



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



January 19, 2022

To: Mayor Kennedy Stewart and City Councillors
VIA EMAIL

Dear Mayor Stewart and City Councillors,

RE: Making Home: Housing for All of Us

I am writing today on behalf of the Vancouver and District Labour Council, representing approximately 60,000 union members in the City of Vancouver and neighbouring municipalities.

Our Labour Council is proud to support Mayor Stewart's motion "Making Home: Housing for All of Us", which we understand will be debated on January 25 and/or 26. At our November 2021 regular meeting, delegates representing our affiliated unions voted overwhelmingly to support Making Home alongside the many other housing and tenant related policies we have advocated for previously.

Many members of our Labour Council know all too well the importance of policies aimed at increasing the supply of affordable housing in the City of Vancouver, as well as the types of options that are available. The "missing middle" referred to in the motion very much speaks to the experience of many unionized workers. Many face difficulty finding affordable rentals. Others seek home ownership, but either cannot afford it, or cannot save the necessary down payment while simultaneously paying high rents.

In either case, working people continue to find themselves pushed by the market into seeking housing in other municipalities, and commuting to work in Vancouver. This leads to negative impacts on quality of life and on our climate.

It is undoubtedly time for a modern look at how we zone residential areas, and how we ensure that we not only increase housing supply but increase the right kind of supply to fix the problems we face. Making Home offers some steps in that direction.

We are also acutely aware of the cities need to develop revenue streams that can assist with everything from affordable housing development to the Climate Emergency Action Plan, to childcare and other community improvements. The Making Home program has the potential to generate substantial revenue through development cost levies and other contributions. Land value capture, a policy which we have long supported, could be utilized boldly in this plan and we encourage that to be considered.

Finally, we wish to highlight the importance of excluding areas approved under the Secured Rental Program, and to ensure that the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy is applied to tenancies in properties considered for redevelopment and all appropriate steps are taken to minimize the impacts of displacements that may occur as a result of redevelopment of properties. After all, the purpose of this policy is to improve affordable access to housing in the city, so we must mitigate potential impacts on tenants to every extent possible.

Thank you to Council for engaging in this important discussion, and to Mayor Stewart for advancing this motion. We strongly encourage its adoption.

Best regards,



Stephen von Sychowski
President, VDLC

cc: VDLC Executive Board

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