



## Council Member Report

For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of April 25, 2019

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**To:** Committee of the Whole

**Date:** April 16, 2019

**From:** Mayor Helps

**Subject:** Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference – Housing Affordability Motion

### BACKGROUND

The Annual Conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is being held in Quebec City, May 30 – June 2, 2019. Resulting from the recent Federal Budget, and in discussion with FCM Staff, there is an opportunity to advance an emergency resolution for consideration at the annual conference in connection with the housing crisis and housing affordability.

The motion proposed below, in consultation with FCM staff, seeks to ensure a stronger federal-municipal partnership on the issue of housing affordability across the country.

With the strong emphasis in the City's Strategic Plan regarding housing affordability, I would respectfully request Council's consideration and support of the proposed motion on this issue.

### MOTION:

That Council forward the following motion to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for consideration as an emergency resolution at the 2019 annual conference.

#### **Prioritizing Housing Affordability**

WHEREAS the National Housing Strategy prioritizes housing solutions for low- and moderate-income households, per FCM's recommendations;

WHEREAS renters and homeowners at a range of income levels and in cities and communities of all sizes are increasingly unlikely to be able to access or maintain a home that is affordable to them and meets their needs;

WHEREAS, on average, owning a home is more expensive now than at any time in the last 30 years;

WHEREAS average rent increases are outstripping inflation in many housing markets;

WHEREAS housing affordability pressures are exacerbated by record-high household debt-to-income levels in a rising interest-rate environment;

WHEREAS the stability of national and local housing markets has a direct linkage to national and local economic outcomes;

WHEREAS housing affordability is correlated to positive health and socioeconomic outcomes;

WHEREAS the federal government has influence over the affordability of housing, both rented and owned, through the regulation of mortgages and mortgage insurance, taxation levers and its spending power;

WHEREAS the federal government's 2019 budget underscored that housing affordability is a federal concern, and that it has an important role to play in addressing it through the announcement of the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive and enhancements to both the Rental Construction Financing Initiative and Home Buyer's Plan;

RESOLVED that the federal government assess and publically report on the impact of budget 2019 measures designed to improve housing affordability for renters and owners; and

RESOLVED that the federal government work with municipalities through FCM to determine the most effective federal role in improving housing affordability for renters and owners at the local level.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Helps', written in a cursive style.

Mayor Lisa Helps