

## Members of Community and Protective Services Committee

Dear colleagues:

While we remain focused in the present, and for good reason, on “flattening the curve,” in a post-COVID London, there are other curves that must also be flattened. I think first and foremost of rising poverty, lack of affordable housing, and a lack of supports for London’s most vulnerable. These curves continue to rise, and must be crushed with the same determination, the same level of community involvement, and the same commitment as has been summoned against COVID-19.

In February 2021, London became the first city in Canada to achieve functional zero for veteran homelessness. It is a truly remarkable accomplishment, one that should instil in us not only pride and confidence, but also a motivation to aim higher, think bigger, and challenge ourselves to do even more. Instead of stopping at functional zero for veteran homelessness, why not functional zero for homeless women, or mothers with children fleeing abuse? Why not functional zero for our homeless Indigenous population, or those with addictions, or those cut off from family and related supports?

Why not functional zero for chronic homelessness, period?

That was the goal announced at my 2021 State of the City address, and in order to do this, we would require an additional 3,000 affordable housing units. Based on our current pace, it would take 20 years to achieve. That’s unacceptable. The Housing Stability Action Plan aims to do it in 10 years. I believe, with your support – along with assistance from Civic Administration, other levels of government, not-for-profits, social agencies, and the private sector – we can make this a reality in 5 years.

It must be said, and it must be understood: London’s most vulnerable don’t ‘choose’ their circumstances. They are where they are, largely, due to a lack of choices. However, we are in the unique position to support our most vulnerable by making different choices, more compassionate and caring choices.

As such, I am requesting the following actions be taken with respect to the creation of affordable housing units in London:

- a) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to expedite the development of needed 3,000 affordable housing units as set out in “Housing Stability Action Plan” (HSAP) to be in place in five years, instead of ten years as set out in the Plan; and,
- b) the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back to a future meeting of the Community and Protective Services Committee with an implementation plan, inclusive of financial impacts, that sets out the best supports for the development of affordable housing units.

Respectfully submitted,



Ed Holder, Mayor