



Right to Housing

2014 Annual Report

Right to Housing Coalition, (R2H), is a volunteer housing advocacy coalition made up of a variety of retired and employed volunteers, and fifty supporting organizations. R2H had its origins ten years ago when a few faith communities tried to get some of the then empty houses on Kapyong military base to house new comers to Winnipeg. Many things have changed since then, but the need for more social and affordable housing for Canadians on low incomes is not one of them.

The housing shortage can be traced to a series of policies by governments at all levels. In response, R2H has created working groups that target policies at the Federal, Provincial and Municipal levels. Our advocacy work includes presenting briefs, speaking to interested groups, using the media and lobbying politicians and public servants about the need for changes in housing policies. This is slow work as we are aware that the current political system is always short of the financial resources it would need to do everything that demands attention. (This too is a policy issue). Recognizing this, our work is to raise housing for low income Canadians on the political priority scale. After many years, many meetings and many interventions I can say that there has been some progress.

The encouraging signs include a promising climate change between the City of Winnipeg and the Provincial Government regarding the sharing of housing solutions in Winnipeg, a long time objective of ours. The provincial vacancy rates for rental housing are creeping up showing that Manitoba’s initiatives to create more social and affordable housing are having a positive impact. There are also positive signs that the problem of homelessness in Winnipeg will be dealt with in a more coordinated way as the Province, the City of Winnipeg and the United Way have committed five year funding to the Plan to End Homelessness in Winnipeg.

Sadly the Federal Government has not been responsive to our message. This is a significant issue as the Federal Government controls the policies of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation which until 1993 reinvested its billions of dollars of profit into creating low income housing. Since that time it has directed these profits into its own revenue, only a small percentage of which are reinvested in housing.

Below there is a brief summary of our activities this year. While many of these activities are taken from my personal calendar and documents file, they include many actions that have been taken by the hard working members of our Working Groups and as such the numbers are very conservative. The list does not include regular planning and information meetings. The Federal Working Group is, chaired by Tim Sale, the Provincial by Ellen Kruger and the City by Bill Muir, (replacing Nancy Testar who retired from

Activity List	
Letters to Editor	5
Advocacy Letters	21
Advocacy Meetings	48
Papers and Articles	7
Presentations	6
Media advisories	2
Staged Events	4
Conference Calls	4
Conferences Attended	4

the chair after many years of excellent service). These leaders steer the planning and execution of a variety of strategies to improve the policies and hence the implementation a better housing supply in Canada.

This April 28 to May 1 the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association will be holding their annual Congress in Winnipeg. This is a wonderful opportunity for Manitobans to learn more about the housing needs

and issues across the country and to showcase some of the many housing projects and solutions that we have in here. Many of our members have been active in planning the Congress and some will be presenting. There will be information forthcoming that will tell how to register for this event. I urge you all to look at the process and make every effort to attend.

Finally, it is time to ask our individual and organizational supporters for financial donations to sustain our work. All our work is voluntary. However we do belong to a couple of important organizations that have membership fees. We also incur some printing, travel and publicity costs. No contribution is too small and all will be receipted from St. Andrew's River Heights United Church with a charitable contribution receipt. Our financial Report is attached.

Thank you to the people and agencies that work for and support our work in so many ways.

February 5, 2015
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