

Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Communities in Accessing Safe Affordable and Supportive Housing

Presentation to 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee

April 16, 2024





Overview

- 1) Introduction & Context
- 2) HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan
- 3) Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Communities
- 4) Next Steps & Opportunities for Input

Introduction



- Meredith Kratzmann (she/her),
*Senior Strategic Policy
Consultant, Housing Secretariat*
- Ciara Hart (she/her),
*Senior Strategic Policy
Consultant, Housing Secretariat*
- Mercedeh Madani, (she/her),
*Acting Director, Housing Policy &
Strategy, Housing Secretariat*

What We Do

The Housing Secretariat works to enhance the health of Toronto's residents, neighbourhoods, economy and environment by delivering funding and incentives, and by developing innovative housing solutions, to create and maintain safe, affordable and adequate housing for lower-income residents



**Delivering
New
Affordable
Homes**



**Preserving
Existing
Rental
Stock**



**Supporting
Equity**



**Improving
Housing
Stability**



**Supporting
Access to
Housing**



**Supporting
Climate
Action**

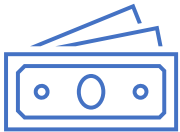
Toronto's Housing Context



Toronto's Housing Challenges



- Over 11,100 individuals experiencing active homelessness
- 1.4% vacancy rate – healthy rental market is 3%
- About 48% of Toronto households are renters, and 40% of renters are living in unaffordable housing



- For every 1 new affordable unit built in Toronto, it is estimated that 15 existing private affordable units are lost



- Rapid decline in new purpose-built rental housing since the 80s-90s
- Less direct federal and provincial investments in non-market housing, particularly deeply affordable homes

Whole-of-government and whole-of-community cooperation and coordination is required for a **systems approach** to address homelessness



The City's HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan



HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan

- Adopted by City Council 2019, Canada's first human rights-based housing plan, which reflects and advances the City's commitment to the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing.
- The City's umbrella housing and homelessness plan, providing a blueprint for actions and investments across the full housing continuum over the next 10 years.



HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan

- The HousingTO Plan includes over 76 actions across **13 strategic themes**, that address:
 - Creating new supply
 - Protecting and preserving existing supply
 - Supporting renters and improving housing stability
 - Prioritizing diverse housing needs
 - Transforming housing policies

HOW WILL IT BE DONE?

1. Adopt a revised "Toronto Housing Charter – Opportunity for All"
2. Enhance Partnerships with Indigenous Community Partners
3. Prevent Homelessness and Improve Pathways to Housing Stability
4. Provide Pathways to Support Women*
5. Maintain and Increase Access to Affordable Rents
6. Meeting the Diverse Housing Needs of Seniors
7. Ensure Well-Maintained and Secure Homes for Renters
8. Support Toronto Community Housing and its Residents
9. Continue the Revitalization of Neighbourhoods
10. Create New Rental Housing Responsive to Residents' Needs
11. Help People Buy and Stay in Their Homes
12. Improve Accountability and Transparency in Delivery of Housing Services to Residents
13. Enhance Partnerships and Intergovernmental Strategy



* Expanded to include Gender Diverse People

Priority Populations

The City is creating a range of affordable rental homes and preserving the City's existing purpose-built rental housing stock which will increase opportunity for **Indigenous peoples**, as well as other **equity-deserving groups, including Black and other racialized residents, seniors, women and gender diverse people, youth, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community** to access safe, healthy, and adequate housing.

Further details on the ways in which the City is creating and preserving housing will be addressed in the upcoming slides.

2SLGBTQ+ Canadians

2X as likely

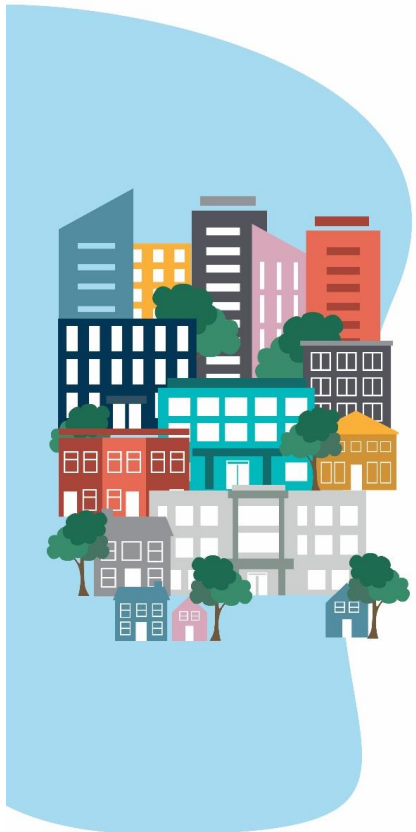
**to have experienced
homelessness
or housing insecurity**

Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Communities



Housing Pathways for Women and Gender Diverse People Working Group

- Established in 2022
- Advances the HousingTO Plan's Key Strategic Action #4 "Provide Pathways to Support Women and Gender Diverse People"
- Members support and serve women and gender diverse people and their dependents, including survivors of gender-based violence
- Provides advice on policy and program improvements to the Housing Secretariat



Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Communities in Toronto

The City supports 2SLGBTQ+ communities to access and maintain affordable housing in Toronto, through:

- Administering Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing with some key communities prioritized where we know 2SLGBTQ+ individuals are disproportionately represented, including applicants experiencing homelessness, youth applicants and those fleeing intimate partner violence or human trafficking.
- Administering the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB), which is a portable benefit, and prioritizing communities where we know 2SLGBTQ+ individuals are disproportionately represented, specifically the shelter relief stream and the intimate partner violence stream.



Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Communities in Toronto

The City supports 2SLGBTQ+ communities to access and maintain affordable housing in Toronto, also through:

- Prioritizing access to new permanent supportive housing and housing with supports programs, including the Rapid Rehousing Initiative, to support housing stability.
- Providing grants for housing and support services providers for targeted programs and services, including many youth specific programs. These grants support programs delivered by The 519, Covenant House, Eva's Initiatives for Homeless Youth, Fife House, YMCA, LOFT Community Services.



Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Communities in Toronto

7 Vanauley St. - YMCA

- 31 new supportive homes dedicated to 2SLGBTQ+ youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Funding from the federal government's Rapid Housing Initiative, and City funding, YMCA to develop and operate.



Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Communities in Toronto

2217 Kingston Rd. - Thunder Woman Healing Lodge

- 24 affordable transitional homes for First Nation, Inuit and Metis 2SLGBTQ+ women exiting correctional institutions, with wrap-around supports in Scarborough.
- City provided Open Door Program funding and financial incentives.



Next Steps & Opportunities for Input



Key Next Steps & Opportunities for Input

The Housing Secretariat will continue to build affordable and supportive homes dedicated to individuals exiting homelessness, with **engagement from the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee**.

There are also opportunities to support 2SLGBTQ+ communities and other equity-deserving groups through building on initiatives, such as:

- **Developing the Housing Secretariat's Data Strategy** to strengthen the City's collection and use of equity-related demographic data.
- **Exploring alignment** between the Housing Rights Advisory Committee and other Council Advisory Committees.





THANK YOU