Faith leaders set up mock shelter in city hall to protest budget cuts

With the City of Toronto budget including a $1 million reduction in homelessness reduction funding, faith leaders from across Toronto crowded into City Hall to bring the problem right to council's front door.

With councillors voting on the 2017 budget on Wednesday, a number of leaders from various denominations created a mock homeless shelter inside City Hall to call attention to the city's inadequate spending on homelessness services. 

The initiative was meant to show just how badly homelessness reduction is needed in the city, with many faith leaders pointing to the city's homelessness prevention strategy, which is already insufficient to handle the critical need in Toronto.

“Within two weeks of opening, we began operating our shelter as if in a cold weather alert to accommodate all shelter and food bank users who are more and more resembling of our family members, friends and neighbours,” said Joe Abbey-Colborne, director of Faith in the City. “Shelter and food bank users are more and more resembling of our family members, friends and neighbours.

They are using our shelters for longer periods, and struggle to find long-term, affordable housing options.”

Faith leaders and religious organizations are doing what they can to fill in the gaps in the city's homelessness prevention strategy, which is already insufficient to handle the critical need in Toronto.

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Faith leaders set up mock shelter in city hall to protest $1 million in proposed cuts to homelessness reduction funding.

Scarborough Mirror

Faith leaders dish out soup at a mock shelter they set up at City Hall on Tuesday, Feb. 14 to protest $1 million in proposed cuts to homelessness reduction funding.

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