

February 10, 2022

Attention: Mayor Tory and City Council Executive Committee Members

The participants, volunteers, and staff of **The Neighbourhood Group Community Services (TNGCS)** call upon you to prioritize urgent community solutions in this year's budget. You have heard from many in the community that investing more in policing is not a solution for challenges in our community – and immediate solutions are available now for investment.

TNGCS is a non-profit, charity with a 110-year history providing community services across Toronto. We serve all ages from our 10 licensed childcare centres to our seniors supportive housing, meals on wheels, and homecare. We run four after-school programs for children and youth. We provide housing for more than 400 tenants in nine locations. We offer job support and job skills training to hundreds of job seekers, and a dozen English classes every day for newcomers. We run one of the largest homeless drop-ins in the city, an overdose prevention site, and - during the pandemic - a shelter hotel in partnership with the city. We are grateful to address urgent needs every day and partner with the city to address the root causes of poverty and inequality. We thank you for selecting us to open the first 100 units of modular housing.

During 2021, we have held many conversations with our community on alternatives to policing, and you have heard from some of our community members in the recent discussions on the city budget and the SafeTO plans. We know that policing is not an answer to mental health crisis – and 40% of police taser use is on people in mental health crisis. We know that policing is not the answer to homelessness – and the result is that 25% of people sent to jail are people who are homeless. We know that policing is not the answer to youth poverty and unemployment – and youth unemployment rates are more than twice as high as the rate for adults.

We are asking you to instead **invest these funds in upstream community solutions:**

- Invest new funds in supportive housing and multi-unit residential acquisition (MURA)
- Invest new funds in homeless drop-ins, youth lounges, street outreach workers, and youth outreach workers
- Invest new funds in crisis response pilots to grow faster and cover more neighbourhoods
- Invest these new funds in purchase of employment services (POES) focused on youth

You can reach me at ceo@tngcs.org for more information.

Sincerely,



Bill Sinclair
President & CEO