



January 16, 2023

John Tory
Chair, City of Toronto Budget Committee

Dear Mayor Tory:

Care Watch welcomes the opportunity to submit our views on the 2023 City of Toronto Budget. Care Watch is a non-profit organization. Volunteers run it, and older adults lead it. We advocate for policies and services that will keep older Ontarians out of institutions and in their homes and communities – what they want and what the system needs. Municipalities help make that possible. They are responsible for public health, safety, transportation, housing, amenities, and recreational opportunities – conditions fundamental to healthy populations and age-friendly communities.

We are especially concerned by long waiting lists which make it difficult for many older adults to access the supportive housing provided by Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation. This housing plays an important role in enabling older adults who need support to continue to live independently while delaying, or possibly avoiding, the need to move into a long-term care home. Significant new investments are urgently needed to increase the number of Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation units, including apartment buildings identified as Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities. These investments will address a gap of many years during which no new units were added to the stock. Additional units will give older tenants access to onsite personal support workers and other supports. They will help meet the need for expanded services for ageing in place as identified in the Toronto Seniors Strategy 2018-2022.

We also draw attention to the need for significant additional City funding for local community support agencies. This funding will strengthen their capacity to deliver home care and other personal supports to older adults living in the community and in Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation buildings that do not have dedicated onsite personal supports.

Further, Care Watch strongly urges the City of Toronto to advocate to the provincial government for wage parity for personal support workers across the system, so that community workers earn as much as those in long-term care homes or hospitals. In other words, we need an equal playing field.

Addressing the needs and concerns of older adults is integral to planning for a healthy city. These investments will further the well-being of older residents of Toronto and of the City as a whole.

Yours truly,

Fiona Green
Chair, Care Watch Board of Directors

John Bagnall
Project Lead