

From: [Donna Spreitzer](#)
To: [Clerk](#)
Cc: [Israt Ahmed](#); [Donna Spreitzer](#)
Subject: [External Sender] Re: Expanding Emergency Shelter Infrastructure in Toronto EC22.3
Date: July 8, 2025 11:45:40 AM

Dear City Clerk - I cannot get the buttons to work on the City's website so I am submitting this submission to you. Thank you.

July 9, 2025

From: Donna Spreitzer

Dear Chair Councillor Bravo and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today in strong support of the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS) and the urgent development of new, purpose-built shelter spaces across Toronto.

As the Executive Director of the Toronto Community for Better Child Care, I have seen first-hand how the most vulnerable people in Toronto are falling through the cracks. Thousands of child care subsidies go unfilled, not for lack of need, but for lack of a child care space!

I commend the City of Toronto and Mayor Chow for prioritizing housing. But housing and shelter without child care is short-sighted. Women need access to child care where they live. If they are to find meaningful work and lift themselves out of poverty, they must have access to child care.

The ripple effects of housing and high quality child care reach far beyond the individual. When someone is housed and when parents can work, communities become stronger. Hospitals see fewer emergency visits. Streets become safer. Families are reunited. Children are able to thrive in school. Entire neighbourhoods become more vibrant, stable, and connected. Housing is not a burden on a city nor on neighbourhoods, it is the infrastructure of care that makes everything else possible.

And yet, thousands of our neighbours are left without access to these most basic needs. The City's own data shows that nearly 300 people are turned away from shelters each night, and over 280 encampments remain across the city. These numbers represent real people, each with potential, with dreams, with the right to live in safety and dignity. The proposed 1,600 new shelter spaces are not just timely, they are essential. These must be developed in collaboration with people with lived experience, designed with flexibility for future conversion to permanent housing, and operated with integrated supports including harm reduction, mental health care, and client-centred case management.

Community agencies have called for the following:

- Purpose-built, smaller shelters that are community-integrated and dignity-focused
- An equitable distribution of shelter services across all wards
- A long-term view that links emergency response with the broader HousingTO 2020–2030 Action Plan
- Sector-wide funding parity and multi-year operational stability
- Toronto must remain open to creative, interim solutions such as micro-shelters and modular housing, particularly as we face urgent encampment displacement.

Housing is a human right. Please move forward swiftly with the implementation of new shelter sites and long-term housing solutions.

Sincerely,

Donna Spreitzer

Donna Spreitzer, ECE, BA, MA

(pronouns: she/her) ([why pronouns?](#))

Executive Director

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(Please note I work a 4-day week)