

From: [Jo-Anne B](#)
To: [Economic and Community Development](#)
Cc: [premier@ontario.ca](#); [Councillor Malik](#); [Mayor Chow](#); [chi.nguyen@toronto.ca](#); [CGlover-CO@ndp.on.ca](#); [Gordon Tanner](#); [Kate Bassil](#); [Paul Johnson \(City Manager\)](#)
Subject: [External Sender] EC22.3— Please post my letter as a web link
Date: July 8, 2025 4:15:39 PM

To Senior City of Toronto Staff, Mayor Chow, and City Council,

I would like to give you all some context here. I am a senior who has lived in the neighbourhood surrounding the proposed site for over 30 years and my partner and I are seriously thinking of leaving because of what is happening in our neighbourhood that will only get worse once 629 gets opened. We already are negatively impacted by what goes on at the newly named HART Hub at Queen and Richmond and placing the shelter in this residential neighbourhood will mean we no longer have any safe spaces. When I walk on Queen St W I am often subjected to individuals who are so angry due to drug addiction that I fear for my own safety; I have been swung at, screamed at and chased. I constantly see individuals selling drugs, openly taking drugs, stealing from each other and then throwing the contents of the suitcase that they have stolen all over the street or laneway not to mention being woken up at night by an individual who is screaming at the top of their lungs. The harm reduction approach that the City supports obviously is not working. Nothing makes me sadder than to walk by a group of individuals in my neighbourhood park who are between 20-30 years that are emaciated and so drugged out they are stooped over. These individuals deserve help instead they are being given drug supplies so that they can slowly kill themselves and make us feel like we are no longer safe to walk in our neighbourhood in broad daylight. I don't propose to have all the answers but what I do know is that what you and the so-called harm reduction advocates and staff that we pay to help addicts are failing them. Why do the children at St Mary's have to play behind a fence that is as high as you put in a prison and not be able to look out because you cannot find a better site for this place or take the time to realize that harm reduction is not the answer!

Outraged Opposition to the Reckless Siting of a 24-hour Emergency Shelter at 629 Adelaide Street West — Demand for Full Public Inquiry

I am writing to express my **fury and absolute opposition** to the City's decision to dangerously force a **24-hour emergency shelter program** at **629 Adelaide Street West** — a decision made **in secret**, under **false pretences**, and with **zero transparency, zero accountability, and zero public genuine consultation**.

The City's own 2024 Street Needs Assessment just released again confirms what we all know:

- **44%** of homeless people surveyed report **serious mental health challenges**
- **25%** surveyed report **substance use issues**

And yet you have decided to place this high-risk, high-needs facility in the **middle of a residential neighbourhood**, surrounded by **homes, laneways, elementary schools, and small businesses** — with **no public safety plan** in place — two blocks from Queen and Bathurst Street where there is negligent and significant social chaos — that will move into the very heart of our neighbourhood.

This shelter will be **distributing needles, pipes, and drug-use paraphernalia within metres of children**

and homes. This isn't just incompetence — it is **gross negligence** and a **flagrant disregard** for neighbourhood safety.

To make matters even more outrageous, the operator you've chosen — **St. Felix Centre** — has **no experience running a 24/7 shelter of this size, risk level, or complexity.** This is a **disaster waiting to happen**, engineered by a City that refuses to engage with residents.

The City claims this facility will open on **July 14, 2025**, yet job ads for "**Shelter Support - Relief**" staff were just posted, listing a **start date of August 8, 2025.** Required qualifications? A single year of experience and, unbelievably, a willingness to "**witness drug use (intravenous, nasal, and oral)**" and "**monitor the environment for safety.**" In the heart of a family-oriented residential neighbourhood.

Let me be absolutely clear:

- Drug use on the shelter property at 629 Adelaide Street West is illegal.
- **629 Adelaide has NO outdoor space.**
- It is surrounded on all sides by homes, laneways, parking lots, and is 54 METRES from a school.

The entire process reeks of **backroom politics, cover-ups**, and a disturbing lack of respect for democratic process. It raises urgent and serious questions:

- What criteria were used to select this site?
- Is the site zoning even legal?
- Who made this decision, and based on what risk assessments?
- What are the full **financial costs**, and who signed off on them?
- What consideration — if any — was given to **public safety, school proximity, and the rights of neighbourhood residents?**
- What exactly is the threshold of social chaos you deem "acceptable" for a neighbourhood for your poorly planned projects?

We deserve answers.

I am calling for a **FULL PUBLIC INQUIRY** into the siting of this shelter at 629 Adelaide Street West. This inquiry must be **independent, transparent, and accountable**, and must address:

1. All costs related to acquisition, renovation, staffing, and operations;
2. The selection criteria and decision-making process used by City staff and Council;
3. The operational qualifications (or lack thereof) of **St. Felix Centre**;
4. All communications, internal documents, and consultation records;
5. The complete absence of meaningful public consultation and the impact on community safety.

This shelter is a **severe breach of public trust.** This is a **city-sanctioned assault on a safe, established neighbourhood.** You are putting seniors, children, our neighbourhood, at risk. Until this plan is halted

and a full inquiry is launched, we will continue to **organize, speak out, and fight back — loudly, publicly, and relentlessly.**

We are not going away. We will save our neighbourhood from the City of Toronto's recklessness.

Sincerely,

Jo-Anne Barnard
33 year resident, Niagara Neighbourhood