



London
CANADA

300 Dufferin Avenue
P.O. Box 5035
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N6A 4L9

October 4, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

Given the severity of the homeless/addiction crisis facing our city, the commitment made in our Strategic Plan to address the safety concerns in our existing emergency shelters and the underfunding of emergency shelters as identified by Jon De Actis (Salvation Army Centre of Hope) in his delegation to the February 2022 CPSC meeting, we have identified an opportunity to provide much needed support to the more than 200 people currently living in our two largest emergency shelters (Mission Services and TSA Centre of Hope).

Although we understand that there were plans to move away from emergency shelter beds and put more funding and resources into prevention, the current reality is that the length of stays in our emergency shelters have increased dramatically from 6 weeks to more than 12 months (even 18 months) over the past 5 or so years. Imagine living in the dorm rooms of an emergency shelter with a staffing ratio of less than 30:1 in a shelter that has not received the funding increases needed to cover the increasing costs of food, maintenance, utilities, wages, etc.

We believe in the old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. By providing supports (similar to those outlined in the RFP for the proposed hubs eg. transportation, quick access to acute and primary care, housing access support, income supports, integrated care planning, translation and intentional connections to health and wellness services) to the people staying in these emergency shelters, we could improve their safety and living conditions and possibly prevent them from becoming high acuity. This could save money in the long run, help more people earlier and improve the safety of both residents and staff.

Therefore, we are asking your support for the following:

That the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to prepare a report exploring arrangements with the city's two largest emergency shelter operators to see if they have the ability and capacity to scale up their level of services to approximate the Whole of Community Systems Response level of service outlined in the hub RFP.

That the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to prepare a report exploring the option of funding recovery/treatment services like Recovery Community Centre at TSA Centre of Hope and Quintin Warner House (a branch of Mission Services).

That the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to identify the costs, operational start dates and potential municipal sources of funding for the above.

Sincerely,

Susan Stevenson
Ward 4 City Councillor

Jerry Pribil
Ward 5 City Councillor