

June 15, 2017

Executive Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Delivered by email

Dear Members of the Executive Committee:

Re: EX26.2, Tenants First- Phase 1 Implementation Plan, Recommendation 5

Maytree has been committed to supporting systemic solutions to poverty since 1982. We take a human rights approach to our work and partner with communities, engage with governments, and collaborate with civil society organizations, policy makers and institutions to create change.

We see safeguarding the right to housing as central to achieving an inclusive and prosperous Canada. For this reason, we would like to express our strong support for the recommendation by City staff “to issue a Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) to the non-profit, co-op and land trust sectors seeking interest, service models and business cases for the operation of the 684 scattered social housing properties, including Agency Houses and Rooming Houses and report with a recommended strategy by the end of 2017.”

Preserving this housing by transferring it to the non-profit, co-op or land trust sectors will ensure the City fulfills its obligation to protect the right to housing for the individuals and families that currently call these places home. The right to housing is about more than affordability, it is also about safe and secure tenure. It will reassure the current tenants that their homes won't be sold off.

Land trusts and co-ops naturally build in opportunities to engage tenants and the community. The concept has already received support from the City's Tenants First Advisory Panel which said, “We support a model such as a community based non-profit, a co-op or a community land trust that can provide innovative ways to maintain and operate the single family homes and engage with tenants in the process.”

Beyond these benefits, the staff recommendation creates opportunities to leverage the expertise of the non-profit, co-op and land trust sectors, permit re-investment to bring these homes to a state of good repair, and relieve TCHC of operating losses and capital liabilities associated with these houses.

Supporting the staff recommendation would be a positive step toward transforming the operations of these homes beyond what we consider business as usual. The decision to move the hundreds of scattered homes out of TCHC and into community ownership will enable the City to better protect residents' right to housing, leverage the sector's expertise and experience with managing this kind of housing, and ensure these homes are preserved for future generations of residents and their families.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. McIsaac". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and a long, sweeping tail.

Elizabeth McIsaac
President
Maytree