

## PH18.7 - Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition (MURA) Program Update

January 22, 2025

Submission from Melissa Goldstein

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### Improving reporting/transparency on MURA funding and outcomes

Good morning Planning and Housing Committee members,

This is now the third year that I've been poring over documents at budget time, trying to understand what's going on with MURA funding and what the program is accomplishing. What should be a pretty simple task instead takes me days and leaves me with more questions than answers. This should not be the case.

The problem is that there is very little consistency among City reports of MURA funding—specifically, what funding is available and distributed and the sources of the funding—and there is very little consistency in reports of MURA outcomes—which organizations received funding and how much, what was acquired and renovated with that funding, and what funding is as yet unspent by the recipients. Housing Secretariat budget notes, HousingTO Plan progress reports, and the MURA website, all include different and conflicting information and inconsistent metrics (invested, allocated, awarded, provided, homes, units, purchased, acquired, secured, etc.).

Appendix A illustrates the inconsistencies in reports of program funding. Reports related to outcomes (units acquired) are even more inconsistent due to the nature of the program.

This MURA update report does not adequately address or fix this.

For example, while the report says that 15 recipients received funding through the 2022 and 2023 funding calls, the recipients aren't named, there is no indication of how much each recipient received, what the sources of the funding were, or what each recipient accomplished with the funding. Not only isn't this information available in the report, **it's not available anywhere.**

Making it difficult (if not impossible) to track the flow of funding into this program, how funds are distributed, how they are spent, and what has been accomplished, is not just a problem for transparency and good governance, but it makes it difficult to “tell the MURA story” and give the City's most successful affordable housing initiative by far the recognition and influence that it deserves.

**I have one question and one request.**

**The question is a simple one: How much funding does the staff proposed budget allocate to MURA in 2025 and what is the source of the funds?**

The [2025 Housing Secretariat budget note](#) (p.34) shows only **\$12.1m** is budgeted to fund both MURA and “other repair programs” in 2025, with no mention of specific funding sources. It also shows there is only funding for these programs for the first 5 years of the 10 year capital plan,

and then funding stops. P.39 of the budget note shows that **\$19.1m** in provincial funding and **\$37m** in federal funding is flowing to MURA and “other repair programs” with no details on timing of distribution.

However, the [‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.9) says that **\$30m** will be invested in MURA in 2025, and the [program update](#) we’re discussing today says **\$18m** out of \$101 in funding approved as part of the 2024-2033 capital plan and \$20 million from the provincial Building Faster Fund, to be approval through the 2025 Capital budget process, will go towards the 2025 MURA call and last year’s [Housing Secretariat budget note](#) (p.21) says starting in 2025, **\$10m/yr** from the Vacant Home Tax will go to MURA to ensure program stability.

I understand that additional funds may be allocated to MURA beyond what’s in the budget at a later point, but it’s not clear what is even in the staff proposed budget for MURA in 2025 or the source of the funds.

And my request is also pretty simple:

**Please make regularly updated information about MURA funding and MURA outcomes publicly available somewhere on the City’s website.** What I would like to see is, **for each year’s funding call, the following regularly updated information, and for all references to the MURA program to use this same information and metrics:**

- **Initial amount of funding available via funding call: \_\_\_\_**
- **Total number of applicants: \_\_\_\_**
- **Total number of successful applicants: \_\_\_\_**
- **Total funding ultimately available/awarded: \_\_\_\_**
- **Sources of funding awarded/amounts from each source: \_\_/ \_\_**

***Project outcomes:***

- **Name of successful applicant (or placeholder when anonymity is necessary): \_\_\_\_**
  - **funds awarded to date (acquisition/repair): \_\_\_\_**
  - **#units acquired/#rooms acquired/#homes repaired to date \_\_/ \_\_/ \_\_**
  - **unspent funds to date: \_\_\_\_**
- **Date the page/data was last updated.**

I think this simple improvement to program reporting will have numerous positive effects, from preventing me from tearing my hair out at budget time, to helping make the case at the provincial and federal levels for MURA funding and province and country-wide acquisition programs.

Thank you,

Melissa Goldstein

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*Melissa Goldstein is an affordable housing and homelessness policy researcher, consultant, and advocate and member of the City of Toronto’s Tenant Advisory Committee.*

## **Appendix A: Illustrating inconsistent reporting of MURA funding data:**

### **2022 funding:**

- According to a City press release, the [2022](#) funding call was for **\$20m** in grant funding.
- The [‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.9) says **\$24.5m** was invested in 2022.

### **2023 funding:**

- According to a City press release, the [2023](#) funding call awarded **\$21.5m**.
- [The ‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.24) says the City awarded **\$39.5m** in funding in 2023.

### **2022-2023 funding:**

- According to the press releases, a total of **\$41.5** million was available through the 2022/23 funding calls.
- The [2024 Housing Secretariat budget note](#) (p.10) says **\$55.6** million was awarded since the program’s inception.
- [The ‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.24) and 2025 MURA update say the City has invested/awarded **\$64m** since 2022.

### **2024 funding**

- The 2024 [funding call](#) was for **\$51m**.
- [The ‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.9) says that **\$51** million was invested in 2024,
- The 2025 Housing Secretariat Budget note says the third funding call in 2024 was for **\$44million** (p.10)
- The [Jan, ‘25 MURA program update](#) says that the 2024 funding call will distribute **\$102m** in funds, consisting of \$101 million MURA funding approved as part of the 2024-2033 capital plan, along with \$20 million from the provincial Building Faster Fund, slated for approval through the 2025 Capital budget process. This funding will support Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition Program all successful proposals under the 2024 RFP along with \$18 million remaining to support the 2025 MURA RFP. (pp.4-5)"

### **2022- 2024 funding**

- The [2025 Housing Secretariat budget note](#) (p.10) says total MURA funding since 2022 is **\$108m**.
- [The ‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.24) says “through the 2024 budget, **\$100m** over 3 years has been allocated to MURA,”

### **2025 funding**

- The [2024 Housing Secretariat budget note](#) (p.21) says **\$10m/year** is being committed from the Vacant Home Tax, starting in 2025, to ensure program stability.
- [The ‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.9) shows that **\$30m** will be invested in 2025,
- The [2025 Housing Secretariat budget note](#) (p.34) shows only **\$12.1m** is budgeted to fund both MURA and “other repair programs” in 2025 (no mention of specific funding sources). It also shows there is only funding for these programs for the first 5 years of the 10 year capital plan, and then funding stops. P.39 shows that **\$19.1m** in provincial funding and **\$37m** in federal funding is flowing to MURA and “other repair programs” with no details on timing of distribution.
- The [Jan, ‘25 MURA program update](#) says **\$18m** out of \$101 in funding approved as part of the 2024-2033 capital plan and \$20 million from the provincial Building Faster Fund, to be approval through the 2025 Capital budget process will go towards the 2025 MURA call.

### **2026 funding**

- [The ‘23/’24 HousingTO update report](#) (p.9) shows that **\$20m** will be invested in 2026.
- The [2025 Housing Secretariat budget note](#) (p.34) says a total of **\$22m** will go to both MURA and “other repair programs” in 2026.