

**From:** [Saroja Ponnambalam](#)  
**To:** [Budget Committee](#)  
**Cc:** [Saroja Ponnambalam](#)  
**Subject:** Written Submission from Jane Finch Housing Coalition  
**Date:** February 14, 2022 9:42:48 AM  
**Attachments:** [FINAL 2022 Budget Deputation JaneFinchHousingCoalition.pdf](#)

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Dear Councillor Crawford and Members of the Budget Committee,  
Please see the attached written submission from the Jane Finch Housing Coalition regarding the City of Toronto's 2022 Budget.

**SAROJA PONNAMBALAM** (she/her)

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Community Planner

**Social Planning Toronto**

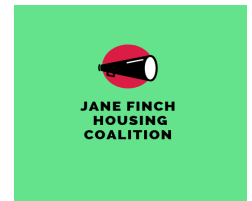
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Councillor Gary Crawford  
Members of the Budget Committee  
2nd floor, Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5J 2N2



## **Re Budget Requests - Jane Finch Housing Coalition**

Dear Councillor Crawford and Members of the City of Toronto Budget Committee,

We are writing as the Jane Finch Housing Coalition to share our concerns regarding housing affordability in Toronto. This is the time to be bold about our budget in addressing this dire housing crisis. The cold-exposure deaths of two homeless people in Toronto this past month is a direct result of the failure of our housing system - something that the City has the power to prevent.

The Jane Finch Housing Coalition (JFHC) is a coalition of Jane-Finch residents, grassroots groups, service providers, and community organizers working towards housing justice and housing equity in the Jane-Finch area in Toronto. JFHC's focus is to bring awareness to ongoing and emerging housing issues, educate and support community members in exercising their housing rights, as well as encourage engagement in urban/community planning processes and housing advocacy.

### **Affordability**

The Jane-Finch community continues to be disproportionately impacted by the affordable housing and homelessness crisis in the city. Our community consultations have revealed that housing access and affordability are the biggest housing concerns in Jane and Finch, particularly for seniors and youth who are financially vulnerable. The yearly rising cost of rent in the Jane Finch area and Toronto is highly concerning.

### **Evictions and Homelessness**

We have one of the highest eviction rates in the city. Local residents have been experiencing displacement over the last ten years. There is a hidden homelessness in Jane Finch, which is not discussed often when it comes to inner-suburban communities. Jane Finch residents are sleeping in their cars, friends' couches and in outdoor spaces. Homelessness in Toronto is not unique to the downtown core.

All this runs parallel to the increasing property speculation as a result of recent infrastructure investments like the Finch West LRT and University-Spadina Subway Extension.

Residents of Toronto are dying in the name of profit.

### **What Can Be Done**

The City's taken action through its commitment to the HousingTO 2020 - 2030 action plan in 2019, but the 2022 budget does not reflect this commitment with the urgency it demands. We are still waiting for a Toronto Housing Commissioner's Office to be established nearly two years after it was announced.

Toronto certainly has the ability to get things done quickly as demonstrated throughout its pandemic response. Though the City may be in a deficit, there is a lot of room for reallocation from the police budget to housing and

community services. It's disappointing to see that the police budget receives 5 times more funding than housing and shelters in Toronto. Access to adequate affordable housing improves well-being and community safety more effectively than police services.

As the saying goes, "a budget is a moral document". They tell us what and who is a priority to the people who create them and even more importantly, what and who is not a priority by omission. If you believe that the budget is supposed to reflect the values of this city, and center equity, please consider our demands.

### **Our Budget Demands:**

- ! Fully fund shelter system and resources for residents in encampments
- ! Fully fund supportive housing operating costs
- ! Address the good repair backlog (the budget shows a 7.4 billion backlog)
- ! Increase property taxes above the rate of inflation to reflect the realities of the housing crisis
- ! Defund Toronto Police Services by 50% (do not support 25M increase to Toronto Police Services)
- ! Fund "an emergency rent supplement program for unhoused people - regardless of immigration status, how long they have been unhoused or type of homelessness"
- ! Fully fund Housing Now and TCHC Building Repairs
- ! Funding for the 'RentSafe' program, be increased so that 100 property standards enforcement officers are on staff by the end of 2022.
- ! Funding for the 'Rent Grant' program, a non-repayable grant from the Toronto Rent Bank, should be made permanent until the end of COVID.
- ! Revenue from the vacant homes tax should be spent only on housing programs
- ! Increase fines for bad landlords
- ! Support a greater investment in the Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition Program (MURA) to support preserving and expanding permanently affordable housing

*Not another homeless death, no more evictions.*

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Finch Housing Coalition

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