

HRAC Framework for Priority Setting 2024-2026

Chair's Presentation to Housing Rights Advisory
Committee

May 13, 2024



Background

- The Toronto Housing Charter, adopted in 2019, commits the City of Toronto to supporting improved housing outcomes for its residents and to moving deliberately to further the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing recognized in international law and in the National Housing Strategy Act (2019).
- The right to adequate housing means that all individuals, without discrimination, have the right to housing that is affordable, accessible, secure and safe, and the progressive realization of this right means taking actions and steps, within the resources and capacity available to achieve this, while prioritizing those whose housing rights are most impacted and who are made most vulnerable by the housing crisis.
- The Framework for Priority Setting for the Housing Rights Advisory Committee is intended to guide the work of the Committee in a way that ensures it upholds its mandate from City Council and provides advice to Council that further the progressive realization of this right in Toronto.

Introduction to the Framework

- The framework categorizes the HRAC's priorities into 4 components, representing challenges faced by people in greatest need across Toronto's housing continuum in the realization of the right to adequate housing.
 - It begins by identifying challenges faced by people who are unhoused
 - Then considers those related to accessing and maintaining adequate housing
 - The final component addresses increasing and protecting the supply of affordable rental housing.
- This continuum aligns with the City's HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan which aims to take action across the full housing spectrum from homelessness to rental housing.
- For each component of the framework, housing rights considerations, examples of City policies, programs, strategies and activities that can affect the right to housing, and examples of high level housing rights outcomes that the HRAC could support are identified.
- The framework also includes foundational questions and considerations that HRAC can apply in each area, in alignment with its mandate and with a rights-based approach to housing.
- Finally, the framework commits to monitoring progress towards the progressive realization of the human right to adequate housing for each component, and overall with respect to the Housing TO 2020-30 Action Plan.

	Supporting people who are unhoused	Access to housing	Maintaining housing	Increasing the right supply
Housing rights considerations	People who are unhoused face particular challenges meeting their basic needs. Supports for people who are unhoused may include access to shelter, clean water, sanitation, food, heating and cooling, accessibility supports, healthcare, and harm reduction.	People can face barriers accessing housing that is affordable, safe, and helps to meet their other needs.	People who are housed can experience various challenges maintaining that housing and keeping it adequate (i.e., risks to both maintaining the adequacy of their housing and to their ability to remain in their homes). These risks can vary depending on their specific housing situation.	The development and protection of rental housing that is adequate to people in greatest need is required to make progress in each component of this framework, and also to further progressive realization of the right to adequate housing.
Examples of intersection with City policies, programs, and activities	• Encampment response • Central intake/access point system • Shelter system and services—access and adequacy, Toronto Shelter and 24-hr Respite Standards • City-funded drop-in services • Warming and cooling centres • Street Outreach • Harm reduction policies (e.g., safe supply)	• Housing access systems • Supportive housing programs and services (including on-site and follow-up supports) • Community-based services, supports and resources for residents • Access to RGI housing/support • Income supports and housing benefits (e.g. Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit, social assistance) • Rent Bank	• Eviction prevention and tenant support programs (including legal supports, rent bank) • RentSafeTO • Multi-tenant homes framework (addressing potential displacement and also keeping the supply of deeply affordable rental housing) • Renovictions and demovictions policies (including rental replacement bylaw) • Housing At Risk Table (HART)	• Short-term rentals by-law • Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition program (MURA) • Affordable housing supply programs (Open Door, Housing Now, Modular/Rapid Housing) • TCHC Revitalizations • Planning policies and by-laws (Official Plan, Zoning-bylaw, etc.)

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Examples of high-level housing rights outcomes	• Reduced numbers of people who are unhoused • Human rights informed encampment response • Established targets and timelines for providing basic necessities to and finding housing solutions for people who are unhoused • Improved shelter access and safety: development, implementation and monitoring of human rights informed shelter standards, including accessibility and safety considerations • Improved drop-in access and safety: development, implementation and monitoring of human rights informed protocols for drop-in centres, including accessibility and safety considerations • Engagement of people with living and lived experience in the development of processes and protocols of services and systems they are using	• Increased and equitable access to affordable and supportive housing, prioritizing those in greatest need • Community infrastructure and services are available and sufficient to support people where they live • People have easier access to supportive housing programs with clear definitions and goals, and culturally responsive programming • Improved health and well-being of people living in supportive housing programs • Service users, those most impacted and most vulnerable, inform program design and processes to access housing with supports	• Tenants have access to emergency resources to prevent eviction and support relocation, if necessary • Tenants are protected from eviction by programs and services that are responsive, enforced, and effective in stabilizing homes for renters • Tenants have access to remedies for housing conditions that are uninhabitable • Appropriate data is gathered to inform policies and programs, and targets and metrics are established as needed • Tenants experiencing housing precarity are engaged in the design, development, implementation and monitoring of programs and processes • Tenant voices inform advocacy to other governments to strengthen tenant protections	• Rental housing preservation programs protect and improve the supply of affordable and deeply affordable units • Supply of supportive, affordable and rent-geared-to-income housing is increasing to address demand • Appropriate data is gathered to inform policies and programs that mitigate the negative effects of the financialization of housing on tenants; targets and metrics are established and monitored, and data is collected and made publicly available

Foundational Framework Components

Housing rights questions and considerations	• Whose housing challenges are being represented, and not represented, in this framework? • Which communities are most impacted? • How does systemic discrimination impact individuals and communities? • How can we (the Committee) connect with the communities most impacted? How can/should the City do so? • How do we ensure people with lived experience are prioritized, while applying an intersectional lens? • What are the interjurisdictional issues and challenges, that impact progress towards realizing the right to housing? • How do we know that the City is progressively realizing the right to housing in this area? What is being measured, monitored and reported transparently?
Monitoring outcomes	• Data sources: City Housing dashboard; Housing data book; HousingTO reporting; Shelter system data; administrative data • Opportunities: Ongoing as human rights outcomes are identified and considered, and specifically to provide input and recommendations on the 2025 mid-point review of HousingTO • Ensure City staff understand and apply a housing rights lens to housing work • Engage people with living and lived experiences of housing precarity in the design, design, development, implementation and monitoring of housing and homelessness action plan

Council Standing Committees

- Council standing committees involved in housing-related policies, programs and strategies
 - Executive Committee
 - Planning and Housing Committee
 - Economic and Community Development Committee
 - Toronto Board of Health
- Through these, HRAC may receive referred items, or can direct its advice to Toronto City Council

Discussion & Feedback

- Overall feedback
 - Do the components of the framework resonate?
 - Does it capture all of the issues and priorities related our mandate or does it miss anything critical?
- Setting the agenda for each meeting
 - How do we do it transparent, responsive, proactive while also being within scope
- Engagement
 - How do we engage more broadly?



THANK YOU