



Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Attn: Toronto City Council & Office of the Mayor

re: DM31.1 - Commencing Public Consultations for Communities Impacted by New Shelter Locations - by Councillor James Pasternak, seconded by Councillor Parthi Kandavel

Dear City Council and Mayor Chow,

We are writing to express our deep concern about this proposed motion by Councillor Pasternak, and seconded by Councillor Kandavel. It is troubling to see a motion from elected officials that undermines the basic right to shelter.

Across the City, “neighbours” are organizing against what promotes survival for unhoused residents, including these six proposed shelter sites, encampments, respites, and supervised consumption sites. These services are positioned as a threat to the comfort or “safety” of people with greater wealth and privilege. Fear and dehumanization of poor, unhoused and racialized people is being normalized through policy decisions, preventing the operations of safe, accessible, and life-affirming shelters and services.

Passing this motion would increase the risk that people’s comfort will be weaponized to deny others their fundamental human right to shelter, amidst a housing emergency. The current heat emergency highlights the severe inadequacy of the current shelter system and creating barriers that make space for dehumanizing rhetoric will mean more unhoused people will die. These are our neighbours, and whether or not they should be “welcomed” into a particular neighbourhood is not up for debate. These dehumanizing debates take place on stolen land, where Indigenous community members are disproportionately unhoused due to historical and ongoing colonial violence. People in support of these proposed sites are ignored, and unhoused people are completely erased and excluded from these “community consultations.”

The City must not cater to this discriminatory and dehumanizing rhetoric. In reality, people who are unsheltered and unhoused face a higher risk of violence, illness, injury and death. Their safety matters and people deserve access to the means of survival. Ultimately, this means housing for all and until this happens there must be safe options for unhoused people to survive without fear of harassment, criminalization, injury and death.

In this increasingly hostile environment towards unhoused, poor and marginalized people where we see violent legislation from the provincial government under the guise of “safety,” City Council must protect measures that ensure people have access to a safe indoor space. These are matters of life and death. As City Council, you must be accountable to these residents, and we urge you to reject this proposed motion. We will be paying attention to your votes on this matter.

Signed,

Shelter & Housing Justice Network

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