

# StreetHealth

March 30, 2022

To the Chair and members of the Executive Committee  
Regarding EX31.4  
Strategic Acquisition of 214-230 Sherbourne Street to Support City Building

My name is Kapri Rabin and I am the Executive Director of Street Health, located in the downtown east (DTE) at Dundas and Sherbourne. Street Health has been working in the community for over 35 years providing nursing, mental health, harm-reduction, overdose prevention, Safe Supply, identification replacement and identification storage services for people who are homeless, living in poverty and who struggle with mental health and substance use challenges.

The gentrification of the DTE is evident. There is a proliferation of new condo development in the last 5 years that has pushed more and more people into homelessness and into encampments. We anticipate see even more people become homeless with the slated closure of 40% of the current covid hotels.

It is widely recognized that the downtown east is a community in crisis, a crisis of a lack of affordable housing, a crisis in a high rates of overdoses and deaths due to a poisoned drug supply, and a crisis in the lack of suitable places for people to go. The need for adequate affordable housing is increasing throughout the DTE and the city overall.

I am here today because there is a vacant property at 214-230 Sherbourne Street. This property was recently sold to a developer who intends to build more condos. But this property could and should be a vital location for deeply affordable housing that this neighbourhood desperately needs. We are asking the City of Toronto to act now to expropriate this property, to make it a place for those in greatest need to live.

The property has sat empty for over 10 years. During this time, hundreds of people have slept on the floors of crowded drop-ins and unsafe shelters, while many others reside in encampments. Just one month ago a man who was homeless was found dead in a bus shelter a mere 150 yards from this property. It is clear that the 214-230 Sherbourne property should be used to provide a home for those who struggle to find shelter and housing in the Dundas and Sherbourne area.

The severity and extent of the problem requires innovative and bold action by all levels of government working together. Building deeply affordable permanent housing in the downtown east such as that proposed for 214-230 Sherbourne Street is a first step and I encourage the city to make this happen. You have the power to make a difference.

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We cannot wait any longer for real concrete action. We urge the City to expropriate the property at 214-230 Sherbourne Street and use it to develop deeply affordable housing. We also call on the provincial and federal government to support the City with funds to take action on the housing and homelessness crisis in the City and for the development of this site.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kapri Rabin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kapri" being more prominent than the last name "Rabin".

Kapri Rabin  
Executive Director