February 11, 2015

Dear Close the Housing Gap campaign supporter:

The conversation about finding solutions to affordable housing challenges in Toronto is picking up steam and we are excited about what the Close the Housing Gap campaign will do in 2015.

Together we have accomplished so much.

We have brought our message about the need for investments in social and co-op housing to Queen’s Park and Parliament Hill. We have broadened the campaign’s reach by placing posters in bus shelters across Toronto and at Parliament Hill. We have reached out to Torontonians through advertising and public meetings.

Awareness is growing about Toronto Community Housing’s $2.6 billion capital repair needs, about how TCHC has worked with the City of Toronto to secure one-third of this need, and about how the federal and provincial governments must come to the table with the other two-thirds. The importance of properly funding co-op and affordable housing is increasingly understood.

Our new mayor and council have made housing a key priority for Toronto. Mayor Tory has already begun advocating with the federal and provincial governments to persuade them to pay their fair share of social housing repairs.

The situation is critical because the funding Toronto Community Housing has for its record capital investments in social housing will start to run out next year. Without federal or provincial funding, the number of TCHC homes in critical condition will climb to 4,000 by 2018, and to 12,000 by 2023. You can find information in the enclosed TCHC brochure.

The campaign will kick into a higher gear in 2015 with activities aimed at the federal and provincial governments. The goal is to focus public energy on making social housing capital repairs and the withdrawal of federal funding for social housing a key part of the political agenda.
We are planning outreach to community organizations across Toronto in March. We'd be pleased to provide speakers who can bring the campaign message to meetings and events you are organizing. Watch the website www.putpeoplefirst.ca for more details.

The outreach will set the stage for a public event on Wednesday April 29th at City Hall. This will be an opportunity for endorsers and other stakeholders to showcase the Close the Housing Gap activities they are undertaking in 2015. As well, we are planning to use bus shelters and other advertising platforms to deliver the campaign message.

Thank you again for your support. We look forward to working together with you to urge Ottawa and Queen’s Park to close the housing gap. If you have any questions about the campaign, please contact Nicole Stewart: 416-392-4223 or nstewar@toronto.ca.

Sincerely,

Councillor Ana Bailão
Campaign Co-Chair
Chair, Affordable Housing Committee
City of Toronto

Norman W. Bud Purves
Campaign Co-Chair
Chair, Toronto Community Housing