



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Honouring Our Partners – The Toronto Housing Awards

Date:	March 24, 2010
To:	Affordable Housing Committee
From:	Sue Corke, Deputy City Manager
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	AFS - 11761

SUMMARY

This report responds to a request from the October 20, 2009 meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee that the City of Toronto create an awards program to honour the work of its partners in the field of affordable housing. The committee was acting on a recommendation from the Chair, Councillor Mammoliti, contained in an October 5, 2009 letter.

This report outlines a recognition event to be held at the June 3, 2010 meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee for proponents currently involved in the creation of affordable rental and ownership housing. The event will honour 16 proponents responsible for the construction of some 2,500 new affordable homes in 2010.

It also outlines a permanent awards program beginning in 2011 that will be a central part of the City's participation in the United Nations' World Habitat Day, which occurs on the first Monday of October each year. The awards will be presented for excellence and innovation in such areas as financing, environmental impact, service provision and conversion to affordable housing.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report has no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

Councillor Mammoliti wrote to the committee on Oct. 5, 2009 recommending the creation of the City of Toronto Affordable Housing Awards. The committee adopted this recommendation at its October 20, 2009 meeting.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The City works closely with its private and non-profit partners who are essential in the creation of affordable homes for Torontonians. Partners supply expertise, land and funding that combine with federal, provincial and City financial support to produce affordable homes. Without them, these homes would not be built.

There currently exists no formal City of Toronto program or means of recognizing these contributions. The City does present Urban Design Awards every two years. In 2009, for example, the City handed out six Awards of Excellence and 12 Honourable Mentions from 117 entries.

As well, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation presents its Housing Awards every two years with a different theme on each occasion. Toronto organizations have been previous winners of these awards, including *Streets to Homes* in 2008 and *St. Clare's Multifaith Housing, Wigwamen Incorporated* and *Woodgreen Community Services* in 2006.

The 2010 theme is *Best Practices in Affordable Housing*. The 16 winners, chosen by an independent multi-disciplinary selection committee comprised of housing experts from across Canada, will be honoured at an awards event in Ottawa in November. Submissions are being accepted until April 16, 2010.

Given the leadership Toronto has shown on affordable housing and the size of its affordable housing activity, it is appropriate that the City recognize the achievements of its affordable housing partners.

Such recognition is important because:

- The City's housing partners make a valuable contribution to the economic, environmental and social well-being of Toronto
- Such awards encourage existing partners to continue their efforts to build affordable housing
- They encourage new partners to step forward and participate in the creation of affordable housing
- They highlight best practices in creating affordable housing
- They promote the importance and value of affordable housing to Toronto's economic and social success

COMMENTS

The City of Toronto Housing Awards will be awarded every two years beginning in 2011. In this way, the Toronto awards will complement the CMHC Housing Awards held in alternate years. The Toronto Housing Awards will be presented as part of the City's celebration of the United Nations' World Habitat Day, which occurs on the first Monday of October.

Specific criteria, the method of selecting winners (such as a panel of outside experts) and the nature of the award will be developed. Nominees and winners will receive city-wide recognition for their accomplishments.

For 2010, the City will recognize the commitment of 16 proponents currently constructing some 2,500 homes affordable rental and ownership homes. The recognition event will occur at the June 3, 2010 meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee.

As well, under the federal/provincial/municipal communications protocol, groundbreakings and official openings are being planned for individual developments.

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SIGNATURE

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