Dear Mayor, distinguished members of the city council,

I want to thank the Council for their work and efforts in the issue of people experiencing homelessness. Your commitment and dedication to this issue is commendable. Homelessness is a complex and challenging issue, and it requires a collaborative effort from all members of the community to address it, and we are here today to speak in response to Item No. 10 Initiatives for the Reduction and Prevention of Homelessness.

Item No. 10 Initiatives for the Reduction and Prevention of Homelessness has some great benefits and I believe that there are some additional considerations.

In reference to Resolution 4, we kindly ask that it be considered that the province assist sector organizations who provide direct support services to tenants, rather than solely assisting landlords. Trauma-informed supports are critical to ensure the wellbeing of tenants is maintained, and direct service workers can work alongside landlords to promote successful tenancy.

In reference to Resolution 5, considerations of Licensing and Standards requirements, we would like the following to be contemplated:

- Reflecting on the work undertaken to license rooming houses, explore what worked well and what were the lessons learned.

- In partnership with service providers, create a definition of 'low-barrier' that consider

    - tenant eligibility
    - attachment to social programming, including to those who provide crisis or regular supports through home visits, and
    - implications of physical safety and building maintenance

Licensing and Standard requirements that reflect a well-defined definition of 'low barrier' is critical to ensuring that the safety of tenants, as well as those who live, work, and play in the surrounding area, is maintained.

Factoring in the role of the province, the city and the community, we are hopeful that this motion will help support the coordination of services to uphold sustainable housing for vulnerable folks in our community.

I want to you thank you for your time, and of the opportunity to speak to this important motion.