

EX16.3.2



Thursday, January 12, 2012

City Council
c/o the Office of the City Clerk,
Ulli S. Watkiss
Toronto City Hall
13th floor West
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Re: the proposed sale of TCHC properties

As the Advocacy Committee of an agency who for over 40 years has worked with people who would be homeless but for social housing, we are asking the City abandon its present course of selling TCHC homes.

On October 21st, 2011 the TCHC Board approved the sale of over 700 homes presumably to close the City budget's deficit.

There are several reasons for our appeal.

The human cost alone makes this alternative unacceptable. Immoral. It means the eviction of people without the financial means of moving elsewhere. It will mean the displacement of persons who are disabled, persons who are elderly on fixed incomes, persons living with mental health issues; the breaking up of households where community has been forged among tenants who but for public housing have no other place to call 'family' or 'home.' If there were viable living alternatives for these people, that would be one thing, but for the majority there aren't. The ranks of the homeless will swell.

The capital cost also makes this alternative unacceptable. To relinquish capital assets (i.e. city owned housing) only transfers the cost to more fiscally unsustainable alternatives. Social housing is about 1/3 the cost of housing people in shelters. Social housing fosters self-reliance, moving its residents from dependence on social assistance. Having one's own place means being free to pursue education, employment and community resources.

Selling off assets to reduce deficits is short-sighted. Especially assets which appreciate in value the way housing does. A capital asset for any individual or business is the leverage to more...more sustainability, more opportunity, more future options. Not only does the sale of these homes reduce the City's capacity to accommodate people having lesser incomes, it jettisons assets that once sold, can't be leveraged for future purchases.

There are better alternatives for the City to consider. They are not pie in the sky solutions. They are 'tried and true' solutions being implemented by other jurisdictions and they work. We would be pleased to discuss these with you.

But first, stop the sale of TCHC homes, so that those tenants for whom there is no alternative are protected, to ensure our City can be home for everyone, regardless of income.

Sincerely,

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