

From: Dispossessed Disabled Artists Demanding Housing (DDADH)

<http://claudewittmann.ca/DDADH/ddadh.html>

Abigail Bond, Executive Director  
Toronto's Housing Secretariat  
[Abigail.Bond@toronto.ca](mailto:Abigail.Bond@toronto.ca)

Copies to:

Doug Rollins, Director  
Housing Stability Services  
[Doug.Rollins@toronto.ca](mailto:Doug.Rollins@toronto.ca)

City Councilor Brad Bradford  
Chair of the Toronto Planning and Housing Committee  
[Brad.Bradford@toronto.ca](mailto:Brad.Bradford@toronto.ca)  
[councillor\\_Bradford@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_Bradford@toronto.ca)

Arshnoor Khoja, Senior Strategic Policy Consultant  
Diya Menezes, Housing Development Officer  
Accessible Housing Working Group  
[Arshnoor.Khoja@toronto.ca](mailto:Arshnoor.Khoja@toronto.ca)  
[Diya.Menezes@toronto.ca](mailto:Diya.Menezes@toronto.ca)

Raine Laurent-Eugène, Membership and Hospital Program Manager at  
Workman Arts  
[Raine\\_LaurentEugene@workmanarts.com](mailto:Raine_LaurentEugene@workmanarts.com)

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**Re:** some urgent questions have not been answered

Dear Director of Housing Secretariat,

We wrote to you on August 29, 2022 and you delegated Director of Housing Stability Doug Rollins to reply to us. He wrote on September 12, 2022 to suggest that we get in contact with the Accessible Housing Working Group, which we did. We sent a series of recommendations to the group (attached) and two of us met with one member of the group, Diya Menezes, Housing Development Officer. We also replied to Director of Housing Stability Doug Rollins on October 18, 2022. In this letter, we asked that he addresses some pressing issues.

We are grateful for the space we have been given with the Accessible Housing Working Group to share the knowledge and recommendations we have gathered through our lived experience of constant housing insecurity and regular threats of homelessness. We are aware however that while this group will consider our input regarding the kind of unit modifications that invisibly

disabled individuals tend to need, but might not extend its definition of accessibility to include “financial accessibility”. This is however a pressing issue in our demographic.

In our letter of October 18, 2022 to Mr Doug Rollins, we listed a few urgent questions that have stayed unanswered. We take the liberty to reiterate them here and to ask you to consider a way to address them as soon as possible. These urgent questions are not new in our disabled population and they need attention.

We ask

- **that people with disabilities be added to the list of individuals falling under the “Local Priority Rules”, which define urgent access to rent-geared-to-income, COHB, and affordable housing in Toronto;**
- **that individuals with invisible disabilities who would benefit from unit modifications qualify for COHB under the call for applications currently on the City’s website, even if the case-specific modifications they would benefit from are not the ones familiarly accepted as such by the City.**

**Here is the example of one of our members, Trevor Manson who is asking to be offered a COHB:**

Trevor is currently called to apply for a rent-geared-to-income unit. He is experiencing the choice-based system as a rigid frame that is not providing him with the information he would need to choose an appropriate unit. He is not allowed to see his future apartment before applying and possibly moving. This is untenable for somebody disabled.

As well, there appears to be no way he could access a unit with the modifications he needs. Modified units are only offered to persons who need wheelchair accessibility, which is not his case. Trevor is an ODSP recipient suffering from a neuromuscular condition that causes widespread nerve pain, ataxia and loss of balance/spatial recognition among other symptoms. He needs very specific modifications that he has paid for to have in his own unit. Over the past decade-plus in his current bachelor apartment, Trevor has also nurtured a network of support around him. If he moves, he would lose both. It is not easy at all for a disabled person to create access, be it to their own home or to professional and social supports! Trevor is asking for a COHB.

We humbly urge you to consider our requests. We look forward to your reply.

For DDADH,  
Leon McCurdy, Serena McCarroll, Trevor Manson and Claude Wittmann