



August 9, 2023

Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Regional of Peel
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, 5th Floor
Brampton, Ontario L6T 4B9

Dear Nando Iannicca:

Thank you for your kind words of congratulations on my recent appointment as Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities. I consider the responsibilities of this position to be an honour and am dedicated to serving all Canadians in this new role.

At this particular moment, we have an extraordinary opportunity to help grow Canada's economy in a way that creates good-paying jobs and supports the people and families who live in our communities.

People in Canada have jobs in record numbers, and we have the ability to leverage new investments that will build more prosperous, socially just and environmentally healthy communities.

A close collaboration with provinces and territories, First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, municipalities and rural communities, as well as community groups, industry and other organizations will indeed be crucial as we invest in communities across Canada and work toward reducing homelessness and making housing more affordable and accessible across the country.

I appreciate the detailed information you provided regarding the Region of Peel's important work. I would also like to acknowledge receipt of your comments and recommendations with respect to Infrastructure Canada programming, which includes [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy](#).

REFERRAL TO _____
RECOMMENDED _____
DIRECTION REQUIRED _____
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED _____

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Reaching Home is part of Canada's first ever [National Housing Strategy \(NHS\)](#), a 10-year, \$82+ billion plan to lift hundreds of thousands of Canadians out of housing need. In total, the Government of Canada is investing nearly \$4 billion over nine years through Reaching Home to support communities in addressing homelessness for individuals and families across Canada. This includes the investments announced in Budget 2022 of \$562.2 million over two years, starting in 2024–2025, in order to continue to support organizations in their vital work to prevent and address homelessness.

Reaching Home funding covers various services for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including housing support services such as shelters and transitional homes. Through this program, the federal government has contributed a total of over \$52.8 million to the Region of Peel's homelessness response since April 2019, including \$11.6 million between April 2023 and March 2024.

Please rest assured that the federal government is committed to working with all orders of government, local communities and stakeholders to implement longer-term solutions to homelessness and housing needs. Success relies on cooperation between all orders of government and interested parties.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Sean Fraser, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities

c.c. The Honourable Marc Miller, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Mayor Annette Groves
Town of Caledon

Mayor Patrick Brown
City of Brampton

Mayor Bonnie Crombie
City of Mississauga

July 31, 2023

The Honourable Marc Miller, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
marc.miller@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Sean Fraser, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities
sean.fraser@parl.gc.ca

Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair & CEO

10 Peel Centre Dr.
Suite A, 5th Floor
Brampton, ON L6T 4B9
905-791-7800 ext. 4310

Dear Ministers Miller and Fraser,

RE: Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) reimbursement and funding for asylum claimants seeking emergency shelter in Peel

On behalf of Peel Region, congratulations on your new cabinet appointments, announced earlier this week. You have both been trusted with very important positions and we look forward to working with you both in your new roles.

We also extend our thanks to your government for providing an additional support opportunity through the Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP), which provides critical funding to provinces and municipalities to support unhoused people throughout the country, including asylum claimants. The one-time injection of an additional \$212 million nationally into the program comes at a critical moment given the increasing number of unhoused asylum claimants accessing shelter systems, particularly in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

In recent weeks, the drastic increase in unhoused asylum claimants within shelter systems across the GTA, including Peel, has placed increased pressure on an already over-burdened homelessness system. **Currently, Peel Region's homelessness system is operating at 182% occupancy.** Over the past 3 weeks, there have been 256 asylum claimants admitted into Peel Region's system. In the last week alone, 131 asylum claimants have come to Peel. It is our understanding that many of these claimants are fleeing 2SLGBTQI+ persecution of themselves, or their loved ones, with recent laws that have been passed, or are to be passed in countries such as Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, and Kenya.

Unlike nearly all other communities, Peel Region operates on the basis of a 'no turn away' policy: if you come to us seeking shelter assistance, we will find a place for you even it means temporarily accommodating someone in a hotel. More than half (58%) of Peel's overflow beds are occupied by asylum claimants and almost half (43%) of Peel's emergency shelter residents are as well. Historically, asylum claimants have made up 5% – 7% of shelter residents. Unfortunately, we have been unable to secure additional overflow capacity as places like hotels have returned to pre-pandemic norms with limited spare capacity from a resumption in travel, general increases in homelessness driven by the housing affordability crisis, and financial limitations.

As you may know, Peel Region is one of the most diverse communities in Canada and is proud to support asylum claimants to build a new life in Canada. However, Peel Region's shelter system is already strained despite ongoing commitments and increased Regional investment in homelessness and affordable housing initiatives. A continued influx of asylum claimants into our shelter system, exacerbates the existing homelessness crisis driven by a lack of affordable housing and supports. This creates increased pressure on an over-burdened system, risking individuals and families to fall through the cracks.

Peel Region has very limited, equitable, revenue tools as compared to other levels of government to address this surge. Further, Regional staff continue to meet and collaborate with community partners to better understand the current need and how we can respond as a community to this heartbreaking humanitarian issue.

Despite all of these efforts, Peel Region requires additional financial support from the federal government to ensure those most vulnerable are served by a homelessness system that is appropriately and adequately resourced to support individuals and families looking to start a safer and better life.

To ensure Peel Region can meet the needs of asylum claimants coming to our community for help, we request the federal government immediately provide \$10.2 million in funding to support the influx of refugee and asylum seekers who need immediate assistance in the Peel community. This includes:

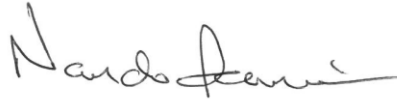
- \$1.5 million in direct reimbursement for costs incurred by Peel Region's homelessness system from January – April 2023 supporting refugee and asylum seekers, as well as
- \$8.7 million in direct reimbursement for ongoing costs incurred for May – December 2023.

Peel Region will continue to serve the needs of asylum claimants to the best of our ability, but without immediate access to additional funding, we will not be able to meet the ever-growing need in our homelessness system. In addition to already announced IHAP funding, the federal government should consider leveraging existing Reaching Home administrative infrastructure to flow additional resources into communities to address this crisis.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with all levels of government on this urgent and important issue. Only together can we support and care for our most vulnerable and those who come to Canada for a safe and better life.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.

Kindest personal regards,



Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Region of Peel

Nando Iannicca
Regional Chair & CEO

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cc: Mayor Annette Groves, Town of Caledon
Mayor Patrick Brown, City of Brampton
Mayor Bonnie Crombie, City of Mississauga
Jason Hollmann, Director General, Asylum Policy, Citizenship and Immigration
Canada