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October 12, 2021

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October 28, 2021

To the attention of the Regional Chair and members of regional council,

I am writing on behalf of United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) in support of the delegation of the Peel Alliance to End Homelessness and the recommendation from the Region of Peel’s Housing Services division to increase funding for housing subsidies, and to allocate new subsidies according to needs-based priorities.

As illustrated by Peel’s 2018 enumeration of people experiencing homelessness, and the increase in visible homelessness driven by the global COVID-19 pandemic, homelessness continues to be a complex social challenge for the region in addition to its neighboring jurisdictions. The problem has been exacerbated by insufficient levels of affordable housing, rising rents, and income inequality. In the context of limited resources to address these challenges, adopting a needs-based approach to the allocation of new housing subsidies is the most strategic use of this funding.

We are in agreement with the assessment contained within the Housing and Homelessness Priorities Report prepared for the Peel Alliance to End Homelessness that “shifting from a first-come first-served to a needs-based approach to housing subsidies will help the Region be in a better position to optimize limited resources and improve housing outcomes for those that are at greatest risk.”

As further mentioned in the report and supported by other research conducted, we know that longer durations of a person’s experience of homelessness is correlated with increasing case complexity and poorer health outcomes. Supporting people experiencing homelessness through housing is the most effective way of eliminating homelessness, including the economic costs it creates for public services. For these reasons any increase in the amount of housing subsidies available in Peel Region is a welcome start to what we hope will be a sustained increase in investment.

United Way Greater Toronto looks forward to supporting the further implementation of Home For All: The Region of Peel’s Housing and Homelessness Plan 2018-2028.

Yours sincerely,

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