

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities: March 18, 2025

MOVED BY J. KEMP

SECONDED BY

Consultation with Staff to Review Policy that Affects Unhoused Persons with Disabilities and Tour Shelter Facilities to Provide Recommendations to Make Them a Safer and More Inviting Space for All

WHEREAS, there is housing crisis and persons with disabilities are disproportionately represented among the unhoused population of the City of Hamilton and that these persons represent a wide variety of different types of disabilities;

WHEREAS, the current shelter system is considered to be low-barrier access, this is not to be confused with fully accessible. Shelter spaces are accessible to visit, but that does not mean they are accessible to reside there for any amount of time. There is no ability to accommodate on an individual basis nor is there an opportunity to offer isolated space even if it is essential for the individual’s safety and those around them;

WHEREAS, the definition of safe accommodation can vary depending on a person’s needs and disabilities and

we must do what we can to ensure that shelters are able to provide safe spaces above and beyond protection from the elements;

WHEREAS, there is not an available accessibility plan for the Barton and Tiffany micro shelter site and the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities would like to review the site and make recommendations to make it a more complete and accommodating space for persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the encampment protocol has been discontinued and by-law officers and police will now be forcing relocations of anyone still living rough and in violation of current by-laws, we must find ways of making shelters better so that persons with disabilities will choose to use them over living in tents and encampments.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities' Housing Working Group requests permission to work with the Housing Services Division and the Housing Secretariat in order to understand the shelter system as it currently operates so we may better offer recommendations to improve their accessibility for persons with disabilities; and
- (b) The Housing Working Group requests permission to tour shelter facilities as well as the micro cabin site on Barton and Tiffany in order that we may better understand the challenges in operating a

shelter system as well as offer suggestions for change.