

March 17, 2025

Dear Executive Committee Members,

Amending the Housing Rights Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Summary

The Housing Rights Advisory Committee (the Committee) was established to provide advice to City Council on policies, programs and actions that the City can implement to advance its commitment to furthering the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing in Toronto. The Committee provides this advice based on the housing and human rights expertise and lived experiences of its members, academic research, and learnings from other jurisdictions.

The Committee also provides advice to Council to ensure that the interests and needs of those with living/lived experiences of housing precarity, discrimination and homelessness are reflected in City programs and service delivery, and supports the City's engagement with Indigenous, Black and other equity-deserving communities. This enables the Committee to identify systemic barriers that prevent residents from accessing and maintaining adequate housing, and to recommend actions to remove such barriers.

At its September 23, 2024 meeting, the committee adopted the formation of Working Groups in alignment with its Priorities Framework ([2024.HS3.1](#)). City Council had previously approved an amendment to HRAC's Terms of Reference allowing honorarium payments for participation in Working Groups ([2024.MM18.3](#)) at its May 22 and 23, 2024 meeting.

Amendments to the Committee's Terms of Reference are needed to formalize the Working Groups, in order to further support the Committee's ability to provide effective advice and recommendations to City Council on housing rights matters within Toronto's complex housing and homelessness service system. The recommended amendments:

- enable the Working Groups' to engage proactively and upon request with City Officials and employees and with members of the public (including Indigenous, Black, and other equity-deserving communities and people with lived and living experience of homelessness and housing precarity).

- clarify that the City Clerk’s Office does not provide meeting management for Working Group meetings.
- outline the support that Housing Secretariat Division provides to Working Groups, which includes administrative and facilitation support for engagement.

These proposed amendments align with previous Council recommendations with respect to HRAC Terms of Reference.

Recommendations

1. City Council amend the Terms of Reference for the Housing Rights Advisory Committee as follows:

- a) Under Section B, Composition and Term:

- i. insert a new clause after clause 5 that reads:

“6. The Advisory Committee may form informal Working Groups, each comprised of up to five members of the Advisory Committee.”

- b) Under Section C, Governance:

- i. add “and its Working Groups” to clause 4, so that Section C-4 now reads:

“4. The Housing Secretariat Division will provide staff support and strategic advice to the Advisory Committee and its Working Groups.”

- ii. add “except for its Working Groups.” to clause 5, so that Section C-5 now reads:

5. The City Clerk’s Office will provide meeting management support to the Advisory Committee, except for its Working Groups.”

- iii. add a new clause 6 that reads:

“6. Working Groups:



- i. Shall have Guidelines approved by the Advisory Committee, which include but are not limited to the matters it will address, member composition and anticipated frequency of meetings.
- ii. May engage with City Officials, other City employees and external parties to provide or receive advice on matters related to the Advisory Committee mandate, and engagement shall be facilitated through the Housing Secretariat Division.
- iii. Shall ensure preparation and submission of meeting minutes to the City Clerk's Office, with support from the Housing Secretariat Division, for inclusion on the agenda and assign a lead Working Group member to provide an update on the minutes at the next Advisory Committee meeting.
- iv. Must forward any advice that requires action by City Officials or City Council to the Advisory Committee for consideration and, if recommended by the Advisory Committee, to City Council for approval.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Councillor Gord Perks
Ward 4, Parkdale – High Park

