

**Ministry of Housing****Minister Responsible for the  
Poverty Reduction Strategy**

Office of the Minister

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18-75848

February 27, 2018

His Worship Fred Eisenberger  
Mayor  
City of Hamilton  
71 Main Street West  
Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

The 2017 Auditor General's Report included a review of social and affordable housing in Ontario and provided a number of recommendations to the Ministry of Housing. The ministry's response to the Report acknowledged the complexity of the affordable and social housing system in Ontario and recognized the need for improvements to move toward the vision that every person has an affordable, suitable, and adequate home to provide the foundation to secure employment, raise a family and build strong communities (click [here](#) to access the Auditor General's Report and recommendations for the Ministry of Housing).

I have had time to reflect on the Auditor General's report and I agree with her recommendations. Ontarians deserve a social housing system that works for them. One that meets their needs and one that meets the unique needs of every community across this province. Over the coming months I am committed to working with you to examine the issues raised in the Report, and to identify ways to address the Auditor General's recommendations over the short and longer-term.

There are two areas in particular that I am beginning work to examine more closely. Firstly, I am committed to addressing the Auditor General's recommendation to ensure that social housing Service Level Standards are met in communities across the province. I have asked ministry staff to follow up with Service Managers who are consistently not meeting these standards to better understand the issues underlying this situation. I know that working together we can find the right solutions.

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In addition, I am committed to looking at ways we can improve the rules around social housing waitlists – recognizing that the need for consistency and fairness across the province must be balanced with the reality of unique local circumstances. As a first step, I have directed staff to provide me with comprehensive advice within 90 days that will include detailed information on how waitlists are currently being managed in communities across the province, as well as potential immediate and longer-term steps that can be taken to improve the system. Following receipt of this advice, I am committed to engaging with tenants, applicants and tenant organizations to get their input on how waitlist system processes could be improved to better meet tenants' and applicants' needs. If what we learn through this process signals the need for regulatory and/or legislative changes, we are prepared to put forward proposed changes.

The ministry will be undertaking an information gathering process to better understand how Service Managers are administering their waitlists across the province – including the implementation of local priorities, rules and asset limits. I am seeking your assistance in participating in the survey and providing this information to the ministry. The data you provide will be crucial to help inform ways we can better work together to improve social housing waitlist systems. In the coming weeks, you will receive a memo with further information detailing how to provide this information, and a provincial roll-up of the results will be shared with you following the data gathering and analysis.

As Minister, I take the commitment to improving the lives of all Ontarians very seriously. I am committed to working with a range of partners to strengthen the way housing services are delivered in the province. I believe that all three levels of government must be partners to meet the housing needs of Ontarians – and when we work together, we can help everyone find a place to call home.

Sincerely,

<original signed by>

Peter Milczyn  
Minister

c: Mr. Chris Murray, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Hamilton  
Ms. Vicki Woodcox, Director of Housing Services, City of Hamilton