



Apr 21, 2025

RE: Motion EX22.10 - Build More Homes: Identifying Opportunities for More Purpose-Built Rental Housing

Dear Mayor Chow and Councillors,

We, the Co-Chairs of the Accessible Housing Network, write to you as disabled Toronto residents. We are heartened by the continued desire for investment in purpose-built, rental housing within Toronto with a clear focus on affordability. As we know, disabled tenants in Toronto are faced with increased costs compared to other residents¹ and increased risk of homelessness (in particular, disabled women).² This is a good and important step for disabled renters—alongside, we hope, further advocacy for full, meaningful rent control.

However, affordable housing must also be accessible housing. We would hope that projects reviewed under this motion would also be measured against existing standards already passed by this City in other instances. We were part of the City's Accessible Housing Working Group (AHWG) and remain in support of its [Recommendations on Increasing the City's Supply of Accessible Affordable Housing](#). We believe a corresponding standard should apply to the projects approved here and *additional* standards that support deaf tenants and tenants with environmental sensitivities should be developed. Deepening our made-in-Toronto standards allows this City to continue leadership in this country on accessible housing and provides tenants assurance that true, accessible affordable housing will be available for all, without exceptions.

We also know that universal, inclusive housing design is often portrayed as more costly or niche. This is not true. It is no more expensive to build an apartment using universal, inclusive design principles than it is not to do so. It is not niche to build apartments that can become places built for all stages of our lives for all people. Any of us can benefit from these design decisions, all of us will experience disability in our families' lives. Instead of approving projects that are exclusive and lack universal design principles, we urge the City to ensure that the best inclusive practices are followed and reinforced through this process.

With sincere respect,

AHN Co-Chairs and Past Co-Chairs

- Minette Samaroo
- Kate Chung
- Brad Evoy
- Salvatore Amenta

¹ Wellesley Institute, 2024: <https://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/publications/thriving-disability/>

² Canadian Human Rights Commission and Office of the Federal Housing Advocate, 2024: <https://www.housingchrc.ca/en/node/121>