

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE “TIME TO TALK” IS OVER

Kitchener— January 10, 2020 — On January 13th, Kitchener Council is set to discuss some of the communities most pressing concerns. With two such meetings scheduled for our municipal representatives, the Housing Needs Assessment scheduled during the standing committee meeting at 12:30pm and the 2020 Budget Public Input Meeting scheduled for 7:30 at Kitchener City Hall.

With the release of the Housing Needs Assessment, painting a bleak picture of the current status of our local housings state of affordability, two of the Kitchener Affordable Housing Advisory Committee members are intending to present on the topic this Monday.

Aleksandra Petrovic working for the Social Development Centre Waterloo Region will be presenting at the Community and Infrastructure Services Committee, as her organization has been tracking trends in homelessness since the 80's and gentrification since 2010. "The assessment is a testimony that hard data and statistics haven't at all influenced policies and strategies to date. The investment into deeply affordable housing at all levels of government remains gravely inadequate to address the crisis that has built up over time," says Petrovic.

Regan Sunshine Brussé, poverty advocate with the Alliance Against Poverty, who also ran in the municipal race for the current council positions in 2018, intends to approach Council at the evening budget meeting.

“The recent report on local housing needs clearly outlines the depth and breadth of the situation and this implies an immediate need for action. The effect this is having on our citizens is immense and brings with it the responsibility of response. Action requires funding. We need to commit. My approach to council on Monday will be to ask for both commitment and a budgetary response from our Municipal Representatives in the 2020 Budget” she says.

The current budget City of Kitchener Budget already includes funding for the ALL IN 2020 Campaign, responsible for the most recently released data on the topic locally. Brussé suggests that “the 2020 budget option needs to be selected at its highest tier.” She goes on to explain "I think this is a necessary and positive step, and would hate to see us miss the chance to really

get started due to lack of funds. We've committed to this. We can no longer hide from our knowledge of this crisis. We need more funding options."

Both women are active locally in the community and many share their deep concern.

Petrovic states that "the only way housing strategies can be successful is by welcoming the people who are homeless, or who spend far beyond 30% of their income or social assistance check on poor and unsafe housing to be at the center of planning and implementation. Re-humanizing of marginalized groups is a process that will build broader understanding about the spending decisions that have to be made."

For more information please contact either:

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