



PH14.8.9



United Way
Greater Toronto



June 26, 2020

Toronto City Council
12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen St. W., Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: 2020.PH14.8, Modular Supportive Housing – Delivering Supportive Modular Housing This Fall

Dear Mayor Tory and Councillors:

COVID-19 has forced governments around the world to respond rapidly, developing and implementing unprecedented policy solutions in an evolving landscape. While the pandemic is far from over, this moment has demonstrated the capabilities of our public servants to deliver on urgent priorities.

The City has already taken bold steps to tackle the housing issues that have been exacerbated by COVID-19, such as securing 1200 hotel beds and rapidly rehousing families into vacant TCHC units. The COVID-19 Shelter Interim Recovery Strategy that the City of Toronto is developing in partnership with United Way Greater Toronto is another step to equip the City and community partners to continue to deliver the next phase of homelessness response.

Toronto has also moved rapidly on modular supportive housing, with a plan to have 100 units ready for occupancy by the fall. In light of the extraordinary mobilization of municipal resources to deliver this project on an accelerated timeline, it would be very unfortunate if zoning were the issue that held up the opening of these much-needed units. **To that end, we are writing in support of the recommendation by city staff to request a Minister’s Zoning Order (MZO) for these sites.**

An MZO is a strong tool, creating an unappealable decision, and we do not make this recommendation lightly. In general, our preference would be to improve zoning processes so these override measures would not be required. In this circumstance, however, using an MZO would be warranted and appropriate.

This is a project initiated by the City of Toronto on behalf of its most vulnerable residents, and the rapid timelines are necessary to provide these units before the snow flies. While this initiative is new for our city, experience elsewhere has proven that this model can work. In addition, an MZO would provide an opportunity for the city and province to demonstrate inter-government collaboration on rapidly delivering much-needed supportive housing.

For these reasons, we urge council to request an MZO for these modular supportive housing sites.

Sincerely,

[signatures on page 2]



Alyssa Brierley
 Executive Director and General Counsel
Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation

Gautam Mukherjee
 Executive Director
Mainstay Housing

Ene Underwood
 Chief Executive Officer
Habitat for Humanity Greater Toronto Area

Farah Mohamed
 SVP, Policy, Public Affairs, Economic Blueprint
 Institute and Strategic Initiatives
Toronto Region Board of Trade

Daniele Zanotti
 President and Chief Executive Officer
United Way Greater Toronto

Anne Babcock
 President and Chief Executive Officer
WoodGreen