Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – March 16, 2011

REPORTS

Item No. 5 Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee – Mandate

The following resolution is submitted to the Executive Policy Committee for consideration, namely:

WHEREAS the availability and quality of affordable housing is a significant issue for many Canadians and Winnipeggers;

AND WHEREAS Council has demonstrated its commitment to affordable housing by instituting a permanent line item for housing in the City of Winnipeg annual operating budget;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to support Council's annual funding commitment for affordable housing with a tri-level affordable housing strategy for Winnipeg;

AND WHEREAS the OurWinnipeg Plan contains a direction strategy that states that the City of Winnipeg should "establish partnerships with the private, not-for-profit and government sectors to provide affordable housing throughout the City…";

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to revise the mandate of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee to task this committee as the municipal lead on preparing a tri-level affordable housing strategy for Winnipeg, in collaboration with the federal and provincial governments, and representatives of the private and non-profit sectors;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(1) That clauses II and III of the November 22, 2000 Council decision entitled "Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee", which clauses set out the current mandate of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee ("WHSC") be rescinded, and replaced with clauses 2-6 hereof.

(2) That the WHSC be delegated the authority to work with the federal and provincial governments, and representatives of the private and non-profit sectors, to develop the policy framework for a tri-level affordable housing strategy (the "Strategy") for Winnipeg, which Strategy and any funding related thereto shall be subject to Council approval.

(3) That the WHSC be delegated the authority to examine best practices in the provision of affordable housing and make recommendations to the Executive Policy Committee regarding the applicability of such best practices to the City of Winnipeg.

(4) That "affordable housing" be defined in accordance with Schedule "A" hereto:

(5) That the WHSC provide quarterly updates to the Executive Policy Committee on: (i) the status of discussions regarding the Strategy; (ii) all work undertaken by the WHSC in the preceding quarter.

(6) That an operational review of the WHSC activities and mandate be undertaken by the City of Winnipeg Public Service no later than two years following the approval of the foregoing, and that recommendations arising from such operational review be submitted for consideration of the Executive Policy Committee within three months following the commencement of such operational review.

(7) That all Council decisions inconsistent with the foregoing be rescinded.

SCHEDULE "A"

Affordable housing is traditionally calculated in relations to household income, and includes separate definitions for rental and home ownership housing. For the purposes of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee, affordable housing is defined below.

Affordable Rental Housing

Affordable rental housing is defined as rental housing where the total monthly shelter cost (gross monthly rent including utilities – heat, hydro and hot water) is at or below the median market rent, by unit type (number of bedrooms), as reported annually by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, but greater than the rental rates considered to be social housing.

Affordable Ownership Housing

Affordable ownership housing is defined as housing with a purchase price that is affordable to households with income at or below the upper limit of the 2nd quintile of the income distribution (within the lowest 40 per cent), as determined by Statistics Canada. Housing is considered to be affordable when its cost1[1] does not exceed 30% of a household's gross income.

1[1] Monthly housing costs in this calculation include mortgage principal and interest payment amortized over 30 years and assuming a 5 per cent down payment, utilities, insurance, and property taxes. (Affordable ownership price includes GST and any other mandatory costs associated with purchasing the unit.)