



ABOUT THE SERVICE

Is 233 Carlton going to become a shelter?

No, 233 Carlton will be a women's resource centre that is being relocated from 67 Adelaide Street East that includes recreation, health and employment supports and a 24hr women's drop-in.

What is the Adelaide Resource Centre for Women and who is it operated by?

The Adelaide Resource Centre for Women was founded in 1998 as a safe and welcoming space for vulnerable women in the area, with onsite access to vital health and community services.

The service is currently delivered as a partnership with several organizations including:

- Fred Victor which runs the women's 24-hour drop-in service that includes emergency overnight spaces
- Street Haven at the Crossroads
- University Health Network
- Centre for Addiction & Mental Health
- Regent Park Community Health Centre

Additional project partners may be brought on board once the service is moved to 233 Carlton based on client and service needs.

What services does the Adelaide Resource Centre for Women offer?

The Centre is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For many women, it is the only way to connect with other women and access services that uniquely meet their needs. The Centre provides such key necessities as food, rest, clothing, toiletries, hygiene products and other items. It also provides a full range of on-site health and social services, including mental health services, chiropody, a drop-in computer lab, literacy and education upgrading, a withdrawal management program, art programming, cooking classes, a legal clinic, and more.

Does the Centre help women leave homelessness?

Yes. Last year 18 women found a permanent home and 80 women received eviction prevention supports that enabled them to keep their homes. Approximately 30% of the Centre's clients are currently housed, and use the programs to prevent eviction, reduce isolation and address food insecurity.

ABOUT THE RELOCATION

When will the Women's Resource Centre be relocated?

The new program is expected to open at 233 Carlton in late 2020 or early 2021. While staff have signed a lease that begins January 1, 2020, there are major renovations that need to be done to prepare the space. Design planning for the space has already begun and renovations are planned to begin summer 2020.

EXPECTED PROGRAMMING

Will there be beds/cots/mats for people to sleep there?

There will be a mix of mats and chairs where women can rest.

Will meal programs be offered?

Yes, three meals will be served daily.

Will there be 24/7 security guards?

Security needs will be assessed as part of the process to relocate the program and may be increased as needed. Currently at 67 Adelaide St. E., there is onsite security on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

Are there other security measures planned for 233 Carlton St.?

Plans include on-site cameras and improved exterior lighting. The front reception has also been designed to allow direct sight lines to the front façade of the building. Clients will only enter and exit through the front of the building. Rear access doors will only be used for staff and emergency exits. Shelter, Support & Housing Administration (SSHA) and Fred Victor will consult with Corporate Security at the City of Toronto and Toronto Police Services to review security plans.

Will 233 Carlton Street become a Safe Consumption Site?

The 24-hour Women's drop-in at 233 Carlton Street will not host a Safe Consumption Site. Staff will provide information about various Consumption and Treatment Sites (CTS) that are available.

Will needles be distributed at 233 Carlton St?

City-funded programs, including this one, operate under a harm reduction model, meaning clients can access clean needles and other harm reduction supplies. Providing harm reduction kits is a health intervention to ensure that when people are using they are using safely.

Is outdoor space being provided on-site?

Yes, the architects are exploring options for providing a rooftop outdoor space and second floor rear balcony as part of the renovation of the site.

Where do service users typically go when not using the Resource Centre?

Many of the women who use the drop-in stay there throughout the day, as the service is open 24 hours. Clients often also access other services for vulnerable women in the community (e.g. faith-based services, Fred Victor Women's Shelter etc.). Staff work to help clients access shelter beds within the permanent shelter system and find housing options. And as mentioned before, approximately 30% of the women who access the centre are currently housed.

What supports will be provided to those who are staying at the facility to help them transition to housing?

Fred Victor will have counselling staff and housing workers available on-site to assist clients with shelter referrals, long-term housing applications and housing follow-up supports.

What is the difference between a 24-hour drop-in and a 24-hour respite site?

The women's 24-hour drop-in programs meet basic 24-hour respite standards, but offer a different model of support services for women experiencing gender-based violence, and consider themselves to be a different program model.

The Adelaide Resource Centre has been in place since 1998. The 24-hour drop-in was added as a result of a Council direction to establish a service that supports women at risk of gender-based violence².

For more information on services and terminology, please refer to the Housing & Homelessness Services Glossary³.

ABOUT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Why was there no community consultation? What does SSHA's community engagement process look like?

In 2016, City Council requested an external third-party review⁴ of best practices to improve community engagement related to emergency shelter development. The consultant identified that new sites that comply with zoning by-laws did not require approval or consultation from local communities in order to be sited and could be developed as-of-right. The review recommended that SSHA's engagement and planning process for emergency shelters be refocused from the location of sites to how communities can support and improve the success of the new service.

As a result, City Staff site new locations for shelters under delegated authority, as approved by City Council⁵, to address the urgent need for shelter spaces in the city of Toronto, using the Council approved community engagement process⁶. The relocation of the Adelaide Resource Centre for Women to 233 Carlton St. falls under this authority as it is required due to 67 Adelaide being selected as a prospective new shelter site.

Is there a process to have this decision reviewed? What is the appeal process? If not why?

No, there is not an appeal process. Sites that comply with zoning by-laws are allowed as-of-right. Siting shelters and other services is a decision made following a specific Council-approved process for delegated authority and based on a careful assessment of the client and operational needs. This site meets all requirements under existing by-laws and planning approvals for use as a 24-hour drop-in.

Now that the Resource Centre for Women's location has been chosen, how will the City engage the community?

The City has hired independent consultants Joy Connelly and Joe Mihevc to engage the community in the lead-up to the Centre's relocation to 233 Carlton. They have already begun to consult with the Cabbagetown BIA, local residents associations, service agencies, and other local stakeholders to plan engagement activities.

The consultants plan to form a Community Liaison Committee (CLC) 4-5 months before the Resource Centre for Women opens its doors at 233 Carlton. CLCs typically include a wide range of stakeholders including representatives from local businesses, residents associations, agencies, schools and City services. The aim of the CLC is to plan for the success of the Resource Centre for Women and its neighbours. Typical topics for discussion include: planning safety and security measures; developing proactive strategies to promote the Centre's success; providing a vehicle for addressing any concerns after the Centre open; promoting the integration of the shelter into the community and advising on communications with the community.

In the meantime, Joe and Joy are available to respond to emailed questions or comments, and welcome invitations to meet with groups interested in promoting the Centre's success in its new location.

How can I stay informed?

If you would like to receive periodic email updates about the relocation, or would like to reach Joy and Joe directly for further details about the Resource Centre for Women and its relocation to 233 Carlton, please email clc.233carlton@gmail.com. People who have already emailed the City about the Centre's relocation to 233 Carlton and indicated interest in being added are already on the mailing list.

All media, including bloggers, should contact media@toronto.ca

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT (CoA) APPLICATION

What is the CoA?

The CoA is a quasi-judicial City of Toronto body comprised of citizen members appointed by City Council. The role of the CoA is to make decisions on minor variances related to municipal zoning bylaws and grants consents required by the Planning Act.

Why is this project going to the CoA?

In order to implement the best practice guidelines for the provision of services, accessibility and neighbourhood integration, the proposed renovation at 233 Carlton St. will require an application for two minor variances as summarized below:

1. Converting the basement at 233 Carlton St. from a storage area to space for staff offices, servery, washrooms, laundry and more
2. An exemption to the requirement of two parking spaces for office use at 233 Carlton St.

The CoA hearing will be held on February 26, 2020. In the coming weeks, City Planning will send a separate Notice of Public Hearing to all residents within 60 metres of the property, as per the Planning Act.

Will the outcome of the CoA hearing affect the decision to relocate the Adelaide Women's Resource Centre to 233 Carlton?

No, the CoA application will not affect the decision to convert 233 Carlton St. into a Women's Resource Centre. The use of this site is permitted under City by-laws and zoning. The hearing will not determine the location or use of the site. The CoA hearing will solely focus on site renovations. If the CoA application is not successful, the site will still be renovated to house the Women's Resource Centre without the renovations that are included in the application.

What will happen if the CoA application is unsuccessful?

If the application is unsuccessful it will mean that the interior space will be reconfigured to relocate office space, and garbage pick-up will have to be on Carlton to allow for the rear to be used for parking spaces.

References

- 1 <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.CD29.1>
- 2 <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.CD29.1>
- 3- <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/research-reports/housing-and-homelessness-research-and-reports/shelter-support-and-housing-administration-glossary-of-terms/>
- 4 <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-102629.pdf>
- 5 <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.CD24.7>
- 6 <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.CD19.6>
- 7- <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/community-partners/emergency-shelter-operators/about-toronto-shelter-system/welcoming-new-shelters-into-communities/>