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*... and the day came when
the risk to remain tight in a
bud was more painful than
the risk it took to blossom*

Anais Nin

April 13, 2026

**Nancy Martins
City Clerk's Office
Planning and Housing Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2**

Copy to: Councillor Nunziata

Re: Item PH29.5 – Advancing the City's Affordable Housing Access System

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

The Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF) is a Toronto-based charitable organization established in 1978 located in Mount Dennis, Ward 5 - York South Weston. We provide a holistic range of social and economic development services to thousands of families and individuals across more than thirty Toronto neighbourhoods. Each year, LEF provides essential services including licensed childcare for over 2,500 children, as well as employment, language, and training support to more than 6,100 individuals. Our work is grounded in equity, collaboration, and building pathways for individuals to actively participate in their community's social and economic development.

Rooted in our mission to advance community-responsive initiatives that empower residents and foster inclusive social and economic growth, LEF is redeveloping three properties at 1240, 1246, and 1250 Weston Road into the *Quilt*, a 14-storey mixed-use development with community and economic development at its heart. The Quilt will provide 149 units of affordable housing plus approx. 30,000 sq ft of community space and affordable retail.

We write today to express our concerns regarding the proposed implementation approach for the new Centralized Affordable Rental Housing Access System as set out in the City's staff report dated March 27, 2026 (the "Report") – Item PH29.5. The solution put forward doesn't recognize the deep history of Toronto's varied and vibrant neighborhoods. A one-size-fits-all approach to this complex process is neither suitable nor equitable for neighborhoods experiencing rapid displacement because of transit intensification.

We urge the Committee to defer this matter back to City staff for further consultation and to ensure that full implementation does not proceed in 2026.

Our Concerns

Premature implementation timeline. The Report proposes to launch the new system in Q3 2026, without adequate time for education, training, or transition planning. For housing providers operating under existing affordable housing agreements with the City, the Report provides no clear guidance on how the transition will be managed. This creates real risk of vacancy losses and operational disruption.

Unworkable secondary screening model. The Report contemplates referring applicants to housing providers for secondary screening even where a unit's rent may represent up to 100% of their annual income. This places housing providers and applicants in an untenable position and runs counter to the Report's stated goal of reducing vacancy loss.

An overly narrow and operationally unworkable targeted allocation framework. The Report treats the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan (the "HousingTO Plan") as establishing a closed list of priority populations for targeted allocation, requiring City Council direction for any group not on that list. The City's proposed interpretation imposes a rigidity the HousingTO Plan was never designed to carry and does so in a way that will directly harm key workers and the housing providers trying to serve them. Requiring Council approval for each case will introduce unpredictable political uncertainty into the development process, threatening otherwise viable projects.

A consultation process that has not met Council's own co-design standard. Through item PH35.20 (July 2022), Council directed staff to include housing providers in the "co-design, implementation planning and timing" of the new system. What was delivered – a quarterly advisory panel and a series of information sessions – falls well short of that standard.


Recommended Actions

We respectfully request that the Planning and Housing Committee:

- Refer Item PH29.5 back to City staff with direction to undertake a genuine co-design process consistent with PH35.20 (2022), engage a broader group of impacted stakeholders, and report back with an amended report in early 2027;
- Direct City staff not to proceed with full implementation of the new system in 2026, and to return to Council in early 2027 with a proposed pilot project, with full rollout no earlier than 2028;
- If the report proceeds in any form, defer implementation to no earlier than mid-2027 to allow adequate time for education, training, and transition planning;
- Direct staff to revise their interpretation of the HousingTO Plan's priority populations framework to reflect the HousingTO Plan's principles-based language, and to establish a mechanism to recognize key workers as an eligible targeted population; and
- Direct staff to provide the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat with delegated authority to approve targeted allocation requests outside the HousingTO priority populations, subject to Human Rights Code compliance and an approved Access Plan, without requiring City Council direction in each case.

LEF is committed to working collaboratively with the City to deliver well-managed, affordable rental housing in Toronto. We believe a well-designed access system can be a genuine improvement for applicants and providers alike. But getting the design right matters more than getting it done quickly. We respectfully urge the Committee to take the additional time required to do this properly.

Yours respectfully,


Amina Yassin-Omar

VP, Community and Placemaking