

November 6, 2024

RE: New Shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E.

Dear Resident,

The City of Toronto is proposing a shelter location in your community at 2535 Gerrard St. E. You are receiving this letter as a neighbour and local community member. Engaging with the local community is a priority and below are key pieces of information regarding the shelter.

The demand for shelter spaces is higher than ever, with more than 12,200 people being accommodated by the City and approximately 230 people turned away every night. Homelessness was declared an emergency by Toronto City Council in 2023. To meet the demand for homelessness services, City staff have been directed by City Council to identify 20 new permanent and purpose-built shelter locations citywide over 10 years. The direction from City Council was provided in November 2023 with adoption of the City's Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS).

In 2019, City Council directed staff to expand overnight homelessness services outside the downtown core, including in Scarborough. This was in response to the verdict from the Coroner's Jury into the death of Grant Faulkner. The 2021 Street Needs Assessment, a citywide point-in-time count and survey of people experiencing homelessness, found 30 per cent of people unsheltered outdoors were staying in Scarborough, highlighting the importance of increasing services in the area. Homelessness is experienced in all corners of Toronto, for various reasons, and shelters are needed across the city.

There are a limited number of locations in Toronto that meet the size, budget and zoning requirements needed to be a municipal shelter. Shelters are not allowed in areas zoned exclusively for employment or industrial uses and are typically in residential or mixed-use areas. As part of its due diligence, City staff conducted an extensive assessment of over 100 properties across Toronto. Currently, 2535 Gerrard St. E. is the only site available in Scarborough that meets all requirements for use as a municipal shelter.

The shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E. will be smaller, serving approximately 80 people, and will provide important services and supports to help people work towards permanent housing. At this time, the City is working to confirm a service operator. The shelter program will be for adults of all genders, including couples and is currently planned to open in early 2027.

We are committed to working with the local community to support the success of the shelter at 2535 Gerrard St. E. The City has hired Third Party Public to lead the community engagement process. This includes meeting with residents and businesses to discuss how to best integrate

a new shelter service into the neighbourhood. If you have specific questions regarding the upcoming service in your area, please email Third Party Public at 2535Gerrard@gmail.com.

Additional information about this initiative and virtual tours of other similar, purpose-built shelters are available on the City's website at www.toronto.ca/newshelters.

We are committed to answering your questions and working together to support the site's success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gord Tanner".

Gord Tanner

General Manager
Toronto Shelter & Support Services
City of Toronto