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POLICY CONTEXT

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1.1 HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES TORONTO AND THE TORONTO HOUSING CHARTER

Housing Opportunities Toronto (HOT): An Affordable Housing Action Plan (see Appendix D: Links to References and Resources) was adopted by Toronto City Council in 2009. The HOT Plan represents the City's ten-year commitment to actions and investments that will create safe, affordable and well-maintained housing for Toronto's most vulnerable and at-risk individuals and families. The HOT Plan recognizes the importance of the shelter system and the need to enhance shelter services with more appropriate facilities and programs that better meet clients' needs.

A key component of the HOT Plan is the *Toronto Housing Charter* (see Appendix D: Links to References and Resources), which is designed to guide Toronto City Council and the Toronto Public Service in the provision of services and programs to residents, including shelter services. It states that fair access to a full range of housing is fundamental to strengthening Toronto's economy, its environmental efforts, and the health and social well-being of its residents and communities.

1.2 HOUSING FIRST

The Housing First approach to shelter service delivery is premised on the idea that stable housing is a homeless individual's or family's primary need, and that issues such as substance use or mental illness can be better addressed once this need is satisfied.

SSHA employs a Housing First approach in order to transform temporary solutions for those experiencing homelessness into services focused on supporting transitions to permanent, stable forms of housing.

1.3 HOUSING STABILITY SERVICE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The *Housing Stability Service Planning Framework* (see Appendix D: Links to References and Resources) is SSHA's five-year strategy to help shape the transformation of Toronto housing and homelessness service system. It was unanimously approved by Toronto City Council in December 2013. The objective is to provide shelter and housing services in a client-centered and outcome-focussed manner with housing stability as the ultimate goal.

By setting the minimum requirements for shelter services, the TSS play an important part in fulfilling the following strategic directions of the *Housing Stability Service Planning Framework*

- (a) Strategic Direction 2 – Supporting the Transition to Housing
- (b) Strategic Direction 4 – Fostering System Stewardship and Innovation
- (c) Strategic Direction 5 – Improving Access and Equity
- (d) Strategic Direction 6 – Delivering High Quality Service
- (e) Strategic Direction 7 – Strengthening Partnerships and Coordination.