

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM9.65	ACTION			Ward: 10
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Request to the Government of Canada to halt the sale of 200 Queens Quay West and commit the site for new Affordable Housing - by Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Joe Cressy, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll, recommends that:

1. City Council request the City Manager to write to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, with copy to all Members of Parliament representing the City of Toronto, to request that the market sale of 200 Queens Quay West be paused until a requirement is applied to the site ensuring it is used to create new affordable housing.

Summary

200 Queens Quay West is a 1.24-acre (0.5 ha) property owned by Canada Lands Company, which is currently occupied by an eight-storey parking structure with frontage on Lower Simcoe Street.

Recently, it has become public that Canada Lands Company has retained TD Cornerstone Commercial Realty to facilitate the marketing and sale of the property for residential redevelopment. In materials posted on the marketing website, the development potential of the property is claimed be "a landmark two-tower development featuring a 55-storey and 45-storey tower above a 10-storey mixed-use podium." The three Waterclub residential towers already stand on the block, immediately abutting 200 Queens Quay West.

Downtown Toronto has grown rapidly in recent years, and the population is expected to double to nearly 500,000 residents by 2041. On top of that, there are even more people who work, study, and visit downtown Toronto every day. As downtown grows, it only becomes more important that we work hard to ensure valuable public lands are being utilized to achieve critical community facilities and services such as affordable housing.

Canada Lands Company is a Crown Corporation that reports to Parliament through the Minister of Public Services and Procurement Canada, and whose directors are appointed by the Government of Canada. The National Housing Strategy speaks to the importance of surplus

federal lands for the creation of new affordable housing, and Canada Lands Company is named as an important partner in that effort. Additionally, the 2017-2018 annual report from Canada Lands Company states that 1,000 new affordable housing units are planned or under construction on properties under its control, and that many collaborative projects are underway with municipalities across Canada to create complete communities. It seems there should be an opportunity for Canada Lands Company to rethink its approach to this property and prioritize the public good.

Our City is facing an unprecedented affordable housing crisis. The waiting list for affordable housing has grown to more than 181,000 people. That's over 181,000 people who do not have an affordable place to call home. The list for supportive housing is now years long. On any given night, over 8,000 Torontonians rely on our shelters, emergency respites and overnight drop-ins to find a safe place to spend the night. And as we all know, market rents and housing prices continue to skyrocket.

In light of the affordable housing and homelessness crisis, and the ongoing rapid pace of growth downtown, the public lands at 200 Queens Quay West should be used to create new affordable housing. Not simply sold to the highest bidder.

This Motion is urgent because Canada Lands Company is already publicly marketing the property for sale.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM9.65