



COALITION OF VANCOUVER NEIGHBOURHOODS

<http://coalitionvan.org>

April 18, 2016
City of Vancouver Council

Dear Mayor Gregor Robertson and Councillors,

Re: Affordable Home Ownership Pilot Program

While we support solving the housing affordability crisis, we are **opposed to the goals of the Affordable Home Ownership Pilot Program in its present form**. This staff report proposes making significant changes to the Vancouver Charter as well as major potential changes to land use in expanded areas tied to many arterials on a citywide basis without adequate public consultation. This raises major concerns.

We request that Council not approve in principle the goals of the Affordable Home Ownership Pilot Program, as described in this report. Instead, we suggest the following:

1. **Withdraw the report and refer it back to staff to include a robust consultation process** with affected neighbourhoods based on collaboration;
2. **Include the approved CityPlan Community Vision directions**, where they are in place, and which would be implemented on a local community basis;
3. **Complete the Heritage Action Plan and Character House RS Zoning Review first**, before considering any proposed new or expanded pilot programs that will affect zoning;
4. **Remove proposed 6 storey and development projects in RS, RT and RM zones** unless supported in local area plans; and
5. **Expand Rate of Change protection in C2 and RT zones** to protect existing rentals.

Lack of process: This proposal has been brought forward without any community consultation or notification. Further, any anticipated future expansion of the program is proposed to require only development industry and related stakeholders being consulted and includes no requirement for community consultation. This is in contradiction of the city's stated goals to create a more collaborative relationship with the community.

Location of development: The map included in the report (attached below) indicates significant areas where 3.5 storeys and/or up to 6 storeys of development could be located. These areas, especially for 6 storeys, as proposed encroach into RS, RT and RM zones, putting heritage, character and older affordable rentals and owner-occupied units at risk of demolition. It also conflicts with the Heritage Action Plan and the Character House RS Review that are in process.

This proposed Pilot Program is an amendment to an existing one, the *Interim Rezoning Policy for Increasing Affordable Housing Choices* (IRP). The existing program has mainly focused on rental projects. Now that home ownership, mainly strata, is being focused on, and broader areas have been identified for development in this report, there will be increased developer attention and activity. Of further concern is that the previous requirements that pilot projects be located no less than 10 blocks apart appears to have been removed.

Many neighbourhoods have large site developments with potential to provide new multifamily ground oriented development, such as the Jericho Lands, without the loss of existing older rentals and character buildings. What best suits each area should be determined on an individual neighbourhood basis.

Affordability objectives: The economics of the proposed Charter changes will not reasonably increase affordability. The program is proposed to provide housing at 20% below market rate purchase values, but recent real estate prices are going up 15% to 25% in one year. Thus, new projects priced at last year's already excessive prices, will still be too expensive to make any relevant improvements to affordability.

In some neighbourhoods, especially on the west side, building new ground oriented housing for families is very unlikely to be affordable as described in the report. Conversely it is anticipated that increased land use stimulated by this program would further inflate land values. Adaptively reusing existing character houses with secondary suites and infill is the most accessible way to build more affordable units both for owners and renters. Purpose-built secondary suite rental units also aid home ownership as mortgage helpers and provides much needed, low cost rental housing.

In conclusion: Again, we strongly advise Council **not to approve** the goals of the Affordable Home Ownership Pilot Program as proposed and instead make the changes described above.

Sincerely,

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On behalf of the Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods

Member Groups of the Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods

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| Arbutus Ridge Community Association | Kits Point Residents Association |
| Arbutus Ridge/ Kerrisdale/ Shaughnessy Visions | Marpole Oakridge Community Association |
| Cedar Cottage Area Neighbours | Norquay Residents |
| Chinatown Action Group | NW Point Grey Home Owners Association |
| Citygate Intertower Group | Oakridge Langara Area Residents |
| Community Association of New Yaletown | Raycam |
| Crosstown Residents Association | Residents Association Mount Pleasant |
| Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Council | Riley Park/South Cambie Visions |
| Dunbar Residents Association | Shaughnessy Heights Property Owners Association |
| False Creek Residents Association | Strathcona Residents Association |
| Grandview Woodland Area Council | Upper Kitsilano Residents Association |
| Granville Burrard Residents & Business Association | West End Neighbours Society |
| Joyce Area Residents | West Kitsilano Residents Association |
| Kitsilano-Arbutus Residents Association | West Point Grey Residents Association |

Attachment

From the report to Council for meeting dated April 20, 2014:
 Affordable Home Ownership Pilot Program
<http://council.vancouver.ca/20160420/documents/cfsc2.pdf>

