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**To:** [Planning and Housing](#)  
**Cc:** [Councillor Perks](#); [Councillor Matlow](#); [Councillor Myers](#); [Councillor Nunziata](#); [Councillor Crisanti](#); [Councillor Bradford](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender] R2HTO Submission: PH23.3 - Advancing Six Sites for the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS)  
**Date:** July 14, 2025 4:54:34 PM  
**Attachments:** [R2HTO submission - Advancing Six Sites for the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy.pdf](#)

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Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

We are representatives of the Right to Housing Toronto (R2HTO), a network of organizations and individuals working to support the implementation of the right to housing by the City of Toronto. Please find attached our written submission in response to item [PH23.3 - Advancing Six Sites for the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy \(HSCIS\) - City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment and Six Zoning By-law Amendments - Decision Report - Approval](#) that is being considered by the Planning and Housing Committee on July 15, 2025.

R2HTO looks forward to ongoing opportunities to support the City in implementing a rights-based approach to housing.

Thank you,  
On behalf of Right to Housing Toronto (R2HTO)

Jonella Evangelista  
Right to Housing Toronto (R2HTO) Coordinator  
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# Advancing Six Sites for the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy

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Submission to Planning and Housing Committee

July 14, 2025

Submission by: Right to Housing Toronto



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Councillor Gord Perks  
Chair of the Planning and Housing Committee  
Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

**Re: PH23.3 - Advancing Six Sites for the Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS) - City-Initiated Official Plan Amendment and Six Zoning By-law Amendments - Decision Report - Approval**

We are representatives of the Right to Housing Toronto (R2HTO), a network of organizations and individuals working to support the implementation of the right to housing by the City of Toronto. We are writing in response to item [PH23.3](#) regarding advancing six sites for the City's Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS).

Following R2HTO's recent [deputation](#) at the Economic and Community Development Committee on item [EC22.3](#) regarding the City's 2024 Street Needs Assessment and HSCIS, we are writing to express our strong support for the strategy, and in particular, for the proposed zoning changes for the six shelter sites identified. As Toronto continues to face an escalating homelessness crisis, it is critical for the City to prioritize the needs of those most impacted by ensuring immediate and equitable access to safe shelter spaces, while working towards long-term, permanent, affordable housing for all.

The findings of the 2024 Street Needs Assessment paint a stark picture of the city's homelessness crisis. As of October 2024, over 15,000 people were experiencing homelessness, a number that has more than doubled in just three years. Moreover, over 1,600 people were living outdoors, unsheltered and susceptible to harsh and unpredictable weather conditions. As Toronto continues to face multiple severe heat waves and poor air quality, for those without shelter, these weather events are life-threatening, with the increased risk of dehydration, heat stroke, and other medical emergencies. Unsheltered people represent our community members, **real people**, who deserve safe, accessible, and adequate shelter.

Homelessness is a direct result of underinvestment, policy gaps, and systemic barriers. The root causes outlined in the City's assessment are clear. The steep and rapid increase in rental costs, erosion of income supports, and widening affordability gap are all contributing to rising rates of homelessness. At the same time, evictions are occurring at an increasing rate, while we continue to lose our stock of affordable housing.



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As outlined in the Toronto Housing Charter, the City has committed to the progressive realization of the right to housing. As part of that commitment, the City must maximize its resources to ensure its policies and infrastructure prioritize the needs of those most impacted by the housing and homelessness crisis. This includes not only groups disproportionately impacted by the crisis – including people experiencing chronic homelessness, seniors, low-income households, people with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, Black people, refugees and refugee claimants, 2SLGBTQ+ people, women, and youth – but also residents living across all wards in the city. Shelters are a critical element of housing infrastructure and should be accessible in all neighbourhoods.

With respect to the six proposed shelter sites in particular, shelters are already a permitted use on all of the sites, and the designs are consistent with urban design guidelines and the neighbourhood context. Moreover, shelter use is consistent with provincial direction under the Provincial Policy Statement.

As such, we strongly support the City's HSCIS and urge the City to:

- Approve the proposed zoning and official plan amendments for all six sites, which would provide approximately 420 new shelter beds.
- Deliver the 1,600 overall shelter spaces with urgency, prioritizing permanent, purpose-built, and community-integrated facilities.
- Meaningfully engage shelter residents, particularly those from equity-deserving groups, during the implementation of this strategy.
- Ensure this strategy is linked to long-term housing solutions, including the expansion of diverse, affordable, and supportive housing options, rental assistance, and pathways to permanent housing.
- Align this plan with the HousingTO Action Plan, the Toronto Housing Charter, and other citywide strategies to ensure a coordinated, rights-based response to homelessness.

The City has rightfully recognized that housing is a human right, not a privilege. Moreover, homelessness is not an individual failure but an outcome of policy decisions and systemic barriers. We are encouraged to see the City taking important steps to uphold the right to housing for all through the HSCIS. R2HTO welcomes ongoing opportunities to engage with the City to support implementing a rights-based approach to all of its housing policies and programs.

Thank you,  
On behalf of Right to Housing Toronto (R2HTO)



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