

Creating New Supportive Housing Opportunities in Parkdale in Partnership with the University Health Network and United Way of Greater Toronto

Dear Planning and Housing Committee Members:

The proposed Supportive Housing Opportunities in the Parkdale Neighbourhood provide an important path to better define other Supportive Housing Initiatives and a chance to give shape to a much needed Supportive Housing Plan for the City of Toronto. As we quickly approach Year 2 of the HousingTO 2020-2030 Plan, this initiative provides a foundation to building the 18,000 Supportive Housing Units and to supporting an approach to creative partnership and neighbourhood development.

Most recently, the Taskforce for Shelter Recovery reinforces the need for a shift from Emergency shelters to supportive housing as a measure to best support the most vulnerable communities in our city. This has been most palpable in the City's Interim Shelter/Hotel programs operating across the Greater Toronto Area.

One of the hard won learnings from the response to Covid-19, is the value of embedded support services to best serve the men, women and vulnerable communities accessing emergency shelter services. Emergency Service providers have long fought for these services in our respective programs. The pandemic has afforded us the health services, case-management, harm reduction and community economic strategies we have only dreamt about until now.

Innovative partnerships with respected institutions like University Health Network and Community and Neighbourhood Centres, supports the needed collaborations to define and advance exciting neighbourhood initiatives rooted in community with a commitment to the social determinants of health. The rich prospects for collaboration and community development can set the tone for other initiatives as we convert to a new moral order. Efforts to advance the Social Medicine Initiative are welcomed by those of us closest to the communities that we serve.

The economic, community, health implications and benefits are sound principles that align with the HousingTO Plan and reinforce the emerging vernacular around the principles of Housing as a Human Right.

Please support this creative Parkdale partnership with United Way and University Health Network (UHN).

Best regards,



David Reycraft
Dixon Hall Neighbourhood Services
Director – Housing Services
Co-Chair, External Advisory Committee to HousingTO