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**Creating Homeownership Opportunities for Social Housing Residents:
Freeing Up Toronto's Housing Investments**

Members of the Affordable Housing Committee,

I am writing as a follow-up to City Council's approval of Housing Opportunities Toronto: An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010 - 2020 (HOT) at its meeting of August 5 and 6, 2009.

As you are aware, HOT proposes actions across the full range of housing needs in Toronto to assist the 640,000 residents of this city who are struggling with high housing costs or inadequate accommodation. In particular, it affirms the importance of affordable home ownership as a key strategy for responding to Toronto's housing challenges.

I have long believed in the importance of home ownership as a building block to success for families and individuals. It can provide many benefits, including pride of ownership and long-term housing affordability. At the same time, assisting residents to become home owners can free up much-needed affordable rental and social housing and relieve some of the pressure and cost to build new affordable housing.

We know from a 2007 survey by Peel Region, that the single most common reason residents leave social housing is to purchase a home, accounting for 31 per cent of those who move out of social housing.

In light of Toronto's support for new affordable ownership through the City's Official Plan and HOT, I am keen to maximize results by directly extending our efforts to social housing residents.

Most recently, Habitat for Humanity Toronto and Options for Homes have successfully worked with Toronto's Housing Connections to make affordable ownership a reality for qualifying residents on the social housing waiting list. I'm recommending that this practice continue and that the City formally request Toronto Community Housing to formalize these partnerships with affordable home ownership partners.

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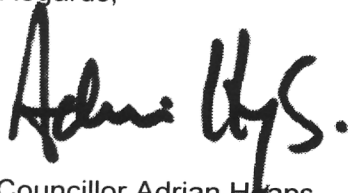
However, the time has also come to expand our efforts by directly linking social housing tenants to new affordable ownership opportunities. With 70,000 households on the waiting list we need to free up existing rental housing through promoting and extending home ownership opportunities to social housing residents.

I am very interested in having this matter followed up and am seeking the Committee's support for the following motion:

That City staff in the Affordable Housing Office and Shelter, Support and Housing Administration co-ordinate a report to the Affordable Housing Committee in early 2010 on providing affordable ownership opportunities to social housing residents, including:

- a. **Information on the reasons why Toronto social housing residents move;**
- b. **Income profile of social housing residents who may be able to afford home ownership;**
- c. **Information on the City's current partnerships with affordable home ownership providers and their experience in finding purchasers from the waiting list;**
- d. **Options to expand opportunities to make affordable home ownership available to residents on the social housing waiting list and to social housing residents.**

Regards,



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