

March 21 2023

Executive Committee  
Toronto City Council  
*Sent via email - exc@toronto.ca*



**RE: Item EX3.1 – Housing Action Plan 2022-2026- Priorities and Work Plan**

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing today to express the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness' (TAEH) support for the Housing Action Plan (HAP) 2022-2026's priorities and work plan as laid out in the staff report for this item.

This plan, with its ambitious scope of actions to create more housing for Torontonians, is very much needed. Not only for the many middle-income households struggling to find homes they can afford, but also, for people facing dire housing precarity putting them at risk of homelessness and those experiencing homelessness right now.

The TAEH, and our partners making up most of the housing and homelessness service providers in the city, work collectively towards homelessness being rare, brief and non-recurring in Toronto. This is also the vision of Toronto City Council, and the plan before you today will help us get closer to this goal. We urge this Committee and all of City Council next week to prioritize its opportunities to build as much deeply affordable and supportive housing to address homelessness as possible.

We agree with the Rental Housing Opportunities Roundtable's underscoring of market limitations in building supportive and deeply affordable rental housing and the need for coordinated government – at all levels – investments and policy interventions to address this reality. We also echo the Roundtable's recommendations to support the non-profit sector in providing deep affordability, optimizing and coordinating funding for homelessness across agencies, and maximizing the opportunities that MURA and other City programs present.

The Roundtable's identification of the need to incentivize infill across all of Toronto's neighbourhoods is also critically important. People struggling to keep their housing, and those experiencing homelessness, live in all our communities and wards. Abundant evidence and experience have taught us that being able to find affordable housing in one's own neighbourhood, staying connected therefore to family and community resources, is a powerful way to prevent and/or keep experiences of homelessness brief and non-recurring. Creating targets and incentives for purpose-built rental housing in specific neighbourhoods is also a welcome idea.

The Alliance is fully aware that Toronto cannot do all of this by itself, and we continue to advocate for the provincial and federal governments to do more. We will amplify the recommendations in today's report to both orders in support of this plan.

Homelessness in Toronto is only rising, people's needs are becoming deeper, and our emergency shelter system meant to support people is at a real breaking point. This Housing Action Plan is an essential strategy in making homelessness brief, rare and non-recurring and we are counting on you, and will work with the City, to support its success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kira".

Kira Heineck, Executive Director  
Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness