

# New Shelter 2535 Gerrard St. E. Community Bulletin

May 2025

## Work continues with shelter planning at 2535 Gerrard St. E.

The City of Toronto is moving forward with a new shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E. to help meet the urgent need to address homelessness and Toronto City Council direction to prioritize and expedite the opening of new shelters.

The new shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E. will be one of the 20 new shelter locations opening citywide that Council has directed City staff to implement over the next 10 years as part of the [Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy \(HSCIS\)](#). It takes two to three years to plan, design and build a shelter. The shelter opening date for 2535 Gerrard St. E. is anticipated for 2027.

**Engaging with the community to determine *how* best to integrate it into the neighbourhood is a priority for the City of Toronto.** This Community Bulletin is part of a series of ongoing communications about the shelter and includes updates on community engagement opportunities and development timeline.

## Hearing a range of perspectives

To be successful, shelter planning needs to consider the needs of the people who will be using the shelter, the local context in which the shelter will be located, and the priorities of the City, shelter operator, shelter partners and service providers.

A range of feedback has been received about the shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E. since the site was announced in late 2024. There are people in the community who are:

- Supportive of the need for shelters but hold strong concerns about the 2535 Gerrard St. E. location. City staff continue to be confident that this is a good shelter site and are committed to working closely with residents to address concerns.
- Supportive of the shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E. and interested in learning more about how to help it succeed.
- Interested in learning more, without a strong opinion for or against the shelter.

Ongoing engagement is a priority for the City, with a focus on how to make the shelter successful at the 2535 Gerrard St. E. location.

## Join Us!

### Two (2) Public Meetings for Zoning By-Law Amendment for new Shelter Sites

**Notice**

**Watch for this Notice**

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**1 Storey**  
10 Metres

**80 Beds**

**6 Cars**

**A change is needed for this site.**  
The City is proposing a permitted use under the Zoning By-law. City staff have received an application to change the Zoning By-law to accommodate the proposed built form.

**Location:** City of Toronto  
**Address:** 2535 Gerrard Street East

**For more information about this application or to tell us what you think:**

**COMMUNITY PLANNING**  
Community Plan  
416-392-3851  
HSCIS/Planning@toronto.ca

**APPLICATION INFORMATION CENTRE**  
www.toronto.ca/2535gerrard  
Services are provided in person.

File # 25 150915 ESC 20 QZ

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#### Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, May 28, 2025  
6:00 to 9:00 pm

*This meeting will cover all 6 new shelter sites. 2535 Gerrard St. E. is included in the second half of the meeting (7:30 – 9:00 pm).*

Meeting Registration Link:

Visit [www.toronto.ca/CPconsultations](http://www.toronto.ca/CPconsultations) for instructions on how to join. We encourage you to join ten minutes before 7:30 pm to allow time to log on.

For more information about how to join the meeting and how to participate, visit [www.toronto.ca/HowToEngageOnline](http://www.toronto.ca/HowToEngageOnline).

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#### In-Person Engagement

Monday, June 16, 2025  
6:00 – 8:00 pm  
Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

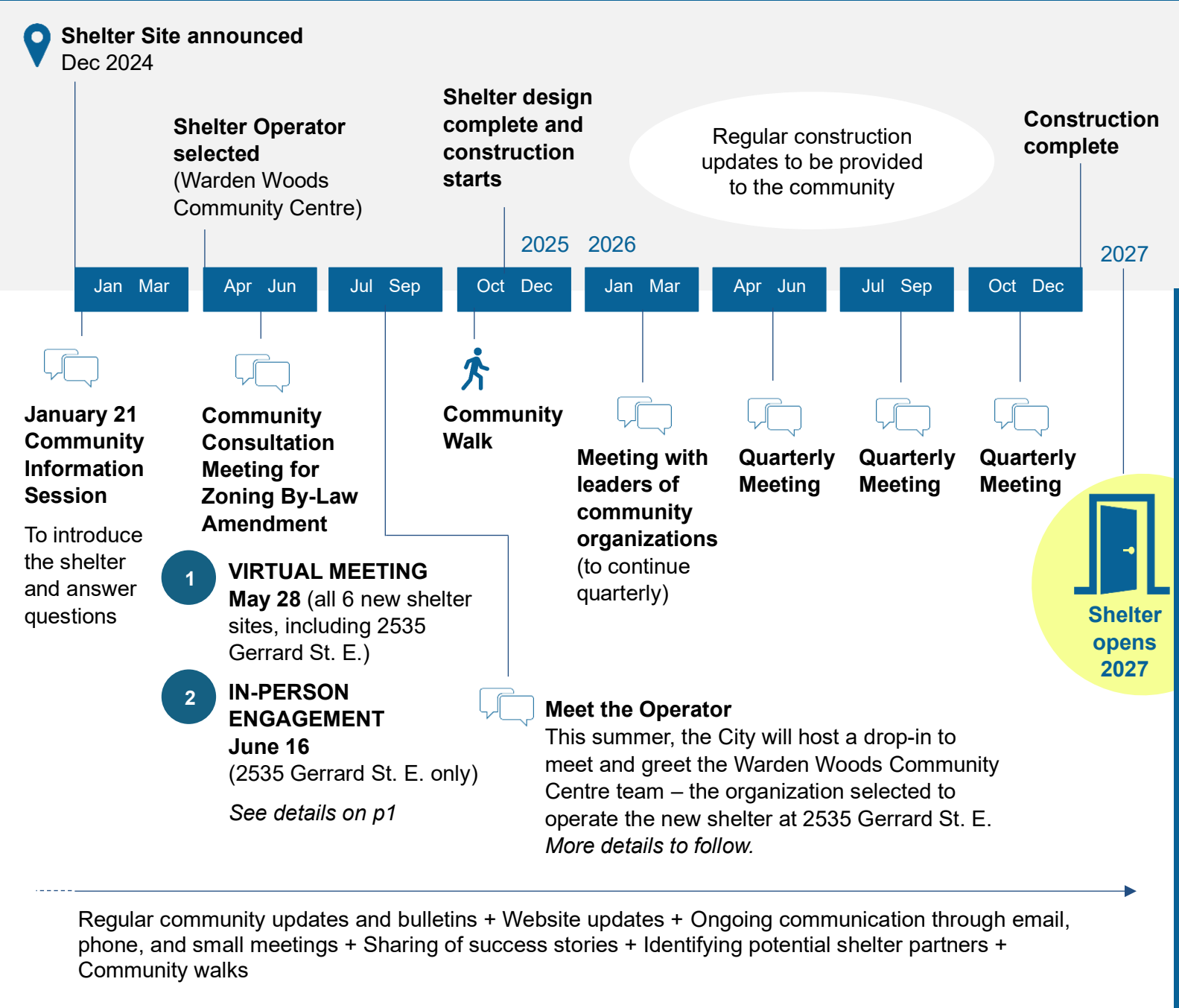
*Focus on 2535 Gerrard St. E. only.*

# Connecting community engagement to shelter milestones

The timeline below shows major milestones\* in the process of developing the new shelter, including the important role of ongoing community engagement. This includes upcoming community meetings hosted by the City of Toronto’s Community Planning staff to discuss an application initiated by City staff to change the Zoning By-law for 2535 Gerrard St. E. to accommodate the proposed built form. A municipal shelter is already permitted on the site and can still proceed and open without this re-zoning amendment, but getting the amendments will allow the City to build a space that optimizes use of the lands.

*\*Note that dates are estimates and may vary as the project progresses.*

## City’s Shelter Development



## Community Engagement



## City responding to local priorities

There are residents who have said that there are opportunities to improve the neighbourhood around 2535 Gerrard St. E. to address the needs of shelter residents and the local community.

City staff from the Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) team are working closely with other City Divisions to identify ways to address needs. Highlights include:



**Resident interest in seeing more frequent TTC bus service on Gerrard.** *TSSS will be talking to TTC about opportunities to increase service closer to the opening date.*



**Resident interest in improving pedestrian crossings of Gerrard.** *TSSS will be talking to Toronto Transportation Services about opportunities to implement crosswalks to connect the shelter to the Gerrard St East at Clonmore Dr West Side TTC bus stop.*



**Resident concern about visibility of the shelter on immediate neighbours.** *TSSS to construct the most appropriate, yet highest fence possible, between the shelter and the immediate neighbours.*



**Resident interest in ensuring a proactive approach is taken to ensuring safety and security in the neighbourhood.** *TSSS will be working closely with the shelter operator (Warden Woods), the SafeTO team, local police, Parks & Recreation staff, the community, and others to identify approaches to anticipate and proactively addressing community priorities.*

## What is a Successful Shelter site?

A successful shelter in Toronto provides safe, temporary indoor space and essential services for individuals experiencing homelessness. Grounded in Housing First principles, shelters are designed to be client-centred, identity-focused, evidence-based, and community conscious. They meet immediate needs by offering basic necessities such as beds, food, showers, and laundry, while also providing access to wrap-around supports like case management, health services, and housing referrals. These shelters form connections with local agencies, support residents' personal goals, and strive to restore dignity and trust.

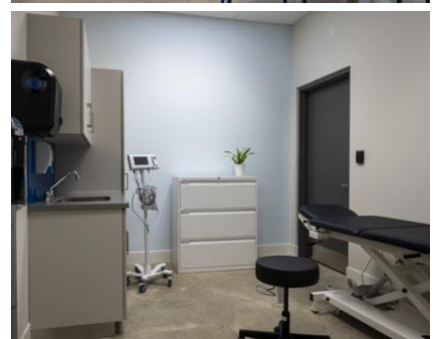
A successful shelter is one that integrates into its neighbourhood, fostering community connections and mutual support. It encourages two-way communication between the shelter and the broader community where issues and concerns of the community (including shelter residents) are addressed in a transparent, solutions-focused manner. A shelter is successful in a neighbourhood when there are intentionally created opportunities for shelter staff and residents and broader community members to engage and interact, and the shelter helps build an understanding of its mission and systemic root causes of homelessness like inadequate housing and health policies.

## Positive relationship between purpose-built shelters and local communities

Toronto Shelter and Support Services has opened 8 purpose-built shelters, all of which have been designed to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness and at the to integrate well into the local neighbourhoods in which they're located.

Check out the 6-minute video describing why the City is building shelters which includes images of new sites:

Developing Shelter Sites:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P22\\_OnXwqs4&t=13s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P22_OnXwqs4&t=13s)



Photos of the new purpose-built shelter at 705 Progress Avenue

# Shelter Operator Selected

Warden Woods Community Centre has been selected by the City of Toronto as the shelter operator for 2535 Gerrard St. E. The organization has been working collaboratively to meet the needs and interests of local communities in Southwest Scarborough since 1970.



## Warden Woods Community Centre:

- Works together with neighbours to meet local challenges and create shared approaches to building community
- Provides essential supports while also supporting caring, compassionate, equitable, interdependent community life
- Collaborates with the City of Toronto, neighbouring businesses, elected officials, Toronto police and program partners to ensure all sites are contributing to peaceful, productive and collaborative neighbourhoods
- Has spent the last seven years building capacity to operate safe, clean and dignified emergency housing, while supporting people to move through the systems and circumstances standing between them and housing

## At 2535 Gerrard St. E., Warden Woods will:

- Approach shelter operations with a spirit of collaboration, and with a focus on respectful relationship-building
- Create and maintain a safe, attractive, welcoming and effective shelter site, with 24/7 opportunities for residents to repair their lives and move forward
- Provide on-site opportunities for residents including around-the-clock supports for physical and mental stability and increased wellness, development of personal capacity and resources, community building and goal setting - all with the aim of moving out into stable housing as soon as possible

# Metrics evaluated in Toronto's shelter system

The City collects data about the use of the shelter system and shares it publicly. If you are interested in the number of people experiencing homelessness, reliance on shelters, and other metrics, see this link:

[www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/research-reports/housing-and-homelessness-research-and-reports/shelter-system-flow-data/](http://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/research-reports/housing-and-homelessness-research-and-reports/shelter-system-flow-data/)

## Interested in supporting success of the shelter?

There are many ways that residents can support the success of the new shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E.

Some can happen right away, and others can happen once the shelter opens in 2027.

- Volunteer at the shelter (cook or support social recreation activities)
- Offer shelter residents volunteer or temporary work opportunities (e.g., lawn cutting, snow clearing)
- Donate to the shelter (e.g., run a yard sale and give the proceeds to the shelter)

Are you interested in staying connected with the City to support success of this shelter? Do you have other ideas? Please let us know by contacting the team.

## Contact the shelter engagement team:



**Visit the project website at**  
[toronto.ca/2535Gerrard](http://toronto.ca/2535Gerrard)



**Sign up to receive e-updates**  
by visiting the project website



**Send an email to**  
[2535gerrard@gmail.com](mailto:2535gerrard@gmail.com)



**Leave a message** for Third Party Public on the project voicemail at 647-370-3345



**Request a meeting or discussion**  
by phone, online or in-person