

REPORT
1996 OCTOBER 28

CITY OF BURNABY
HOUSING COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE
MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

RE: CHILD FRIENDLY HOUSING GUIDELINES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. *THAT* the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write a letter indicating the City's support of and willingness to participate in the Society for Children and Youth Society's proposed project to prepare development guidelines for child friendly housing.

R E P O R T

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 1995, the Society for Children and Youth (SCY) in BC produced a document entitled, *Child Friendly Housing: a Guide for Housing Professionals*. Focusing on medium and high density housing, the stated purpose of the document was "to inform housing professionals and decision makers of children's needs, and to make information available so families and children have appropriate choices in housing." The document provides a useful introduction to the topic of child friendly housing; however, it is general in nature and, in itself, will not likely lead to significant changes in housing developments. The SCY thus decided to pursue preparation of a complementary but more pragmatic tool: development guidelines for child friendly housing. The SCY has asked Burnaby lend its support to this follow up project.

This report provides an overview of the proposed project, discusses expectations of the City, and offers recommendations concerning Burnaby's support of the project.

: COPY - CITY MANAGER
- DIR. PLNG. & BLDG.

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The purpose of the project is to create a set of regulatory and planning guidelines which identify important elements of housing for the growth and development of children and youth. The guidelines are intended for use by city planning staff and individuals involved with designing and developing medium and high density housing for families with children. The guidelines would not pertain to single family dwellings or developments that are primarily geared towards adult residents.

In addition to Burnaby, the SCY has asked the District of North Vancouver and City of Abbotsford to support and participate in the project. The Society is seeking project funding through the Affordability and Choice Today (ACT) program. (A press release concerning the ACT program is presented in Appendix 1, *attached*).

The specific expectations of Burnaby and other participating municipalities are twofold:

- 1) *To provide the project consultants with necessary information and contacts* - This step will involve such tasks as
 - ▶ identifying multi family housing developments built in Burnaby in recent years
 - ▶ specifying various child friendly elements that had been requested in the development approval process
 - ▶ providing the consultants with contact names to enable them to arrange interviews with developers and residents of selected developments.

It is expected that only three or four projects from each of the participating municipalities will be examined in the study.

- 2) *To review the results of the completed project and consider any procedural or policy changes that may be appropriate for Burnaby* - Based on their research, the consultants will recommend guidelines which could improve opportunities for development of child friendly housing in the municipalities being studied. When the project has been completed, staff will present the research findings and proposals to the Housing Committee. The Committee will make subsequent recommendations to Council concerning any appropriate City actions to be considered.

3.0 DISCUSSION

The Housing Committee believes the proposed project is worthwhile and deserves support. From the Committee's viewpoint, the project's key benefits are that it would

- ▶ provide information which should help the City to make future housing more friendly to children and families
- ▶ provide prototype guidelines which could be used by other jurisdictions seeking to develop child friendly housing in their areas
- ▶ demand little City staff time or resources, with the project coordination being left to the SCY and an inter-disciplinary project steering committee.

Based on the foregoing, it is recommended that the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write a letter indicating the City's support of and willingness to participate in the proposed project. The SCY would include this letter with its funding proposal to the ACT program, which will be submitted by the program's 1996 October 31 deadline.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Lee Rankin, Chairperson

Councillor Celeste Redman, Member

Councillor Jim Young, Member



RELEASE

For Immediate Release

AFFORDABILITY AND CHOICE TODAY PROGRAM EXTENDED THREE YEARS

OTTAWA, - August 7, 1996 - A federal program, which is proving successful in fostering innovative ways of improving housing affordability, has been extended three years by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

In announcing the extension to the Affordability and Choice Today (ACT) program, the Honourable Diane Marleau, Minister responsible for CMHC said, "This program encourages municipalities and the housing sector to work together to develop, demonstrate and promote innovations in local planning and building regulations which can lead to improvements in housing affordability and housing choices."

Madame Marleau also thanked the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) for their ongoing support in partnering with CMHC to manage and promote the program.

Now entering its seventh year of operation, the program has provided \$990,000 in federal assistance to 84 projects spread across all regions of Canada.

The decision to extend ACT was based on the findings and recommendations of a recently completed program evaluation. It showed that ACT projects are having benefits in a wide variety of areas such as, streamlining project approvals, establishing alternative development standards, allowing new types of housing and enabling innovative infill and adaptation projects.

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The evaluation also confirmed that ACT has fostered greater cooperation between municipalities and the housing sector and has succeeded in transferring information on new approaches to housing problems to municipalities across Canada.

Jerry Roehr, CHBA President, called the program a very significant contributor to Canada's housing objectives because it encourages communities and industry to work together.

"Our joint initiatives, promoting reforms which benefit everyone, are a positive way to achieve tangible results for housing consumers and to sustain a viable Canadian housing industry," he added.

Bryon Wilfert, President of FCM, said the program was a boon to municipal governments. "The ACT program has led to productive partnerships with the housing industry in developing a wide range of new approaches to make local housing more affordable. The benefits will last for generations to come."

"The ACT program has launched demonstration projects in all parts of the country that can become models for regulatory innovation at the local level," added Grant Wanzel, President of CHRA. "The CHRA is very pleased that the program will be extended."

The closing date for receipt of applications for the 1996 round of selections is October 31, 1996.

For Further Information:

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