

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

John Elvidge
City Clerk
Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Elvidge,

Re: Administrative Inquiry on Micro-Shelters

I am submitting this Administrative Inquiry under Municipal Code S27-7.11 for the March 26, 2025 meeting of City Council to seek an update on 2024.EC13.8 - The City's Encampment Approach and Strategy.

On June 26, 2024, City Council directed:

1. the General Manager, Toronto Shelter and Support Services to report back through the 2025 Budget process on the costs for:
 - a. up to three concurrent 24/7 Community Safety Teams for large encampments; and
 - b. increasing shelter and respite capacity across the City, including temporary modular and micro-shelter options, required to fully accommodate everyone living in an encampment.
2. the General Manager, Toronto Shelter and Support Services to prioritize the development of immediate rapid shelter program models that address the unique needs of people living in encampments through the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy, including exploring the use of micro-shelters and vacant or under-utilized City-owned lands for this purpose in consultation with the General Manager, Corporate Real Estate Management and Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO.

At our May 2023 City Council meeting, homelessness was declared an emergency in the city, but shelter capacity and persistent encampments in City-owned parks continue to be a challenge. The City must do absolutely everything possible to mobilize temporary solutions while more permanent shelters and supportive/affordable housing are being built.

Micro-shelters should be rapidly procured and installed in underutilized City-owned parking lots and land across the city. In this absence, micro-shelter type structures are being placed illegally in our parks without important safety and oversight considerations, further frustrating efforts to clear these spaces for use by the broader public.

I am very concerned about our cyclical strategy where we wind down our temporary winter locations in the spring and people have nowhere else to go, so they encamp in our parks. We cannot go into another summer without a plan. No plan means our parks become the plan.

I am requesting answers to the following questions from the General Manager, Toronto Shelter & Support Services:

1. What is the status of increasing shelter and respite capacity across the City, including temporary modular and micro-shelter options, required to fully accommodate everyone living in an encampment?
2. What are the limitations and barriers preventing staff from prioritizing the development of immediate rapid shelter program models?
 - a. What are staff doing to overcome those limitations and barriers?
3. If there are zoning limitations, why haven't staff brought a report to City Council to request temporary exemptions and/or changes to our zoning bylaw?
4. If there were funding limitations, has this funding been requested in the 2025 budget?
5. Have staff explored and/or applied for funding from the provincial and federal governments for the purposes of creating temporary shelter spaces as well as housing individuals living in encampments?
 - a. In January 2025, the Provincial Government announced \$20 million for municipalities to expand shelter capacity and create additional temporary accommodation spaces.
 - b. In that same announcement they also committed \$5.5 million to top up the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) to immediately free up emergency shelter spaces for people living in encampments by helping people living in shelters move into longer-term housing.
6. When will a staff report be coming to give all necessary authorities and budget to implement a micro-shelters pilot?

Respectfully submitted,



Chris Moise
City Councillor
Ward 13 - Toronto Centre