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Toronto City Councillors,
Economic and Community Development Committee

EC 28.9 COVID-19 Shelter Transition and Relocation Plan Update

The teachings of this pandemic have been compared to a social X-ray, exposing previously known inequities, dangers, and health hazards. This is particularly true for the shelter system.

Congregate shelters were dangerous before the pandemic. They remain so today. Do any of you really believe it's acceptable to carry on with congregate style shelters?

Instead of a report that calls for a new vision, a new model of shelter provision informed by public health science and common sense you have in front of you today a report that talks about slowly decommissioning shelter-hotels, a renewed focus on security firms, consideration of reducing bed/cot/mat spacing and placing two strangers in a hotel room together.

The references to immediately house people are unambitious and not concrete.

Where is the plan to relocate homeless people to the [two buildings the city has purchased for housing](#) (the hotel at 225 Spadina and the former seniors building at 877 Yonge)? Wasn't this the purpose of the federal government's COVID inspired Rapid Housing Initiative funding?

Where is the plan to fast track eligible people to ODSP and to creatively augment housing allowances/rent supplements to house x number of people?

Where is the plan to expropriate properties, including hotels being used for shelter, for housing?

Where is the plan, the urgency, to examine the [high death rate in Toronto shelters](#)? 132 deaths in shelters in 2021. May I remind you that the definition of a shelter includes the words protection, cover, shield, harbour, defend.

Where is the plan to call for emergency funding from the province and federal government to accomplish a new shelter model of one person/family unit per room and where is the call for HOUSING?

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