



**REPORT TO THE
PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 22, 2012**

SUBJECT **CANADIAN RENTAL HOUSING COALITION CHARTER**

ISSUE

To consider endorsing the initiatives of the Canadian Rental Housing Coalition Charter as a means to address the critical shortage of affordable rental housing nationally, provincially and regionally.

BACKGROUND

The Canadian Rental Housing Coalition (CRHC) is a nonregistered organization coming together with a vision of nine goals to increase the supply of affordable rental housing across Canada. The official charter is attached as Appendix 1, including the member signatories as at November 9, 2011. This organization is presently co-chaired by Maureen Enser of the Urban Development Institute and Wayne Wright, Mayor of New Westminster. Included in the nine point plan is a call for a "National Economic Strategy" to foster rental housing, the reinstatement of federal tax incentives to stimulate private rental housing and encouragement for municipalities to adopt policies that support rental housing construction.

The founding members of the Canadian Rental Housing Coalition include; Metro Vancouver Housing, Urban Development Institute, Cooperative Housing Federation of BC, BC Apartment Owners and Managers Association, BC Non-Profit Housing Association, Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, Canadian Home Builders Association of BC, Greater Vancouver Home Builders Association, Vancity, and Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre. This Coalition does not wish to expand its charter membership but rather to seek endorsements from all forms of housing stakeholders and different levels of government.

The following organizations have endorsed the Charter or are in the process of finalizing their endorsement: the cities of Burnaby, New Westminster and North Vancouver, School of Community and Regional Planning, University of BC, BC Chamber of Commerce, Early Childhood Educators of BC, the Right to Housing Coalition of Manitoba, Housing Alternatives of New Brunswick, New Brunswick Non-Profit Housing Association, Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Canadian Housing and Renewal Association. The CRD Housing Action Team and other Regional Housing Stakeholder Groups strongly recommend the endorsement of the directions of the CRHC Charter.

A common sentiment of those expressing support for the mission, principles and goals of the CRHC Charter could best be summarized in the following statement:

"The Right to Housing Coalition of Manitoba has read and considered the Rental Housing Coalition Charter. We fully endorse the complete Charter as circulated. There is a critical shortage of affordable rental housing across our country. This is a shortage that has been created by a variety of policy decisions by governments at all levels. These decisions need to be examined and revised so that the private, non-profit and cooperative housing sectors are once again able to supply the market

need for this kind of housing. The charter is clear that creating affordable rental housing to meet the current demand is not only necessary for households that are suffering from lack of affordable housing, it is also necessary to provide a secure and stable workforce to lead us through these tough economic times and capitalize on the current opportunities that exist. By rectifying this component of the housing shortage, governments will be able to focus their attention on the great need for social housing, another area that is sadly lacking."

On October 13, 2011 the Victoria Real Estate Board hosted a one-day Capital Gains workshop, attended by approximately 100 private sector, government and community officials, to discuss and establish direction on the appropriate federal and provincial tax regime changes that are necessary to promote the aggressive development of additional rental housing. This workshop strongly endorsed the directions of the CRHC Charter, creating committees and working groups to further the Charter goals.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Fully endorse the Canadian Rental Housing Coalition Charter.
2. Not endorse the proposal of the Canadian Rental Housing Coalition Charter.

IMPLICATIONS

Social Implications

The Capital Regional District's (CRD) endorsement of the Charter will provide strong encouragement to the CRHC Charter Group, FCM and other organizations in their continued efforts to address the extreme challenges of securing affordable housing for millions of Canadians. The provision of affordable housing substantially reduces public expenditures in the areas of health, education and public safety.

Intergovernmental Implications

Alternative #1 will provide strong support through the continued efforts of the CRHC organization to affect taxation and government policy changes. The FCM organization is seeking additional parties within municipal and regional governments to endorse the CRHC Charter in order to strengthen their position of negotiation with federal and provincial governments.

Alternative #2 could discourage the efforts of FCM and national housing stakeholder groups.

Economic Implications

Endorsement of the Charter will be a significant positive step in moving forward with Canada's Economic Action Plan. New house construction and repair has a significant economic multiplier effect with each new home creating four to six person years of direct and indirect employment.

Not supporting the Charter means a status quo position that does not support any direction to resolve the almost total lack of additional rental housing development in Canada.

CONCLUSION

Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing is central to the economic and social well-being of cities across Canada. The CRHC Charter Group founding members anticipate the expansion of the Coalition on a national scale to advocate the nine goals outlined in the Charter to meet Canada's rental housing needs. The endorsement of the CRD will be viewed as a positive development to facilitate ongoing progress in meeting the nine Charter goals.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning, Transportation and Protective Services Committee recommends;

1. That the CRD Board fully endorses the Canadian Rental Housing Coalition Charter.

*** original signed ***

Henry Kamphof
Senior Manager, Housing Secretariat

Robert Lapham, MCIP
General Manager Planning & Protective Services

Kelly Daniels
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment: 1