

From: Dispossessed Disabled Artists Demanding Housing (DDADH)

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

To:

Arshnoor Khoja, Senior Strategic Policy Consultant
Accessible Housing Working Group

arshnoor.khoja@toronto.ca

Copies to:

Doug Rollins, Director
Housing Stability Services

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Abigail Bond, Executive Director
Toronto's Housing Secretariat

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City Councillor Gord Perks
Member of the Toronto Planning and Housing Committee

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Scott Miller Berry, Interim Executive Artistic Director
Workman Arts

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Toronto, November 12, 2022

**Re: Accessible Housing Working Group, suggestion by Director of
Housing Stability Doug Rollins that we contact you**

Dear Arshnoor,

You have received a copy of Director of Housing Stability Doug Rollins' reply to the letter that we sent to Abigail Bond, Executive Director of Toronto's Housing Secretariat on August 29, 2022. The letter is here:

https://claudewittmann.ca/DDADH/ddadh_priority_in_progress.html

We are a small group of disabled artists whose lives are tied to housing insecurity, when not in housing crises. One of us experienced three housing crises in the last two years. All led him close to homelessness; the last one into a serious health urgency. The traces

of such life are deeply written mentally and physiologically. Another one of us went through 11 months of stress related to renovations and the relentless discrimination against ODSP recipients. Another member of DDADH recently had to move out of Toronto to be housed. This is trauma.

We would like to join the Accessible Housing Working Group if this were the invitation, but we volunteer already at the limits of our capacity while facing our precarious realities. We take the liberty to start a written communication with the group. This allows us to work at our best efficiency and according to our internal democratic rules. We want to be in solidarity with all invisibly disabled individuals in Toronto.

With this letter then, please receive a few thoughts and recommendations from us and please share them with the working group. We hope that they will be carefully considered. We welcome questions or requests for more information or details or more development of our propositions.

We recommend that

- The Accessible Housing Working Group ensures that its members include lived experience of and advocacy for improving access to housing by individuals with invisible disabilities.
- The Accessible Housing Working Group includes "financial accessibility" into its definition of *accessibility* to housing.
- The Accessible Housing Working Group urges Toronto to include individuals with disabilities into the list of groups covered by "[Local Priority Rules](#)" (item 6 in the link).
- The Accessible Housing Working Group considers the barriers embedded in the current housing allowance and benefit programs (TTHAP, COHB, housing allowances, etc.). We know that all provincially-administered housing allowances have been under review since the fall of 2020, after Deputy Mayor Ana Bailao witnessed the stress that tenants at 17 Paton Road experienced with TTHAP and passed a [motion](#) (item 7 in the link). These tenants, in collaboration with housing workers and advocates, worked diligently to create a [new concept for housing allowances](#). The Accessible Housing Working Group takes time to consider the work of the 17 Paton Road tenants and investigates if the review has led to improvements as seen by the clients themselves.
- The Accessible Housing Working Group strongly recommends that Toronto increases its stock of rent-geared-to-income (RGI) despite the expiration of operating agreements and other

decisions that might have been taken by the Province and the City.

- The Accessible Housing Working Group recommends that transfers between rent-geared-to-income units owned/managed by the Toronto Housing Community Corporation and other managers be possible again and easier than it was in the past.
- The Accessible Housing Working Group surveys individuals with invisible disabilities to gather an appropriate understanding of what unit modifications they would need.

We thank you for your work.

With our regards,

DDADH