



September 28, 2016

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

## **An Open Letter on the National Housing Strategy**

Dear Minister:

Thank you for accepting Mayor John Tory's invitation to attend the Toronto Housing Summit this coming Friday.

We are pleased to be sponsors of the event, which we hope will bring significant attention to the importance of investing in social and affordable housing. Housing is the underpinning of our success as a nation. When the supply of housing falls behind or into a state of disrepair we, as housing providers, builders, non-profit and charitable organizations, see first-hand the negative impact on our citizens and our city.

We are doing our part to help and we welcome the 2016 budget as a sign that the federal government also recognizes the need to get involved. With the National Housing Strategy, we ask that you do more.

### *Social Housing*

In Toronto, there is an imminent risk of hundreds of families having their affordable units boarded up due to the lack of funding to repair them. Toronto Community Housing's capital repair backlog alone is \$2.6 billion and requires long-term support from the federal and provincial governments to address the need. Investing in the repair of social housing will keep vulnerable individuals off our streets, out of our shelters, and reduce the pressure on our health care system and other social supports.

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Studies have also shown that this level of repair results in job creation, reduced burden on the health care system and can also help meet climate change objectives through targeted energy retrofits.

### *Expiring Operating Agreements*

Over the next 15 years, as social housing operating agreements expire, the affordability and quality of thousands of units will be in jeopardy. In 2016, the federal government provided stop-gap funding for two years to address the loss of subsidies for low-income residents. Looking forward, there is an important need to provide sustainable, long-term funding for social housing to fund repairs and maintain affordability.

### *New Affordable Housing*

Affordable housing is essential to low and moderate income families, to grow a stronger middle class and a vibrant economy, and to ensure our cities are home to people of all ages and income levels. We are pleased that the City of Toronto has shown real leadership in developing new affordable rental homes through making surplus land available and providing a range of funding and financial incentives. Similar efforts from the federal government are required to support the private and the non-profit sector in building more affordable housing.

### *The Way Forward*

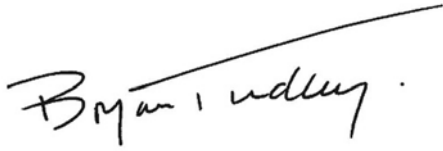
We know making housing happen in Toronto and across the nation can be done. On Friday, the Housing Summit is being hosted in Regent Park where the building industry and the public sector have come together and are delivering on the revitalization of an entire neighbourhood. In doing so, Canada can boast of bringing one of the world's most innovative initiatives to the country's social and affordable housing challenges.

We want to assure you that among the many housing stakeholders in our city that the United Way Toronto & York Region, Co-Operative Housing Federation of Toronto, The Daniels Corporation, Building Industry and Land Development Association, Evergreen, convener of the GTA Housing Action Lab and Toronto Community Housing are at the table ready and able to assist the federal, provincial and municipal governments in addressing the housing crisis and protecting the future of inclusive and accessible Canadian cities.

Through the National Housing Strategy, we ask that you provide the necessary leadership and support to reach this achievable goal. We look forward to seeing you at the Summit this Friday and working with you to build a better housing future for all Canadians.

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Signed,



**Bryan Tuckey, President & CEO  
Building Industry and Land Development  
Association (BILD)**



**Tom Clement, Executive Director  
Co-operative Housing Federation of  
Toronto**



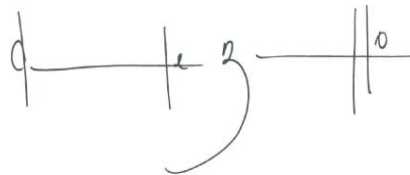
**Mitchell Cohen, President  
The Daniels Corporation**



**Robert Plitt, Executive Director  
Evergreen Cityworks, convener  
of the GTA Housing Action Lab**



**Greg Spearn, President & CEO (Interim)  
Toronto Community Housing Corporation**



**Daniele Zanotti, President & CEO  
United Way Toronto & York Region**