

Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81161969426>

Introduction of Forum Co-Chairs

- Mark Aston, TAEH Chair and Executive Director, Covenant House
- Ashleigh Dalton, Manager, Strategic Policy and Service Planning, SSHA
- Fifty-three participants joined the Zoom meeting for the THHSP meeting
- Welcome extended to the group. Everyone is invited to attend these forums, including TAEH partners as well. The goal is to have a forum with bi-directional information sharing and dialogue regarding services, policies and planning.

Welcome and Land Recognition

- Kira shared a land recognition with the group which highlighted the importance of thinking deeply about the purpose of land acknowledgements that are shared at these meetings. Land acknowledgements are critical to work being done in the homelessness sector, as land is a resource that we all share. Land acknowledgements are not historical, they are present reflections of the historical and ongoing impact of colonization, and our commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous communities.
- Meeting took place during national Indigenous history month. During this meeting it was announced that there will be an agenda item added to each meeting to explore and learn more about Indigenous history, communities, and/or issues impacting Indigenous communities in Toronto.
- A survey will be sent out after the meeting to find out what attendees would like to learn about and/or identify knowledge gaps in understanding of Indigenous histories.
- There was a special acknowledgement by Kira of the tragedy of the 215 graves of Indigenous children found in BC

Agenda Review

Mark provided an overview of agenda items.

Meeting in the Middle – Presented by Steve Teekens, TICAB and Linda Wood, SSHA

Linda Wood and Steve Teekens- Presented on Meeting in the Middle and the process for co-creating and steps that they have taken to implement the action plan

Background:

Persistent overrepresentation of Indigenous people in Toronto's homeless population, especially among individuals staying outdoors. These issues are the direct result of colonialism, structural and institutional racism, government policies and practices, and intergenerational trauma

Meeting in the Middle:

Background:

The aim of the Meeting in the Middle Engagement Strategy and Action Plan is to build partnerships to address indigenous homelessness. The plan was co-created with Indigenous partners, including, Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council and the Indigenous Community Advisory Board for Homelessness

Creating the Meeting in the Middle Engagement Strategy and Action Plan:

- The Meeting in The Middle engagement strategy and action plan was created to address issues of homelessness that impact Indigenous communities in Toronto. It was done in partnership with SSHA and Indigenous community organizations
- There is a persistent over-representation of Indigenous people in the City's homeless population. 35-28% of outdoor homeless population identify as indigenous, and 16% of the homeless population overall
- Indigenous homelessness is the direct result of systemic racism, and government policies
- The Indigenous Community Advisory Board identified unique challenges in working with community orgs. The doc highlights how community orgs should be engaged, Indigenous led solutions, and co-create principles for engagement, and so the Meeting in the Middle strategy was created to build trust and develop protocols for engagement that are mutually agreed upon between SSHA and Indigenous community partner orgs
- Three day planning meeting with TASSC to co-create Meeting in the Middle Strategy
- Meeting in the Meeting meets on a semi-annual basis
- Through Meeting in the Meeting SSHA and TASSC were able to identify seven commitments. The three highlighted for the meeting were:
 - Commitment 1 - Learning and Development
 - Commitment 2 – Integrating Holistic Approaches
 - Commitment 3 – Supporting Capacity Building
- Indigenous organizations were paid for their work
 - Trainings were made free to other staff across the City and will be available for the next 12 months
- Development of an Indigenous funding stream, and working toward 20% of funding to be directed to indigenous funding stream
- Dedicated policy to implement Meeting in the Middle action
- Collaboration on Street Needs Assessment
- Development of protocols for engaging Indigenous orgs within SSHA
- Commitment 7 of the Action Plan includes:
 - Reporting back to Indigenous stakeholders and partners
 - Annual gathering to re-commit to partnership and assess progress on implementation
 - Mid-year check-in with Indigenous partners and stakeholders to set priorities for the year

- Ceremony is a very important component of the engagement strategy. Ceremony helps each party to look to the past, present, and future, regarding goals and intended outcomes of the strategy.
- A working ceremony was created for the Meeting in the Middle Strategy

Outcomes and Impacts from the three day meeting include:

- Solidified partnership with the Indigenous CAB and TASSC
- Increased Divisional awareness and understanding of the *Meeting in the Middle* commitments and actions
- Strengthened Divisional capacity to meaningfully engage with Indigenous organizations on policy and program development
- Increased financial investments in Indigenous housing and homelessness prevention
- Strengthened cultural learning and development of SSHA staff with focus on local realities of Indigenous homelessness
- Strengthened capacity of TASSC and Indigenous CAB to engage with the City and Indigenous community
- Increased responsiveness of funding and recruitment processes to the needs of Indigenous organizations and communities
- Increased accountability of SSHA to Indigenous partners in the housing and homelessness sector

**Reducing transmission respiratory illness through improved indoor air quality -
Dr. Jeffery Siegel, University of Toronto**

Dr. Jeffery Siegel presented on his work exploring how to reduce the transmission of respiratory illness through indoor air quality

- For most Canadians, poor indoor health quality is one of our greatest health care risk
- Air borne illnesses spread quicker and are more detrimental to an individual's health indoors and in poorly ventilated environments
- The Swiss Cheese Model – i.e., there are many ways to stop a virus, but none are perfect. To mitigate the risk of transmission, everyone should layer strategies to help combat COVID.
- Following this model to combat COVID should involve implementing at least two of the three strategies listed below at once. These may include:
 - Remain outside
 - Wear well fitted and appropriately fitted masks
 - And be physically distanced
- Technology, like filters, performs differently in different homes/environment, so context is key
- "Layers" may describe:
 - Masks - fit of the mask on the face and the quality of mask matters a lot

- Physical distancing - the further the better, however, at least 2 meters outside and inside well ventilated spaces
- Mechanical ventilation – however, if used incorrectly, ventilators can also create humidity issues, and require ongoing mechanical maintenance. Placement of the units is also important and filters need to be changed. Beyond filtration you can also do a room flush out, the air in the room should turnover three times, (ventilators usually take 2 hours to filter/turnover air at this rate)
- Examples of air ventilator use:
 - Potable air cleaners, make sure that there is enough air in the filter to filter the room
 - Placement of air cleaners is important, you should place air cleaners in the centre of the space. If dining is going on the space, do six changes per hour
 - Make sure with air cleaners you talk to people in the space and explain what they are and what they are doing
 - Place air cleaners to intercept portable flume
 - Prioritise common areas for placement
- Make sure to provide people with good information on how to socially distance or isolate (when appropriate) in any space
- Inspect building look for vertical spacers in the building, make sure the virus does not have an easy pathway

List of ventilation resources:

- The MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions has shared some [resources for reducing transmission of respiratory illness](#) through improved indoor air quality
- Public Health Ontario also provides information through [COVID-19: Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning \(HVAC\) Systems in Buildings](#)
- Public Health Agency of Canada [COVID-19: Guidance on indoor ventilation during the pandemic](#)
- Toronto Public Health [COVID-19: Transmission, Aerosols and Ventilation](#)

Using Toronto's Shelter Data Dashboard to drive systems change – Stephanie Malcher and Wondu Amenu, SSHA

- Review of current [Shelter System Flow Data Dashboard](#)
- Overview of how SSHA is using the data
- [Open Data Portal](#) demonstration
- Overview of data workshop at next forum on July 7, 2021, with invitation for community presentations

TAEH updates – Kira Heineck

- Position on encampments and opportunities to join call for TAEH recommendations was shared

Next meeting – July 7, 2021