



Regent Park Tenants Rights Association

(Corporation Number: 1161877-6)

Regent Park Tenant Rights Association

585 Dundas Street, 3rd Floor, Office 9
Toronto, ON M5A 2B7
December 2nd 2024.

Mayor Olivia Chow

Toronto City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Members of the Toronto and East York Community Council

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Subject: Regent Park Phases 4 & 5 – Zoning By-law Amendment (Item 2024.TE18.7)

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Toronto and East York Community Council,

The Regent Park Tenant Rights Association (RPTRA), representing over 2,000 Toronto Community Housing (TCH) tenants in Regent Park, is writing to address item 2024.TE18.7, the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment for Regent Park Phases 4 and 5.

As an organization established 12 years ago and formally registered on October 10, 2019, RPTRA has a long-standing commitment to advocating for tenants' rights, amplifying their voices, and meeting their needs. Our leadership includes individuals with decades of experience in social work and community advocacy. RPTRA has been featured in local and national media, including the Toronto Star and Metro News, for its impactful work.

We wish to emphasize the critical importance of expanding affordable homeownership opportunities for TCH tenants while reaffirming the position and requests made by the Regent Park Neighbourhood Association (RPNA).

1. Commitment to a Pathway to Homeownership

Homeownership is a cornerstone of stability, wealth-building, and long-term security for tenants. During your visit to [Regent Park on June 3, 2023](#), and your meeting with RPTRA leadership, you committed to a **200-unit pilot project for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) homeownership**. This commitment was a beacon of hope for many TCH tenants, and we urge the City to make this initiative a priority.

Key Facts and Historical Context:

- In 2009, the City committed \$1.61 million in federal affordable housing funding to support homeownership for low-income tenants in Regent Park. This **Foundation Program** provided down payment assistance of up to 35% through a no-interest, no-payment second mortgage, enabling 15 households to purchase homes.
- Without such programs, few TCH tenants can qualify for a mortgage, given the high cost of housing.
- Daniels Corporation recently announced a \$5 million commitment to its **Partnership for Affordable Homeownership program**, which has helped nine TCH tenants in Regent Park become homeowners.

These efforts are promising but insufficient. Only 24 Regent Park tenants have accessed homeownership opportunities to date, demonstrating the urgent need for renewed and expanded programs.

Recommendation:

- Launch the 200-unit Rent-Geared-to-Income homeownership pilot project, as committed during your visit.
- Reinstate and expand programs like the Foundation Program and the Daniels Partnership for Affordable Homeownership.
- Develop partnerships with federal and provincial governments to secure funding for affordable homeownership.

For further reference, please see the following resources:

- **Creating Homeownership Opportunities for Social Housing Residents:** [Background Document](#)
 - **Daniels Affordable Homeownership Programs:** [More Information](#)
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2. Reaffirming RPNA's Position and Requests

RPTRA supports and reaffirms the RPNA's key concerns and recommendations:

1. **Balanced Housing Mix and Delivery of RGI Units:**
 - Ensure a 50/50 balance of RGI and market units in Phases 4 and 5.
 - Secure funding to deliver the 637 affordable units planned under the OPA 558 income-based affordability definition.
2. **Community Spaces and Needs:**
 - Increase community space by at least 2,000 square meters.

- Implement the Association of Community Centres (AOCC) governance model for effective community oversight.
- 3. Developer Accountability and Community Benefits:**
- Redirect the proposed \$325 million in developer subsidies to prioritize RGI housing and public infrastructure.
 - Secure a legally binding Community Benefits Agreement to ensure accountability and long-term benefits for Regent Park residents.
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3. Building a Sustainable Future for Regent Park

As redevelopment continues, we want all partners to prioritize infrastructure that will serve the community for years to come. This includes affordable homeownership initiatives, expanded community spaces, and transparent governance.

We understand that the \$26.8 million in committed community benefits will not fulfill all priorities, but we believe partnerships with all levels of government can help address capital needs like affordable homeownership and community-owned spaces.

For further context and resources, please refer to the following:

- **TCHC Affordable Homeownership Programs Report:** [Document Link](#)
 - **Regent Park Coalition Resources:** [Visit Here](#)
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Closing

The RPTRA remains steadfast in its mission to advocate for TCH tenants and ensure their needs are prioritized in Regent Park’s redevelopment. Expanding homeownership opportunities, restoring the housing balance, and addressing community needs are essential to achieving a sustainable and inclusive future.

We urge the Council to act on these recommendations and reaffirm its commitment to equitable and affordable housing in Regent Park.

Thank you for your attention to these critical matters.

Sincerely,

Shah S. Ahmed on behalf of the The Leadership Team,
President, Regent Park Tenant Rights Association - (416-737-5677)

Visit our new website: <https://www.rptra.org/>
