

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM8.49	ACTION			Ward: All
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Providing a Rapid Housing Response to Homelessness Through a New Modular Supportive Housing Pilot Initiative - by Councillor Ana Bailão, seconded by Mayor John Tory

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Ana Bailão, seconded by Mayor John Tory, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, in consultation with CreateTO, the Real Estate Services Division, the Corporate Finance Division, the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division, Toronto Public Health and City Planning, to report to the Planning and Housing Committee at it's meeting on November 13, 2019 on a new modular supportive housing pilot initiative.
2. City Council request the Executive Director of the Housing Secretariat, in consultation with City Councillors, CreateTO, City Planning and the Real Estate Services Division, to identify public properties appropriate for the development of modular supportive housing on an accelerated basis.
3. City Council request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to design an expedited Planning approvals process for the rapid development of modular supportive housing to be included in the report referred to in Part 1 above.
4. City Council request the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, to convene an interdivisional working group composed of senior City staff representing, as necessary, but not limited to, CreateTO, the Real Estate Services Division, the Corporate Finance Division, the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division and City Planning, charged with the expedited development of new modular supportive housing under the pilot initiative.
5. City Council request the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to continue to consult and engage with the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness on the implementation of a modular housing pilot.
6. City Council request that the report from the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat

referred to in Part 1 above include, but not be limited to:

- a. a minimum of one pilot site for the development of modular supportive housing on an accelerated basis;
- b. in consultation with the Corporate Finance Division and the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division, potential Federal, Provincial, City and third party Capital and Operating funding and resources for the development and on-going operation of modular supportive housing;
- c. the results of consultations with representatives of the modular and supportive housing sectors;
- d. the procurement process recommended to engage a manufacturer/developer of the new housing;
- e. the procurement process recommended to engage a non-profit operator of the new housing; and
- f. a review of best practices in the modular and supportive housing sectors, such as Vancouver's experience.

Summary

This Motion recommends the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat lead an interdivisional team to explore and develop a pilot program for new modular supportive housing on public lands and report to the Planning and Housing Committee at its meeting on November 13, 2019.

Housing development approvals and construction in Toronto is a long-term, multi-year process, while the reality of homelessness demands rapid solutions. Modular and prefabricated housing construction presents an opportunity for the City to pilot the delivery of affordable, supportive housing opportunities for Toronto's homeless faster and at a much lower cost than traditional construction. A new modular supportive housing initiative could provide an urgent and much-needed "housing pathway" for people who are homeless and in emergency shelters, providing new, safe, stable and dignified homes with the support services that so many need.

In recent years, Toronto has utilized public and private real estate to undertake an aggressive expansion of its emergency shelter capacity, with many new shelter beds and respite centres opening to help alleviate homelessness. The City has also committed significant financial and real estate resources to the development of permanent affordable rental housing through the Housing Now Initiative and the Open Door Program. Dedicating underutilized public sites to supportive modular housing opportunities would fill a much-needed gap in the housing continuum.

Since 2016, the City of Vancouver and British Columbia Housing have funded, approved and completed over 600 modular supportive homes at 10 locations through the Building BC: Rapid Response to Homelessness program. Toronto is well-positioned to build on the learnings and successes of Vancouver and launch a pilot program for new modular supportive housing in the City.

On June 5, 2019, the City co-hosted a supportive housing charrette Making Supportive Housing

Happen in Toronto with the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness, a community-based collective impact initiative with a vision to end homelessness in Toronto. The charrette was attended by non-profit supportive housing groups and community agencies serving the needs of the homeless, and also explored modular housing as an innovative option to bring supportive housing on-line in Toronto. Senior staff from Vancouver's Portland Hotel Society highlighted their work in successfully operating supportive modular housing for homeless and vulnerable people.

This Motion requests the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to continue to consult with the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness on the planning and delivery of the pilot initiative.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM8.49

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-134880.pdf>)