

November 26, 2019

To Mayor John Tory and Toronto City Councillors:

The Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness (TAEH) is in strong support of Councillor Cressy's and Wong-Tam's motion MM12.21, *Ending Homelessness - Building New Supportive Housing Now - by Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam.*

There was much deserved excitement and support when City Council committed to building 18,000 new supportive housing units in our city over the next 10 years. This was in response to what we all understood then to be an unacceptable crisis in homelessness and our ability to keep up with it through emergency responses. It was a key moment in City Council's role in ending homelessness in Toronto.

The situation is even more dire now, and simply put, we cannot wait any longer to start creating healthy, sustainable homes for people currently in shelters or at risk of entering homelessness. We all know the numbers – and the early winter weather's toll on the lives of people experiencing homelessness. City Council must act now.

This includes committing, up front, what the City 1/3 share from its 2020 budget to this priority. This bold act of municipal leadership will put needed pressure on the other orders of government and help create the path for their action and contributions. Ontario has responsibility for housing its residents as they cross municipal borders, and the federal government aims to reduce chronic homelessness in half by 2028. They cannot do this without concerted effort in Toronto that they must also contribute to.

Equally important in today's motion is the call for immediate action to move at least 1,800 people out of shelters and into housing as the building of new, permanent supportive housing takes place. The motion recommends "a bridging strategy to move 1,800 households into stable housing while the new build program is being rolled out, including resources required to expand any programs needed to accomplish this such as eviction prevention, housing allowance program streams, and community partnerships." The TAEH is ready to work with the city on this, leading community partnerships and to advise on the best nimble use of housing allowance programs.

Sincerely,

Kira Heineck
Executive Lead, TAEH

Committed to Ending Homelessness
taeh.ca