

TORONTO SUPPORTIVE HOUSING GROWTH PLAN



THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR MORE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IN TORONTO

Toronto is facing unprecedented levels of homelessness, at the same time as more than 13,000 people are waiting for mental health and addictions supportive housing. Supportive Housing is recognized as a vital part of solutions to chronic homelessness, to helping people find and maintain stable housing, and to ensuring people with addictions and mental health issues have access to supports that foster health and wellbeing - yet is unavailable to thousands in Toronto who need it.

Supportive housing waitlists are growing exponentially faster than supply, while current stock is being lost and investment in new supply fails to keep pace. Addressing the current and future scale of demand for supportive housing requires both government-led solutions and more coordinated, sector-led solutions. These must be based on a shared, evidence-informed understanding of how to prioritize need, how to leverage existing potential to meet this need, and where new investment and efforts should be targeted.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Alongside the urgent need for more supportive housing, there are currently several opportunities to create a more comprehensive growth strategy arising from:

- ZERO TO, the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness' (TAEH) campaign to end chronic homelessness in Toronto by 2025
- New resources from the National Housing Strategy and Reaching Home
- Provincial promises on mental health and housing-related supports
- The City of Toronto's target of 18,000 more units and its new ten-year housing plan
- Untapped potential in the sector to leverage and expand the impact of existing assets and resources

Leveraging these opportunities requires a clearer understanding of the typology of housing and supports that will match need, and alignment among the sector on how to prioritize need. Efforts to meet need must be grounded in an understanding of what resources the sector already has to work with, and where government should target investment to fill remaining gaps.

THE PLAN

The Toronto Supportive Housing Growth Plan will help position the sector to increase the supply of supportive housing in Toronto by establishing the necessary foundation of evidence, buy-in, and new solutions. This Growth Plan will be developed with key stakeholders and experts to ensure it is pragmatic, evidence-based, and experience-informed. It will focus on both strategic (up to 10 year) approaches and short-term opportunities. The Growth Plan will position the sector to come to alignment on how to prioritize need, and to be ready to pursue new solutions.

THE PARTNERS

The Toronto Supportive Housing Growth Plan is co-sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association, Wellesley Institute, and the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness. These co-sponsors are managing and supporting the project, while key stakeholders and groups from the supportive housing sector and government will be engaged throughout the process to ensure the Growth Plan develops feasible, impactful solutions targeted to need.

PROCESS

- 1 Quantifying, for the first time, what assets currently exist in the supportive housing sector in terms of physical stock, land, and rent supplements - and how these could be leveraged towards new supply.
- 2 Developing a more detailed understanding of need, including both the range and typology of housing and supports required.
- 3 Understanding how existing government funding could be applied in more strategic ways to go further in meeting need, and where new funding could be targeted in a more evidence-informed way to fill the remaining gap.
- 4 Engaging the sector and government as these elements are carried out and building buy-in around needs and priorities.
- 5 Synthesizing these elements into the Toronto Supportive Housing Growth Plan to support the sector in advocacy and pursuing new sector-led solutions.