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January 6, 2023

Chair Carroll, and members  
Economic and Community  
Development Committee

Re: EC 1.5

While the shelter-hotel operations have not been perfect, they can provide more dignity and safety, especially in an ongoing pandemic, than congregate shelters.

There have been repeated concerns regarding their operation (food quality, bed checks that invade personal privacy, poor communication, inadequate infection control practices).

Most importantly the pandemic demands we rethink the accepted norm of congregate shelters. This is an opportunity to prioritize housing. I urge you to:

- 1) Support the renewal of as many shelter-hotel contracts as possible but at the same time request city staff develop a **Shelter Transition and Relocation plan to Housing, not back to shelters**. The city's 24-month Housing and Homelessness Plan (2021-22) is not able to meet people's immediate housing needs and pandemic conditions are expected to continue for an indefinite period.
- 2) Request appropriate staff report on the feasibility of obtaining more rent supplements/housing allowances to assist in transition to housing.
- 3) Request that ongoing use of shelter-hotels provide single room occupancy unless there is a couple needing shelter.
- 4) Request staff audit shelter-hotel operations examining health and safety, harm reduction practices, food quality, rules such as bed checks and COVID infection control practices.

Sincerely,

Cathy Crowe

*Honorary Doctor of Science in Nursing (University of Victoria), Honorary Doctor of Laws (McMaster), Honorary Doctor of the University (U of Ottawa), Honorary Doctor of Laws (York University), Honorary Bachelor of Applied Studies (Humber College) Honorary Doctor of Laws (University of Windsor), Honorary Doctor of Laws (Law Union of Ontario).*