

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

MEETING DATE YYYY/MM/DD 2021/10/28	MEETING NAME Regional Council
--	---

Attention: Regional Clerk
Regional Municipality of Peel
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9
Phone: 905-791-7800 ext. 4582
E-mail: council@peelregion.ca

DATE SUBMITTED YYYY/MM/DD 2021/10/21
--

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL(S) Dagma Koyi
--

POSITION(S)/TITLE(S) Executive Director

NAME OF ORGANIZATION(S) Restoration and Empowerment for Social Transition Centres (R.E.S.T.)
--

E-MAIL dagma.koyi@restcentres.org	TELEPHONE NUMBER 6477076762	EXTENSION
---	---------------------------------------	-----------

REASON(S) FOR DELEGATION REQUEST (SUBJECT MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED) Address housing and homelessness needs of black youth in Peel

A formal presentation will accompany my delegation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Presentation format: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint File (.ppt) <input type="checkbox"/> Adobe File or Equivalent (.pdf) <input type="checkbox"/> Picture File (.jpg) <input type="checkbox"/> Video File (.avi,.mpg) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>
Additional printed information/materials will be distributed with my delegation : <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Attached

Note:
Delegates are requested to provide an electronic copy of all background material / presentations to the Clerk's Division at **least ten (10) business days prior** to the meeting date so that it can be included with the agenda package. **In accordance with Procedure By-law 56-2019, as amended, delegates appearing before Regional Council or Committee are requested to limit their remarks to 5 minutes and 10 minutes respectively (approximately 5/10 slides).**

Delegates should make every effort to ensure their presentation material is prepared in an [accessible format](#).

Once the above information is received in the Clerk's Division, you will be contacted by Legislative Services staff to confirm your placement on the appropriate agenda.

Notice with Respect to the Collection of Personal Information
(Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act)

Personal information contained on this form is authorized under Section 5.4 of the Region of Peel Procedure By-law 56-2019, as amended, for the purpose of contacting individuals and/or organizations requesting an opportunity to appear as a delegation before Regional Council or a Committee of Council. The Delegation Request Form will be published in its entirety with the public agenda. The Procedure By-law is a requirement of Section 238(2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended. Please note that all meetings are open to the public except where permitted to be closed to the public under legislated authority. All Regional Council meetings are audio broadcast via the internet and will be posted and available for viewing subsequent to those meetings. Questions about collection may be directed to the Manager of Legislative Services, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, 5th floor, Brampton, ON L6T 4B9, (905) 791-7800 ext. 4462.

Please save the form to your personal device, then complete and submit via email attachment to council@peelregion.ca



ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF BLACK YOUTH AND HOUSING IN PEEL

Presenter: Dagma Koyi (Executive Director)

RESTCENTRES.ORG

About R.E.S.T CENTRE

- ❑ **WHO WE ARE:** Restoration and Empowerment for Social Transition (R.E.S.T.) Centres is a black-led and black-serving not-for-profit organization incorporated in 2015.
- ❑ **OUR MISSION:** To strategically invest in homeless youth through intervention targeted at addressing their vulnerabilities. We aim to launch them on a positive path towards independence and self-sufficiency to become contributing members of society.
- ❑ **OUR VISION:** Youth leading healthier and happier lives with adequate support and opportunities so they can contribute to society.

THE R.E.S.T. APPROACH

'Housing First' is our priority.

Individualized and client-centered intervention strategies.

An orientation toward **positive youth development.**

Promotion of client **self-determination and choice.**

Healthy **social and community** integration.

OUR PROGRAMS

Our programs are executed using our Logic Model – care on a continuum.

1

THE BARE NECESSITIES PROGRAM

- Food and personal care support

2

THE BRIDGE OF HOPE PROGRAM

- Housing Model

3

THE LIFE PROGRAM

- Workplace development and training

4

THE ALUMNI SUPPORT PROGRAM

- Ongoing support up to 2 years thereafter



THE BARE NECESSITIES PROGRAM

Our pandemic response program

Launched July of 2020

Provides weekly food items, personal care items, and gift cards to young people.

Currently serves 40 young people.

THE BRIDGE OF HOPE PROGRAM

The Bridge of Hope Program provides youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with housing and wrap-around support to ensure that they have greater chances of sustained independent living.

Transitional housing

Monthly rental subsidy

**Essential life skills
training & capacity
building**

**Counselling and other
support services**



HOW BRIDGING THE GAP BENEFITS YOUTH

1. Participants can acquire **support, learn** essential life skills, and have **access** to secure homes and affordable housing.
2. **Capacity building for youth to live independently** to survive, adapt, and prosper in a rapidly changing environment.
3. **Personalized assistance** with budgeting, household management, self-care, and learning to cook on a budget.
4. Assistance with devising and implementing a **roadmap to success**
5. Practical support in the **transition to self-sufficiency**
6. **Financial support** – qualifying youth may receive a rental subsidy of upto \$250/Monthly for up to one year.

THE LEARNING INITIATIVES FOSTERING EDUCATION (L.I.F.E.) PROGRAM

2022 Pilot program in collaboration with CEE centre for young black professionals .

Workplace training and development, and work placement

Aims to fill labour gaps in: Trades, Digital Technology

Support for free enrollment to the Ontario College of Trades.

Access to mental wellness support

THE ALUMNI SUPPORT PROGRAM

Mentorship
Program.

Up to 2 years of
continued support
after leaving
REST's programs.

Volunteer
opportunities.

Internship
opportunities.

Life coaching and
support services.

BLACK FOCUSED, CULTURALLY RELEVANT HOUSING SOLUTIONS AND SUPPORTS

Emergency Aid	R.E.S.T. Centres	Shelters
Culturally relevant	✘	
Black staffing	✘	✘
Community focused approach	✘	
Safety planning	✘	✘
Housing support	✘	✘
Wrap-around support services	✘	✘
Peer support & mentorship	✘	
Rental supplement	✘	✘
Landlord/tenant training	✘	
Life skills & employment training	✘	

OUR HOUSING MODEL: COST SAVING FOR THE REGION

Operating the Bridge of Hope housing model costs less than emergency shelters each month.

Emergency Shelters⁽¹⁾: 1 young person per month = \$1,932
20 young people per month = \$38,640

At R.E.S.T. Centre: 1 young person per month = \$791.21
20 young people per month = \$15,824.16

Number of Supported Youth (Monthly)	Cost of Emergency Shelter (Monthly)	Cost of the Bridge of Hope program (Monthly)	Cost Savings (Monthly)
20	\$38,640.00	\$15,824.20	\$22,815.80
40	\$77,280.00	\$31,648.40	\$45,631.60
Overall Results		41% Savings	200% Impact

THE ASK

R.E.S.T. is therefore requesting the partnership of the Region of Peel, through funding, to continue addressing the needs of black youth and helping the Region to achieve its homelessness reduction goals.

Budget Breakdown: Year-Over-Year	
Year 1	\$491,351.68
Year 2	\$961,040.74
Year 3	\$1,344,125.28

<u>Impact Year-Over-Year and Projections with Supports</u>					
Year	Annual Budget	Number of Youth Supported			
		<i>Housing Support</i>	<i>Practical Assistance</i>	<i>Social Support</i>	<i>Workforce Training</i>
2019	\$11,864.00	9	-	-	-
2020	\$286,710.00	20	36	50	-
2021*	\$773,627.94	22*	40*	25*	-
2022**	\$961,040.74	60	80	70	30
2023**	\$1,344,125.28	80	100	90	60

*Year to Date #

**With support from the Region of Peel

TESTIMONIALS



“every Young person needs a place to call home”

LUNKULU'S STORY

Lunkulu moved to Canada as a teenager from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Transitioning into Canada has not been the easiest journey. Lunkulu's plight has been marked by wave after wave of differential treatment connected to race. As a racialized immigrant, opportunities were few and far between, and gaining access to important support was even more difficult. No matter how hard he tried, the odds seemed to always be against him. As everybody seemed to be getting ahead, Lunkulu was trailing far behind. After multiple unsuccessful attempts to stabilize, he moved from British Columbia to Ontario, where he then found himself in a shelter in the Region of Peel.

Like so many youths, Lunkulu struggled with being in the shelter and hoped for a permanent home setting, a place to call home. Despite this, Lunkulu persisted and eventually came across a workshop hosted by R.E.S.T for residents of the shelter called: "Housing 101". The workshop was a success and had a transformative effect on Lunkulu. Almost immediately after the event, he reached out to R.E.S.T. to secure long-term, stable housing. We connected him with a housing worker and determined he was a suitable candidate for the Bridge of Hope program. The Bridge of Hope program connects and places youth within a family-home setting, where they are included and members of a unit, giving them a sense of belonging. **We were able to find that loving, nurturing home for Lunkulu, and on December 1st, he officially became a part of that home.**

To help offset some of the expenses, Lunkulu was provided with a monthly rental subsidy. **The subsidy takes a lot of pressure off of Lunkulu**, which allows him to focus on obtaining skills and full-time employment. While working closely with R.E.S.T. Centre staff, these goals are slowly, but surely materializing. He has begun the process of upgrading a number of vocational skills necessary for construction and has begun exploring his options for becoming a young entrepreneur. Lunkulu wants to share his struggles and experiences with other youth to show them that **"their dreams can come true too"**.

Without the generosity and support of our funders, youth in dire situations, like Lunkulu's, only worsen. Your funding would allow for the growth of this program, to ensure more youth like Lunkulu can reach their potential.

TASHAWNA'S STORY

Tashawna is no stranger to homelessness. At a young age, Tashawna and her siblings lived in a family shelter, as her mother desperately tried to rebuild their lives. For a few short seasons, the situation seemed to improve, and hope was starting to well up, but the fount was short-lived, as chaos began to settle in all around her. Without addressing the traumatic events of her past, Tashawna lived for many years with a wounded and fractured soul. The negative experiences impacted the choices she made, and before she knew it, she entered into an abusive relationship.

The cost of housing made it difficult for Tashawna to find a safe place to stay, and **out of desperation, she settled for an illegal basement apartment.** Sadly, this living arrangement was short-lived as a fire brought attention to the fire marshals who enforced an eviction for health and safety reasons.

Tashawna was in a state of hopelessness. At the height of the pandemic, she suffered the loss of her job and her home, including her clothing and belongings. Tashawna calls it a great blessing the day her friend saw a R.E.S.T. flyer and brought it to her attention. This was the beginning of what she calls **“light in the darkness.”**

After contacting the R.E.S.T. support line, Tashawna was assigned a caseworker who helped create an individualized care plan to help her regain her independence. **Through this care plan, she has been able to find support in recovering her IDs, housing, has received bi-weekly groceries through the Bare Necessities program, and support through the virtual support line.** She is currently a part of two support groups, Road to Recovery, a group focused on healing from trauma, and as an aspiring entrepreneur, she is also a part of the R.E.S.T. Let's Talk Business club.

Recently, Tashawna was informed that her long-awaited social housing application was approved and R.E.S.T. is helping Tashawna with acquiring furniture for her new apartment as well as providing her with a Starter Kit, which will include blankets, pots and utensils for her new home.

LATRELL'S STORY

Statistics show that **43 percent of homeless youth are former clients of the Children's Aid Society (CAS)**. Latrell, a former CAS client, spent a large portion of his adolescence being shuffled from group home to group home. This went on for too long, and the instability and chaos eventually left him houseless. With no place to go, and with nearly every option exhausted, Latrell went to live with his grandmother. While superior to a group home, living with grandma still comes with its challenges. These challenges have been exacerbated by the pandemic, leaving Latrell no choice but to reach out to R.E.S.T. for support.

Latrell discovered the R.E.S.T organization upon the recommendation of his guidance counsellor and has been receiving assistance since. **Financially, R.E.S.T has helped him tremendously** by providing monthly rent subsidies and biweekly grocery gift cards. Additionally, he was provided with money to purchase a new pair of glasses and was given workout equipment. Beyond the financial aid, **Latrell has also been receiving continuous emotional support**. On a bi-weekly basis, R.E.S.T organizes Zoom meetings to check up on him, as well as update him on new opportunities. Latrell acknowledges the negative impact that the pandemic has had on his emotional wellbeing, and the support groups have been an invaluable resource to counter this.

The challenges posed by the pandemic have been unprecedented, widespread, and have impacted all of us in different ways. We have found that Black communities have, in particular, fared worse than their Caucasian or Asian counterparts. The fight for equality and equity is an uphill battle, but a battle that can be won, nonetheless. Through sustained support from funders, we can make positive differences in our community. Your funding support would allow us to continue this important work with communities of colour.

YEMI'S STORY

Yemi was a former youth for whom an urgent appeal was made by her Children's Aid Society (CAS) independent worker. **She was 2 months away from having a baby, and was desperately in need of a safe place to live and bring her expected baby home to.** The challenges of being alone, and a first-time mom with no place to stay, heightened her fears and she was devastated by the idea of having her baby in the shelter. R.E.S.T. acted quickly and resolutely to get her, and her child, into housing.

Through the Bridge of Hope program, we were able to find Yemi, a wonderful host family that provided a safe place to stay for her and her new baby. The monthly rental subsidies have also made the cost of housing more affordable, relieving her of the financial stress.

By the time Yemi gave birth, she was safely housed and set up for success for both herself and her healthy newborn. Besides connecting Yemi with a housing worker, we also provided her with a starter pack. The starter pack included basic essential items, such as towels, blankets, and bedding; as well as some furniture to give her new home some life and style. In addition to this, we also provide Yemi with a grocery card every two weeks to ensure that she, and her baby, have the items they need. **Yemi is extremely grateful for the help R.E.S.T. gave her, and with a safe, warm house and a fridge full of food, she can focus on the responsibilities that come with being a new mother.** As a young single mom, Yemi is also an addition to our single mom support group where she receives peer and emotional support. Because of R.E.S.T., Yemi has hope for her child's future and goes to bed with peace of mind.

Young racialized women are disproportionately impacted by unplanned pregnancy. They often feel isolated, stigmatized, and unable to cope with the responsibilities of early motherhood. At R.E.S.T., we provide services to youth from every walk of life, and we treat them with the same hope and dignity as any other. It is the faithful and ongoing support of our funders that allows us to ensure the smooth and successful transition to independence that our clients need.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT



365 Father Tobin Road
Brampton, Ontario L6R 0R4
Telephone: 905-793-5451
Fax: 905-793-9633

PEEL CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

Our team, Adolescent Success and Permanency Planning at Peel Children's Aid has utilized The Bridge of Hope Program, as well as other transitional supports; groceries, starter kits, and rent subsidy are all examples of what our youth have accessed.

The youth we work with identify finding stable, affordable housing as a barrier to live independently. Through this program, our youth are having improved connections, by receiving caseworker support to engage with landlords. COVID-19 has highlighted the disproportionate disparities that Black youth experienced in the community prior to the pandemic. R.E.S.T's response to addressing the service gaps that exist in the community for Black youth has helped them attain positive outcomes.

Our youth have said...

"They called her quickly and were very nice on the phone."

"They were helpful."

"Thank you for the stuff you brought we really appreciate it."

"They gave me blankets, household items, food, all stuff I needed, I am very thankful."

Also some feedback from the staff...

"The extra care packages, especially food have been very helpful. Continued housing support helpful and needed."

"Their quick response and positive attitude toward my youth has been great."

"They seem to be able to offer more to our black youth." "I would agree as well that my radicalized youth have been the ones to have success with this program."

Having a program like The Bridge of Hope, which supports the interaction between landlord and the young person, is both valuable and impactful. Thank you R.E.S.T, your organization is highly valued in the Region of Peel.

Sincerely,

Alicia Boothe

Team Lead. Adolescents and Independence Team
Permanency Branch

YMCA GREATER TORONTO

My name is Alicia Wilson and I am a Youth in Transition Worker in the YMCA's Youth in Transition (YIT) Program. The YIT Program was developed to support youth transitioning out of CAS care. As a Youth in Transition Worker it is my job to support youth with past or present CAS involvement by meeting them where they are, and helping them work towards their personal goals.

In December of 2014 a study revealed that black children and youth make up 8.2 per cent of the population in Peel, but account for 41 per cent of children and youth in care. The Black Youth in Transition Worker position was implemented to take a culturally sensitive approach to address the disproportionate overrepresentation of black children and youth in CAS care. While we have made incredible strides, the work we do is not possible without organizations like The REST Centre.

Stable housing is by far the most pressing concern of young people in or exiting CAS care and an ongoing crisis in Peel. Shelter is a basic and fundamental need. There are many barriers youth face when they are trying to secure a safe place to live. Being black, and male in particular, poses an additional set of unique challenges when trying to secure housing.

The REST Centre takes a holistic approach to housing support, specifically, their Bridge of Hope (BOH) Program. The BOH Program is an alternative to the emergency shelter and helps provide youth with permanent housing solutions by connecting them to host families in the community. From one-on-one assistance and help navigating the rental/housing process, to connecting clients with programs and services, The REST Centre provides individually tailored service to their clients. The team helps to instill hope in situations that can seem hopeless for our youth. When I refer a young person to REST, I have the utmost confidence that they will receive unwavering support and leave better off than when they came. The REST Centre is an esteemed community partner of the YMCA of Greater Toronto and I look forward to working collaboratively in 2021 and beyond.



Sincerely,
Alicia Wilson,
Youth in Transition Worker

LOUISE ARBOUR S.S.

It is with great pleasure that I submit this letter of support for REST Centre in appreciation of their services to our students who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

My name is Valda Keldo-McDonald and I work for the Peel District School Board, at Louise Arbour Secondary School (LASS) as a Guidance Counsellor. As a guidance counsellor, I truly believe in the work that the centre is doing in the Peel Region. One of the major supports of this organization is to address Black Youth homelessness; those that are homeless and those in risk of becoming homeless. They work assiduously to ensure that the maximum number of youths they can help are being helped. They aim for students to remain steadfast in school for their long-term wellbeing.

One of the things that is necessary for the advancement of any young person is that the basic need for housing is fulfilled. We appreciate that the REST Centre is addressing this need through the REST Bridge of Hope Program. Several students from LASS have personally benefited from this program and the grocery program also.

It is important that programs like these are supported, as they not only ensure safer environments for students in need, but the Black Diaspora will certainly benefit from an upliftment to their culture when more Black students complete their education. I am in total support of this program being funded and I look forward to continued partnership with them.

Yours Sincerely,

Valda Keldo-McDonald

(Guidance Counsellor, founder of PURE YM Boys' Club - LASS)

Office: 905 793 5451 ext. 417 | Cell: 647 379 0680 | Email: valda.keldomcdonald@peelsb.com





THANK YOU!

22

CONTACT: 1-905-863-1118

info@restcentres.org