

Client Testimonial: October 2025

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my counsellor at a Toronto Shelter.

Since July, she has taken us under her care when we found ourselves in an extremely difficult situation: we had no roof over our heads, no information, and no understanding of where to turn or what to do.

Our counsellor not only explained everything to us and clarified each step, and helped us navigate all the difficulties, supported us at every stage, and gave us the feeling that we were not alone.

She showed genuine human care, compassion, and attention to our family. I had a young child and a sick mother in my care, as well as my seriously ill husband who was in a coma and completely paralyzed after stage 4 cancer. She also assisted us with advice and recommendations regarding his care and support, which was incredibly important for us.

Thank you, for everything you have done for our family! You have made a positive impact on our lives, and we will always remember your kindness, professionalism, and dedication.

- Toronto Shelter Client (Name Withheld)

2 Buttonwood Ave

Monday, November 10, 2025

5:30 PM to 8:00 PM

**The Learning Enrichment Foundation
116 Industry St.**



Welcome

Purpose

- **Introduce and share details about 2 Buttonwood Ave with the community**
- **Respond to questions, concerns, and offers of support from the community**
- **Discuss how we can all contribute to the success of the shelter in the community**

Agenda

- 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks – 10 Minutes**
- 2. City of Toronto Presentation – 25 Minutes**
- 3. Community Townhall – 45 Minutes**
- 4. Wrap Up – 5 Minutes**

➤ Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the land we are on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.



➤ **African Ancestral Acknowledgement**

The City of Toronto acknowledges all Treaty people-including those who came here as settlers as migrants either in this generation or in generations past- and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery. We pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.



➤ Meeting Code of Conduct

As both **participants** and **panelists**, we will:

- Be respectful in words and action to all in attendance,
- Be patient with the technology,
- Share the air: listen and when needed and ask for clarification,
- Actively participate and speak from your own perspective,
- Respect personal and organizational confidentiality,
- Racist or other forms of prejudicial, derogatory, or discriminatory comments and questions, including name-calling, will not be tolerated. The City of Toronto is an inclusive public organization.

Opening Remarks

Councillor Frances Nunziata
Ward 5, York South-Weston

Opening Remarks

Gord Tanner | General Manager
Toronto Shelter & Support Services (TSSS)

Overview of the City's Shelter System

**Lara Danon | Manager, Planning and Engagement
Toronto Shelter & Support Services (TSSS)**

➤ Background

Why are shelters opening?

- **Toronto's shelter system is full.** There is an urgent need to address the issue of homelessness
- Demand for shelter space is expected to **remain high or continue to rise**
- Housing is the ultimate solution to homelessness. **Shelters are necessary** to fill gaps while housing solutions are being developed
- **Homelessness is the result of failures across multiple systems.** This includes housing supports, health care, income supports, mental health, and the justice system

The Street Needs Assessment, a point-in-time count, estimated more than 15,000 people were experiencing homelessness in October 2024

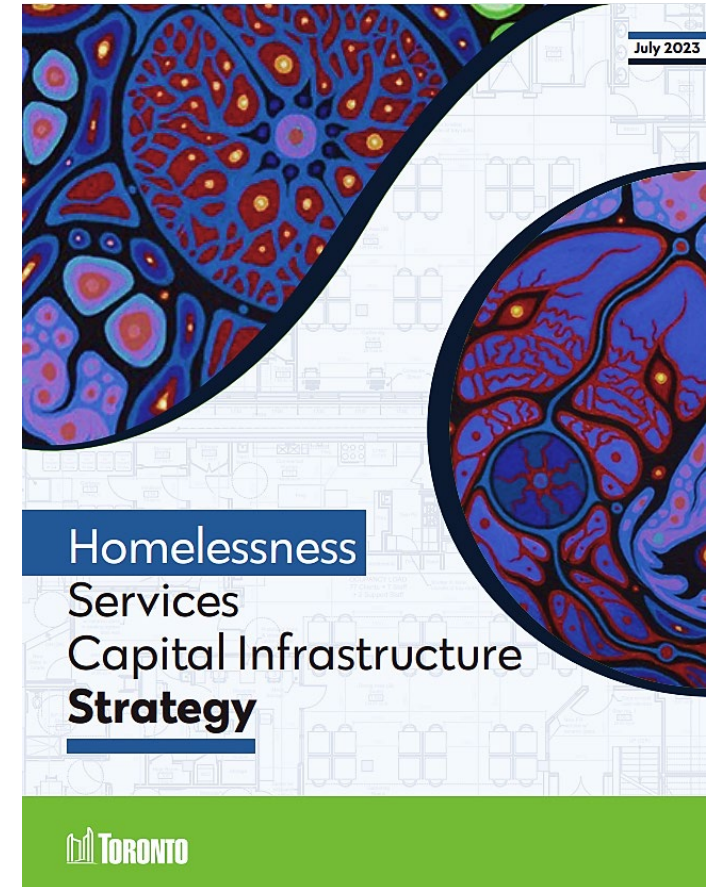
The Housing Continuum



➤ Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS)

- In November 2023, Toronto City Council unanimously approved the **Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy**
- The HSCIS is focused on the **recovery and stability** of the system
- Solutions include both purchased and long-term leased sites produce **substantial cost-savings**
- By 2033, up to **20 new shelters** with approximately **1,600 spaces** will be developed
- This includes **2 Buttonwood Ave** which was announced as a new shelter location in October 2025

In 2024, over 4,300 people were moved from the shelter system into permanent housing



➤ 2 Buttonwood Ave

The City is developing a new shelter at 2 Buttonwood Ave

- This site will provide shelter to **women with children** experiencing homelessness
 - Demographic was determined using shelter system data
- The program will open gradually
 - Starting with **24 families** initially
 - Expanding to **96 families** over time
- The shelter will be operated by the **City of Toronto**
- Estimated opening date for the site is **Late 2026**



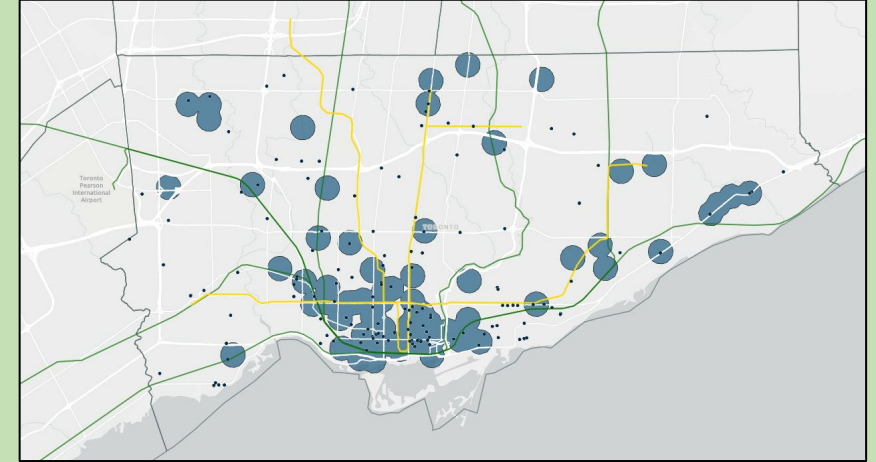
Shelter Siting Process

**Devi Mohan | Manager, Portfolio Management
Corporate Real Estate Management (CREM)**

➤ Shelter Siting Process

- City Council **delegated authority** to City of Toronto staff to approve and develop new shelter locations across Toronto
- **CREM, TSSS, and CreateTO** undertake a comprehensive real estate review to identify potential sites for new shelters
- The site search includes looking at hundreds of potential sites across Toronto through **listings, brokerages, and networks**
- Sites **must meet the key shelter site criteria** to move forward as a potential shelter location

Limited availability of sites that meet shelter site criteria



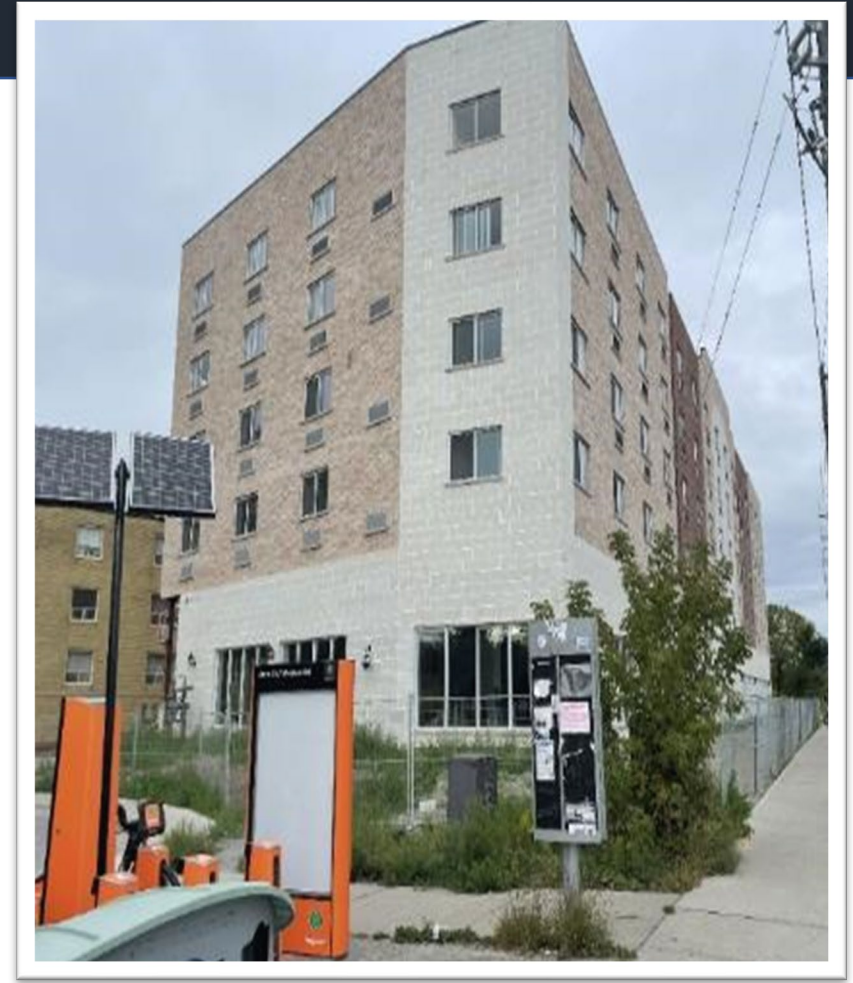
Key Shelter Site Criteria

1. Site Availability, Fair Market Value
2. Permitted for Shelter Use
3. Site Size
4. Proximity from Existing Shelters
5. Access to Amenities
6. Proximity to Public Transit

➤ Shelter Siting Process

How are shelter locations selected?

- Currently, shelters across Toronto are **successfully located in residential areas**, often close to libraries, schools, daycares, and community centres
 - Shelters **must** be located on properties zoned to allow for municipal shelter use
 - Shelters **cannot** be located on lands that are zoned for employment or industrial use
- **2 Buttonwood Ave** was secured by the City for shelter use based on key shelter site criteria



Shelter Operations and Engagement

Shivaughn Carmichael | Manager
Homelessness Initiatives & Prevention Services

City of Toronto

Who is the shelter operator? What is their role?

All shelters have trained staff on-site for 24/7 operations



Access to shelters is streamlined through Central Intake as a point of entry



➤ Role of the Shelter Operator

Shelter staff work one on one (1:1) with all clients and families.
All families will be assigned to a Counsellor who is responsible for:

Case Management

Housing Search Assistance

Support with Housing Stability

Tenant Rights Education

Connecting to Financial
Counselling Supports

Connections to Healthcare
(Primary, Mental Health)

Referrals for Income Assistance
(OW, ODSP)

Resident meetings are held so shelter residents can provide feedback on operations



➤ **2 Buttonwood** **Programming Focused on Stability**

Programming for women includes:

- **Life Skills (Cooking, Financial, and Social)**
- **Community Integration and Relationship Building**
- **Housing Search & Support Workshops**
- **Mental Health and Wellness Workshops**
- **Employment Readiness Workshops**

Programming for children and youth includes:

- **After School Programs:** Movie Nights, Swimming, Homework Club
- **Education Field Trips:** ROM, Science Centre
- **Recreational Programs:** Indoor and Outdoor Games, Arts & Crafts
- **Child Minding:** Babysitting Program



Community Engagement

Building relationships and meaningful communication

Community Engagement Facilitator: [Mihevc Consulting & Mediation](#)

Community engagement to-date (October 23, 2025 – Present)

2000+ flyers delivered to the local community

120+ conversations with community members

Engaged with key stakeholders including local schools, resident associations, businesses, community organizations and residents

Goals of community engagement process:

Foster genuine and meaningful communication, collaboration and partnership with local stakeholders

Share accurate information with community members

Explore opportunities to support the integration of the upcoming shelter into the community

Listen and address local priorities and concerns

Townhall Discussion



Closing Remarks

Councillor Frances Nunziata
Ward 5, York South-Weston

➤ Wrap Up

- To engage further, contact us at:
2buttonwood@toronto.ca
- Learn more and for program updates at the 2 Buttonwood Ave webpage:
toronto.ca/2buttonwood
- For general questions about City services to support those experiencing homelessness please email
homeless.support@toronto.ca



www.toronto.ca/newshelters