure ongoing availability of 24-hour respite sites to meet demand
- Service improvements include:
  - Launch of an enhanced Homeless Help app to provide up-to-date centralized information about available City-funded homelessness services,
  - New 24-hour respite site standards created to ensure consistent quality of services,
  - Implementation of all 18 recommendations following the Ombudsman Toronto Enquiry into Winter Respite Services (including improved communications, improved operational reliability, improved system oversight, and improved results),
  - A new System Oversight function was implemented that provides daily operational reports and acts as a first-point of contact for service partners, and
  - Modernization of the Central Intake service (see below for more details on Central Intake).
  - Use of Sprung structures to deliver services, which offer an accessible, climate controlled environment.

### ***c. The Number of People Housed from Shelter to Permanent Housing***

- Over the past five years, SSHA and its community partners have supported the following number of people move from shelters into permanent housing:

<b>Year</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b># of Discharges to Permanent Housing</b>	4,297	4,220	4,177	5,198	7,963	25,855

***d. The Refugee/Asylum Claimant Inflows and Outflows to Permanent Housing***

- SSHA improved its reporting on refugee/asylum claimants in the shelter system in 2018 and now provides weekly reports to the Federal government.
- Since January 1, 2018, current as of February 14, 2019, 10,085 unique refugee/asylum claimants have used the Toronto shelter system in this period. Over this same time period, 6,300 refugee/asylum claimants have been supported to move into permanent housing.

***e. Central Intake Modernization***

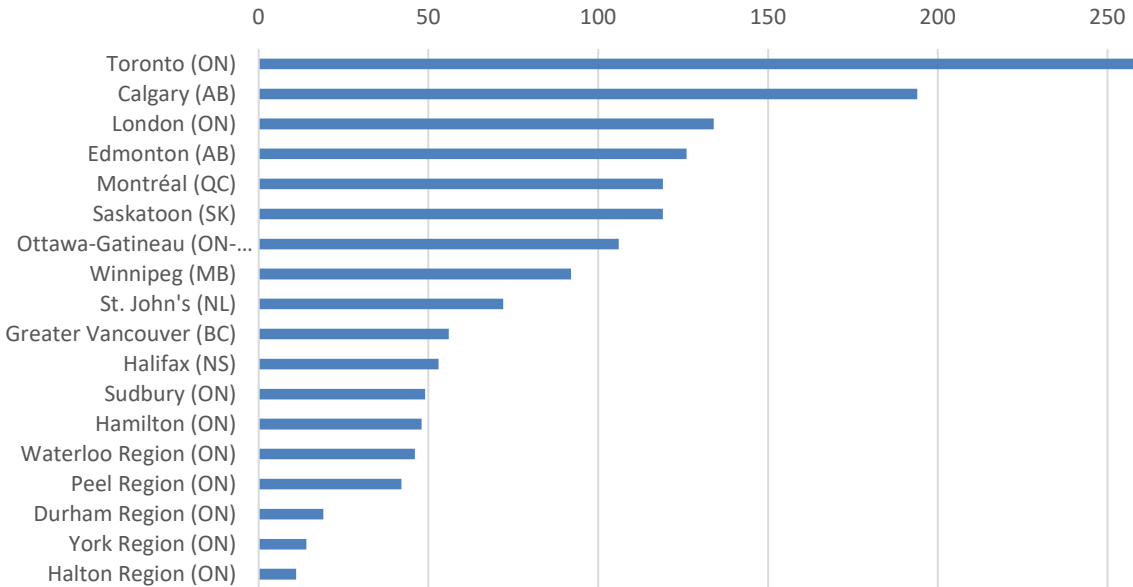
- Central Intake provides a 24/7 telephone based service that offers referrals to emergency shelter and other overnight accommodation, as well as information about other housing stability services.
- In 2018, following a recommendation from City of Toronto's Ombudsman's Office, SSHA carried out a comprehensive internal review of the Central Intake program.
- The review identified a number of areas for enhancements, which were implemented in spring of 2018.
- The enhancements, including new technology, processes and staff have significantly increased the reliability of our central intake system and greatly enhanced access for service users. For example:
  - The call abandonment rate was reduced from 55.8% in early 2018 to 4.2% in January 2019, and
  - Amendments to the triage process have resulted in call times decreasing from 22 minutes to 8.15 minutes per call.

***f. Shelter Capacity in Toronto Compared Other Jurisdictions***

- Increasing homelessness is an issue in most large urban centres in Canada and North America. For example:
  - In New York City, the number of people staying in municipal homeless shelters each night is more than 63,000 people, 72% higher than ten years ago.
  - Vancouver's recent point in time count found a 60% increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness over the past 10 years.

- Ottawa has seen a 15% increase in the number of people using shelter between 2014 and 2017.

Figure 1: Shelter Beds Per Capita (100,000 Population)



Note: Other jurisdiction shelter data obtained from the 2016 Shelter Capacity Report, Employment and Social Development Canada; Toronto data from SSHA 2018

- Jurisdictions that have seen a reduction in homelessness have done so through investment to increase the availability of supportive housing for people who have complex mental health issues.

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**Prepared by:** Paul Raftis, General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

**Further information:** Glenn Morgan, Director Program Support, Shelter, Support & Housing Administration, (416) 397-4161, Glenn.Morgan@toronto.ca

**Date:** February 15, 2019