



Dear Executive Committee,

I wrote to the TCHC Board in October of last year regarding serious concerns about the sale of the stand-alone units, including the sale of those units housing service agencies. I am relieved that houses such as 981 Dundas Street West currently occupied by Matthew House, an organization providing transitional housing for newly-arrived refugees, have been taken off of the list. However, I am writing today to ask you not to vote for the sale of the remaining 675 stand-alone units and instead consider deferring this item until we have explored all options for coping with our state of good repair backlog.

Toronto's neighbourhoods are made stronger by their cultural and socio-economic diversity. The TCHC scattered housing not only ensures we can meet the housing needs of families in Toronto but also that our neighbourhoods are mixed income, making Toronto a more accessible and equitable city. Concentrating Rent Geared to Income (RGI) units is a step backwards for this city.

TCHC's policy is to create mixed income neighbourhoods because they have proven that is where communities thrive. We should not go back on this. However, the plan before us does. In fact, it puts TCHC in a position where it needs to reduce the number of market-based units to make room for the relocation of RGI tenants from the stand-alone homes. This will lead to an increased concentration of RGI housing and over time will significantly decrease the revenue TCHC would have earned from the market-based units.

There are almost 70,000 individuals and families on TCHC's waiting lists. The sale of 675 stand-alone homes, representing thousands of units, makes little sense in this housing crisis. This puts a significant strain on the City in many other ways as the costly demands placed on other services increases. As the City of Toronto's Housing Opportunities Toronto report shows, affordable housing costs us significantly less on average per day (\$23 per day) than alternatives such as the use of emergency shelters (\$69 per day).

If this is the strategy for completing repairs on other units, will we continue to sell off homes and other assets in the future? This is one time funding for repairs and is by no means a sustainable solution to TCHC's funding needs. Further, the sale of stand-alone units is reducing the availability of housing for larger families and families will not only be displaced through this process but divided as they are forced to split up and move into separate units.

In 2011, City Council voted to sell 22 of TCHC's stand-alone units. Some of these houses required Ministerial Consent, while others located in my ward did not and could be sold right away. Three houses in my ward have now been sold and another will be up for sale this summer. My constituents are upset at the extremely short notice they have been provided to find new housing, despite the assistance they received from TCHC. Families are being divided and do not have enough time to find homes for everyone, putting families at risk. In fact, we are now facing a move out date of March 1 for tenants in one home who as of last week had not found a new home and are facing dividing a multigenerational family, one member of which uses a wheelchair. Through this process we've seen that more notice needs to be given to tenants and more time given to accommodate the unique needs of each family. Multiple moves need to be paid for when families are divided. Further, families with school age children need special consideration for the timing of their move so it does not disrupt their child's learning. The sale of these homes has placed an unfair burden on our residents.

I have heard from many of the TCHC residents in Ward 19 and their neighbours that tenants are a part of their communities and do not want to be forced to move out of their homes. TCHC does not only provide housing for tenants but homes for people and for families that are members of our communities and loved by neighbours. The sale of these homes takes people and families out of our neighbourhoods.

Please, let's take more time to consider how to approach this very real funding crisis faced by TCHC so that we can treat people with the dignity they deserve and ensure we continue to create mixed income neighbourhoods that thrive.

Sincerely,



Mike Layton
City Councillor
Ward 19, Trinity-Spadina