

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM39.17	ACTION			Ward: 11
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Engaging the Provincial Government on a Potential Site to Build Indigenous Housing at 19 Spadina Road - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Mayor John Tory

** Notice of this Motion has been given.
* This Motion is subject to referral to the Planning and Housing Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Mayor John Tory, recommends that:

1. City Council re-iterate its request to the Province of Ontario to convey the existing Green "P" parking lot site located at 19 Spadina Road (the "Property"), which is currently owned by the Province and leased to the City of Toronto (the "City"), to the City, or to whom the City may direct, for the purpose of creating new Indigenous-led and owned affordable rental and supportive housing.
2. City Council request the City Manager and the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, upon entering into an agreement of purchase and sale with the Province, to issue a proposal call to select a qualified Indigenous housing organization to own, develop and operate the Property as permanent affordable and supportive housing for Indigenous seniors and women.

Summary

The City of Toronto is in a housing crisis. Rent is unaffordable and new home ownership is reserved for those with generational wealth, or a very select few in the workforce. The impacts of this troubled market is felt most acutely within populations which have been historically oppressed and suffer from the impacts of inequity in the services governments provide.

City Council is committed to add a substantial amount of supportive and deeply affordable housing in the years ahead and plan to work collaboratively with other levels of government and housing partners to secure more units for residents of Toronto. This commitment especially extends to the Indigenous residents under the guidance of the province's Urban Indigenous Action Plan, and our commitments to truth, justice and reconciliation.

Action Area 3 of the Urban Indigenous Plan focusses on developing Services Planning, Design and Delivery alongside Indigenous partners to meet and respond to the needs of their communities. Toronto has one of the largest Indigenous populations in Canada, with our partner agencies serving the Indigenous community estimating that there are 70,000 residents

who belong to this community and that number is certainly growing, with an increase of 25 percent between the two most recent census disclosures. In 2016, the City also determined that over 90 percent of Toronto's Indigenous population lives below the (before tax) low income cut-off. This makes securing a home Toronto very difficult given the ongoing crisis.

The City has a unique opportunity at Spadina and Bloor to convert a parking lot into much needed Indigenous housing. Surface parking lots are not contributing to the well-being of Toronto residents and the neighbourhood. These spaces must be re-envisioned to become important community hubs and unique housing opportunities. Working alongside Indigenous service agencies who have shown support for the idea, there is a strong potential to secure this site for Indigenous specific housing needs.

The issue with this specific parking lot is the fact it is owned by the Province. Before substantial work can begin by the City and Indigenous partners to build housing on site, we need to get the Province to provide this land to the City to rezone and utilize. We can continue this process by formally asking the Province to consider the request and work with the relevant staff at the City on a framework and timeline for doing so. City Council has previously requested that this site is transferred to the City for housing purposes.

Housing must be treated as a human right and as a means to ensure the best possible health outcomes for Toronto residents. If we can provide housing for more people, the City and the people within it will thrive. City Council must work to support every effort to secure housing and apply pressure where needed to make this potential housing site a reality.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM39.17