

EX4.3 - Accelerating the City's Tenants First Project (9.4.19)

Deputation: Mark Smith Co-chair Toronto Seniors Forum

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Toronto Seniors Forum [TSF] was established by City Council in 2005, to ensure that the Seniors lens and voice is applied to ALL the City of Toronto discussion and decisions.

TSF Members were active contributors on the Accountability Table, authors of the Toronto Seniors Strategy 2.0, which was presented to and accepted by Council [05.18].

Senior Services and Long Term Care

TSF wholeheartedly endorses Recommendation #1 on page 2 of EX4.3, the creation of the new division which will be named Senior Services and Long Term Care. TSF looks forward to continued dialogue with Councillors and Staff as the division structure develops. And the improved communications within the city structure that it will bring.

Other recommendations within EX4.3 include plans to repair existing housing. TSF asks that you consider keystone issues like the few listed below to be part thought process:

- Any repair or replacement of housing include Universal Design Standards; for example, increasing all door sizes to accommodate wheelchair access.
- That the funding announced last week by the Federal Government, that at the absolute minimum of one-third of the total funding be committed to Seniors Housing.
- Moving forward when approving or discussing any new affordable Housing that at least one-third of all new builds be Seniors focused.
- That within all city-operated housing that infrastructure for on-site Service and Support Providers are included. Consider issues like; Aging In Place or Butterfly Care for People living with Dementia.

Engagement with Seniors

On page 8 of EX4.3, Bullet Point number 4.

While developing the Service Planning model: "Lead Responsibility for engagement with Seniors include liaison with the Toronto Seniors Forum...".

When City Council approved TSS 2.0 last May it included recommendation Number 26, that Councillors hold Seniors Active Living Fairs, TSF will help lead this aspect of TSS 2.0. [When TSS 2.0 was passed, the Councillors absent for the vote were contacted and all but 2 voiced support for the TSS 2.0]. Further:

- TSF has already made progress in advancing that recommendation, and have started to meet with individual Councillors.
- We request that all Councillors respond to the invitations TSF has already extended to meet and discuss the best ways to engage and involve Seniors in their Wards.
- Working toward higher standards of Seniors care and services is not a 5-minute deputation, but an ongoing and continued dialogue. Working together will only provide better ways to discover the needs of the Seniors in your Wards.

Trust and Confidence

Today's Tenants First Project deputations will be heated and passionate.

TSF would like to add to the voices that the well-documented lack of trust and confidence in the ability of TCHC to manage housing, leaves little doubt that without some drastic changes Seniors Housing issues will only get worse. It is important that past baggage is left outside the new division, new ways and new ideas must be brought forward.

Senior Services and Long Term Care Staffing

TSF would like to suggest that ALL staffing of the new Senior Services and Long Term Care division [as discussed on page 12 of EX 4.3], not be simple job transfers from across the city departments, but include new processes and job descriptions. Support systems within the city structure are often buffered with the statement "Not in my job description", this is something that cannot be tolerated within the new staffing structure. We are facing a rapidly developing Seniors crisis, having the ability to adjust and grow is important. Staff must be willing to go beyond their job descriptions to make this work.

Sadly ageism still rears its head, even within the City Structure, it is important that ALL staff are aware that dismissive or patronizing responses to Seniors requests, even if it is unintentional, speak volumes. Understanding comes with direct interaction.

To help bridge/repair this, TSF stresses that SENIORS be included in the hiring process.

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TSF is NOT an emergency service provider, if you or a senior you know is in crisis, contact 311 or 911.

Established by City Council in 2005 to facilitate engagement between seniors and the City of Toronto.

What is the Toronto Seniors Forum?

The TSF is a Program Advisory Body [PAB] that currently works within the Social Development, Finance and Administration division of the city. [With the adoption of EX4.3 - Accelerating the City's Tenants First Project (9.4.19), TSF will shift into the new city division named Seniors Services and Long Term Care.

Providing an opportunity for senior residents to have input into the improvement and development of the City of Toronto's operations and policies.

Forum members volunteer their time and knowledge to ensure the City of Toronto:

- provides services equitably to all senior residents and uphold the city's commitment to be an "age-friendly city" as outlined by the World Health Organization
<https://www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-environments/en/>
- and that the city adhere to the values and planning principles as outlined in the Toronto Seniors Strategy: Equity, Respect, Inclusion and Quality of Life.

Toronto Seniors Forum Membership represents:

- the cultural, linguistic and economic diversity of Toronto
- from all geographic areas of Toronto

Shared Experience of our members

- First hand knowledge of issues impacting seniors including health, housing, finance and transportation.
- Proven ability to work with diverse communities.
- Experience in community development familiarity with non-governmental community organizations working and/or advocating with and for seniors.
- Knowledge of municipal government, familiarity with City issues, decision making processes and budgets

Work Group priorities

- Health & Well Being
- Transportation & Accessibility.
- Housing & Shelter
- Employment & Income
- Outreach & Information
- Leadership and Operations Committee: providing oversight and direction for the Forum and is populated by Chairs of the Work Groups.

Four mandates of the Toronto Seniors Forum

- **Advocate**
Ensuring that the Seniors lens and voice is applied to ALL council decisions and discussion.
- **Engage and Consult**
and collect information from Seniors and Seniors Organizations from all across Toronto.
- **Ambassadors**
for Seniors at City Hall, and on various City Advisory Boards and committees.
- **Accountability Table**
is the community voice in the continued development of the Toronto Seniors Strategy 2.0 and oversight in its execution and implementation.

World Health Organization: Age-friendly environments

Health and well-being are determined not only by our genes and personal characteristics but also by the physical and social environments in which we live our lives.

Environments play an important role in determining our physical and mental capacity across a person's life course and into older age and also how well we adjust to loss of function and other forms of adversity that we may experience at different stages of life, and in particular in later years. Both older people and the environments in which they live are diverse, dynamic and changing. In interaction with each other they hold incredible potential for enabling or constraining Healthy Aging.

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APPENDIX B: SUMMARY

VERSION 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

INTEGRATED CITY SENIORS HOUSING AND SERVICES ENTITY

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The City of Toronto will initiate a process to develop a seniors housing and services entity at the City dedicated to taking a service system management approach to the needs of all seniors and integrating City services for seniors.

HEALTH

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Through Toronto Public Health, the City of Toronto will explore how to expand access to free dental health services for low-income seniors.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

The City of Toronto in partnership with Toronto Community Housing will seek provincial funding for

additional Seniors Active Living Centres in Toronto.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Toronto Public Library will support social connectedness by expanding digital literacy programs for seniors in libraries.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

The City of Toronto will expand Community Paramedicine programming, which provides non-emergency community care and supports in order to better support seniors who are high-volume 911 callers.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

The City of Toronto will work with the Province of Ontario and

community partners to develop a Toronto Caregivers Strategy with an emphasis on the needs of senior caregivers.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

The City of Toronto will consider senior-friendly outdoor fitness equipment in the design and refurbishment of parks.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

The City of Toronto will work with Toronto Community Housing and FoodShare to establish healthy food access initiatives that are accessible to seniors living in social housing through Toronto Public Health.

HOUSING

RECOMMENDATION 9:

The City of Toronto will develop Housing Opportunities Toronto: Housing Action Plan (2020-2030) to account for the evolving demographics and needs of older Torontonians over the next decade, including those in informal retirement communities, including apartment buildings or housing developments that house a high concentration of seniors.

RECOMMENDATION 10:

The City of Toronto will address the specific and growing needs of older Torontonians by continuing to create new affordable housing and fund housing repairs and accessibility modifications for seniors by delivering federal-provincial-City funding and City incentives.

RECOMMENDATION 11:

The City of Toronto will seek

provincial funding under the Seniors Community Grant Program to pilot a HomeShare program in Toronto to connect overhoused seniors with students and others.

RECOMMENDATION 12:

The City of Toronto will develop a new homeless shelter that provides specialized services for seniors and older adults.

RECOMMENDATION 13:

The City of Toronto will implement the provincial Home for Good program funding to create and maintain housing with supports that meet the needs of formerly homeless persons including seniors.

RECOMMENDATION 14:

The City of Toronto will amend the Official Plan to recognize the City's commitment to age-friendly principles.

RECOMMENDATION 15:

The City of Toronto will negotiate the use of Section 37 benefits to develop new neighbourhood facilities, including those around apartment buildings or housing developments that house a high concentration of seniors, to meet the needs of seniors as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 16:

The City of Toronto will provide seniors with new and customized information and tools that will empower them to ensure that they and their neighbours are living in a fire safe environment.

TRANSPORTATION

RECOMMENDATION 17:

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) will develop and launch a new public awareness campaign to advance a culture of respect and civility for the benefit of seniors and other riders.

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RECOMMENDATION 18:

As part Toronto's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan, the City will identify and install additional Seniors Safety Zones to promote the safety of seniors on City streets.

RECOMMENDATION 19:

The City of Toronto will construct new sidewalks on roads where they are missing to improve walkability, mobility and accessibility of city streets.

RECOMMENDATION 20:

The Toronto Transit Commission will develop a travel training program to support increased senior access to public transit.

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME**RECOMMENDATION 21:**

The City of Toronto will work with community partners under Toronto For All to develop a workplace anti-ageism campaign.

RECOMMENDATION 22:

The City of Toronto will work with The 519, Senior Pride Network and other community partners to develop a public awareness and education campaign addressing homophobia and transphobia affecting seniors.

RECOMMENDATION 23:

The City of Toronto will expand employment support services to further address the needs of older workers, focusing on those in receipt of Ontario Works.

RECOMMENDATION 24:

The City of Toronto will enhance public awareness of property tax deferral and cancellation programs.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION**RECOMMENDATION 25:**

The City of Toronto will work with the Seniors Strategy Accountability Table and other community partners

to update and circulate the new Services for Seniors in Toronto directory.

RECOMMENDATION 26:

The City of Toronto will work with all ward councillors to hold Seniors Active Living Fairs to facilitate outreach and communication of the burgeoning range of diverse products and services available for seniors.

RECOMMENDATION 27:

Toronto Police Service, in collaboration with key partners, will create a seniors-inclusive training curriculum aimed at increasing officer awareness around ageing related issues and increasing officer capacity to connect seniors to appropriate community services.