November 11, 2023

Re: **Housing Accelerator Fund Application**

Dear Mayor Gillingham and members of the Executive Policy Committee,

The Right to Housing Coalition would like to express its support for the City of Winnipeg's application to the CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) as an opportunity to achieve the affordable housing recommendations that Right to Housing has made to the City of Winnipeg and urge you to support it.

The Right to Housing Coalition has consistently recommended the City of Winnipeg:

1. *Create a Housing Office and expand housing staffing to 7 FT, permanent staff to increase capacity and coordination between City departments.* This office should sit with the CAO to ensure cross-department coordination and priority. With increased capacity Winnipeg can take a consistent, proactive approach to addressing housing needs and maximize the benefits of low/no-cost tools City tools and opportunities like the Federal Rapid Housing Initiative when they arise.
2. *Support the development of deeply affordable rent-geared-to-income units owned by public, non-profit, co-op, or Indigenous-led housing providers, in partnership with other levels of government on an annual basis.* Given the number of Winnipeggers who are unhoused or in core housing need, the City should be supporting 750 net new units each year.

Often, we have heard that the City lacks resources to implement recommendations such as these. The Housing Accelerator Fund is proposed to bring almost $200m dollars over three years to the City of Winnipeg, which will go a long way towards supporting these initiatives. The proposed actions in the Housing Accelerator Fund Application include incentives for affordable housing development, a land enhancement office to facilitate strategic development of affordable, supportive, and mixed income housing, and a City Concierge for affordable housing.

These HAF initiatives and increases in staffing should used in a way that will create long-lasting infrastructure within the City to support social housing, and to support incentives targeted to the greatest need and most sustainable projects, those that provide deeply affordable housing through the creation of non-profit and public housing. We ask you to commit the City to add 750 units of desperately needed deeply affordable housing to our housing stock for each of the three years of the HAF funding.

Ending homelessness and creating a city where everyone has a safe, adequate home they can afford is possible – and Winnipeggers want it to happen. The resources that will be provided through the Housing Accelerator Fund will boost the City of Winnipeg's capacity and allow it to take a proactive leadership approach to affordable housing.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for questions or additional information regarding our support for the City's proposal to the Housing Accelerator Fund.

Sincerely,

Yutaka Dirks
Chair, City Working Group, Right to Housing Coalition