

October 5, 2009

## Housing Charter signing celebrates UN's World Habitat Day

Mayor David Miller and Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti (Ward 7 York West), Chair of the Affordable Housing Committee, today signed the City of Toronto's new Housing Charter to mark the United Nations' World Habitat Day.

The *Toronto Housing Charter – Opportunity for All*, the first in Canada, is a key part of *Housing Opportunities Toronto—An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010-2020 (HOT)*, adopted by City Council August 5, 2009. The Charter will assist those who often face challenges finding affordable housing, from newcomers and single parents, to seniors and those with disabilities. It states that all residents have the right to equal treatment in housing without discrimination as provided by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

"I'm very proud of Toronto's leadership in promoting a basic fundamental right such as safe, stable and affordable housing," Mayor Miller said. "This charter will guide City Council and staff as they continue to work with other governments and our partners to provide housing opportunities throughout Toronto."

Mayor Miller and Councillor Mammoliti also presented a plaque to Toronto's Home Ownership Alternatives (HOA) for being one of nine world-wide finalists for the UN's 2008-2009 World Habitat Awards. HOA's innovative financing mechanisms enable low and moderate-income families to become homeowners.

"The work of Home Ownership Alternatives is a great example of the dedication and innovation of our partners in the non-profit and private sectors," said Councillor Mammoliti. "They are and will be a key ingredient in ensuring the success of *HOT*."

"We are very excited that our work is being recognized globally," said Joe Deschênes Smith, Vice President, Partnerships, at HOA. "We've helped over 2,300 families become new homeowners over the years and it wouldn't be possible without great partners like the City of Toronto and the federal and provincial governments."

The United Nations has designated the first Monday in October as World Habitat Day to reflect on the state of human settlements and the basic right to adequate shelter for all. It is also intended to remind the world of its responsibility for the future of the human habitat. This year's theme is Planning our Urban Future.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

- 30 -

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