



1 POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 HOUSINGTO 2020-2030 ACTION PLAN & THE TORONTO HOUSING CHARTER

HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan is the City's blueprint for action across the full housing spectrum – from homelessness to rental and ownership housing to long-term care for seniors – to create a city where housing opportunities are available for all. HousingTO was adopted by Toronto City Council in 2019. HousingTO updates and builds upon the City's first housing plan, Housing Opportunities Toronto Action Plan 2010-2020. It aligns with other City policies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Resilience Strategy, TransformTO, and the Seniors Strategy. It sets targets to be achieved over the next 10 years with estimates of the financial investments necessary to achieve success. The Plan outlines increased accountability and oversight over a range of government resources necessary for improving housing outcomes for residents. HousingTO includes as a key strategic action to Prevent Homelessness and Improve Pathways to Housing Stability. SSHA is responsible for implementing the components of HousingTO that relate to the homelessness service system.

Consistent with the vision of HousingTO is the updated [Toronto Housing Charter – Opportunities for All](#). The updated Housing Charter expresses the City's policy approach to housing as one that begins and ends with human rights. A "human-rights based approach to housing" is consistent with the National Housing Strategy Act. It is based on the need to ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to thrive and on the recognition that adequate housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of the person and to building healthy, sustainable communities.

1.2 HOMELESSNESS SOLUTIONS SERVICE PLAN

The [Homelessness Solutions Service Plan](#) sets out implementation priorities to guide the collective efforts of the homelessness service system over three years (2022-2024), while also defining outcome statements that guide longer term planning towards our shared goal of ending chronic homelessness in Toronto. The Service Plan outlines the Housing First, Human Rights and Person-Centred approaches as guiding SSHA in addressing homelessness. The Service Plan also provides further context on service delivery, who service users are and how the homelessness service sector operates within the broader housing system. The Service Plan was approved by Toronto City Council in November 2021.

By setting the minimum requirements for shelter services, the TSS play an important part in fulfilling the priorities of the Homelessness Solutions Service Plan.

1.3 HOUSING FIRST

The City's approach to addressing homelessness is grounded in a Housing First approach. Housing First focuses on helping people find permanent housing as quickly as possible, with the supports they need to live as independently as possible, without any preconditions such as accepting treatment or abstinence. The underlying philosophy of Housing First is that people are more successful in moving forward with their lives if they first have housing. The Housing First approach includes providing individualized, person-centred supports that are strengths-based, trauma-informed, grounded in a harm reduction philosophy and promote self-sufficiency.

1.4 COORDINATED ACCESS

[Coordinated Access to Housing and Supports \(Coordinated Access\)](#) is a systems-level approach for addressing homelessness that provides a consistent way to assess, prioritize and connect people experiencing homelessness to City-funded housing and supports. SSHA adopted a Coordinated Access approach in 2017, after signing onto the international [Built for Zero](#) campaign. The approach brings government agencies, Indigenous leaders, service providers and service users to work together and set priorities for the best use of supportive housing resources to achieve shared outcomes.

Coordinated Access is a key component of several municipal plans, including the 2020–2030 HousingTO Action Plan and the Homelessness Solutions Service Plan. It is internationally recognized as a best practice for reducing homelessness, and is mandated by provincial and federal levels of government.

1.5 SSHA DIVISIONAL PRIORITIES & POLICY FRAMEWORKS

SSHA is committed to a continued focus on equity in its delivery of homelessness services, which includes addressing Anti-Black racism and incorporating an intersectional and inclusive approach to its work. SSHA will continue supporting Black service users and staff by advancing SSHA's actions in the Toronto Action Plan for Confronting Anti-Black Racism, and developing partnerships with City divisions, community agencies, boards, and commissions to impact long-term change.

The TSS reflects the commitments and principles in SSHA's [Harm Reduction Framework](#) and the [Meeting in the Middle – Engagement Strategy and Action Plan](#), which supports meaningfully addressing Indigenous homelessness in Toronto. The TSS also supports 2SLGTBQ+ clients and clients with disabilities.