

## City Council

### Notice of Motion

MM6.13	ACTION			Ward: 13
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### **The Dan Harrison Community Complex Master Plan - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão**

*\* Notice of this Motion has been given.*

*\* This Motion is subject to referral to the Planning and Housing Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

### **Recommendations**

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to update the “Review of the Dan Harrison Community Complex” and to include a renewed comprehensive strategy to address the long-standing complex challenges in the upcoming Five-Year Downtown East Action Plan and the Tenants First reports.
2. City Council direct the City Manager and as sole shareholder direct the President and Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Community Housing Corporation to work in partnership to co-develop a timeline for implementation and full costing for the Dan Harrison Community Complex renewed comprehensive strategy and to report the outcomes to the October 15, 2019 meeting of the Planning and Housing Committee.

### **Summary**

The Dan Harrison Community Complex is geographically located at the north-east corner of Dundas Street East and Sherbourne Street and is an important asset of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. Housing for 428 residents, Dan Harrison Community Complex is composed of 17 rooming houses and two low-rise apartment buildings with a total of 376 units that are primarily bachelors, but also include one, two, three and four bedroom units.

The Dan Harrison Community Complex is home to a dense population, including many vulnerable residents who experience disproportionately high rates of poverty, violence, crime and poor housing conditions. Many residents live with mental health, medical and substance use challenges which are compounded by a broader failure to address systemic and chronic service gaps, including effective wrap-around services, including that of recovery, treatment and mental health supports.

In July 1991, a research report by the City of Toronto Housing Department titled “Review of the Dan Harrison Community Complex” was published with a set of 31 recommendations.

Almost 30 years later, tenants, Toronto Community Housing Corporation staff, social agencies, Toronto Police and the local community continue to raise concerns consistent with the report, which have since escalated to crisis levels.

Vulnerable Toronto Community Housing Corporation tenants stated that they are living with constant anxiety due to a high number of “unit takeovers” for illegal activity on the premises. Toronto Police expressed concern about the physical condition and layout of the complex including the lack of effective co-ordinated security measures. Last year Toronto Fire recorded 79 false fire alarms triggered at the Dan Harrison Community Complex, representing the largest number in the City and resulting in significant fines and misappropriated time and service calls from other first responders.

Toronto Community Housing Corporation in 2018 began enhancing security on site with additional special constables at the Dan Harrison Community Complex. The Dan Harrison Community Complex received limited renovations to improve the community and common spaces, including a shared kitchen space. More recently, Toronto Community Housing Corporation started to mobilize a long-standing plan to renovate the primary entrance, which is only one of the building's deficiencies. Unfortunately, these enhancements will not adequately address the most fundamental challenges impacting tenants. The Dan Harrison Community Complex has and continues to be immersed with structural, systemic, and social challenges which all intersect and include but are not limited to:

#### Structural

- No major improvements since the 1991 report
- Lack of continuity and commitment towards the Dan Harrison Community Complex
- Lack of safety and security
- Lack of communication (Toronto Community Housing Corporation-to-Board-to-Management-to-Tenants)
- Community agencies/partners being understaffed, overworked, burned out, working in silos, and lacking adequate capacity

#### Systemic

- Poverty
- Marginalization
- Vulnerability
- Unsafe sex-work
- Drug Trafficking
- Violence
- Crime
- Social service delivery gaps
- A lack of safety and security
- Inaction and a feeling of neglect/not being heard

#### Social

- Inadequate supports and social services for seniors, persons with disabilities, persons with addictions and mental health challenges
- Social isolation and lack of belonging

With the five-year Downtown East Action Plan and Tenants First reports underway and to be considered by Council in the next few months, Council has an opportunity to create a path forward and deliver long-awaited meaningful change for the current and future residents of Dan Harrison Community Complex. It is critical that the Dan Harrison Community Complex is not overlooked, especially with the new funding commitment from the Federal Government. It's time to specifically address the long-standing challenges at the Dan Harrison Community Complex and to include detailed and updated recommendations in these reports.

### **Background Information (City Council)**

Member Motion MM6.13