



Update to Dufferin Grove Friends following my Housing Town Hall with Minister Erskine-Smith

Dufferin Grove Friends & Neighbours,

I know how important housing is to the community, so I wanted to take a moment to share a couple of key updates.

Earlier this month, Housing Minister Nate Erskine-Smith came to Davenport for a Housing Town Hall. During the discussion, the Minister made sure that everyone knew that \$25 million additional dollars were given to the City of Toronto by the federal government to support transitioning those who are living in encampments to more permanent, safe spaces.

The Minister articulated that the federal government had to bypass the province of Ontario, who did not want to engage with us on this file. We are now working directly with the City of Toronto. While all this funding is not specifically for the encampments at Dufferin Grove, **the city can choose Dufferin Grove as one of its priority areas.** Note also that this funding is in addition to support for the Interim Housing Assistance Program (IHAP) and the Reaching Home program.

The Minister further mentioned three additional things for me to pass along to Dufferin Grove residents:

Expanding Non-Market Housing: Minister Erskine-Smith indicated that he will be working closely with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to ensure that they are more flexible and supportive of nonprofit applications. I was thankful to West Neighbourhood Housing and St Clair, as well as developers who came out, who articulated their firsthand issues with CMHC.

Removing Barriers to Housing Supply: The federal government has given the City of Toronto just under \$500 million in funding with the Housing Accelerator Fund; this funding incentivizes the reduction of permit wait times, zoning law changes, and other processes that will make it easier and faster to build affordable homes. The Minister indicated that while good progress has been made, far more must be done.

Following Finland's Housing First Model: The Minister also indicated that housing needs to be seen as a home, and not as an investment. He would like to follow the Finnish Housing First model and will be taking steps to move toward a model that combines rapid housing, and wraparound supports to ensure people have access to affordable places to live. Steps that the



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Minister would like to explore include policy measures to discourage speculative investment in housing and moving toward a ‘housing first’ model.

The final point I would like to make for Dufferin Grove is that it is very clear that housing affordability and homelessness will not be resolved by any one level of government. **We need all levels of government working constructively together and doing our part to make progress.** To see the comprehensive announcement on addressing encampments in Ontario, kindly click [here](#).

If you have any questions about any of the information about housing, please feel free to connect with my office at (416) 654-8048

My very best,

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