



May 14, 2014

Attention: Chair and Members, City of Toronto, Affordable Housing Committee

RE: AH 8.3 Affordable Home Ownership Assistance Program Adjustments

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the recommendations by the Director, Affordable Housing Office to amend the Affordable Home Ownership Assistance Program from \$15,000 to \$25,000.

Over the last 25 years, Habitat for Humanity GTA has been proud to partner with the City of Toronto to deliver affordable home ownership to hardworking low income families. The result of this partnership for Habitat families is transformational. Families become stronger. Kids do better in school. Health improves. More often than not, children of Habitat families go on to post-secondary education and, when they are adults, they follow their own dream of home ownership.

In addition to these social benefits, every new Habitat home represents an increase in property taxes for the City, since like every other homeowner, Habitat home owners pay property taxes. Currently, the property taxes from Habitat GTA homeowners here in the City of Toronto, represent \$500,000 in municipal revenues every year.

The single-most limiting factor preventing low income families from accessing the benefits of home ownership is up-front cash. The Habitat model mobilizes community partners together with the "sweat equity" of partner families to lower the cash costs of entering home ownership. With government fees accounting for 20% of total costs of each new Habitat home and with development charges set to increase, the proposed increase in HOAP loans is vital to enabling Habitat to mitigate these up-front costs.

I would like to thank staff at the Affordable Housing Office for their excellent work and I strongly encourage you to support these vital recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ene Underwood".

Ene Underwood
CEO, Habitat for Humanity Greater Toronto Area

Cc: David Sauve, Board Chair, Habitat for Humanity Greater Toronto Area



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