



July 11, 2005

Mr. Doug Stewart
Vice-President, Policy and Planning Sector
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
700 Montreal Road, A3-313
Ottawa, ON K1A 0P7

Dear Mr. Stewart:

At its last meeting on May 29, 2005, CHBA's National Board of Directors approved a motion from the CHBA's Urban Council to seek the assistance of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for a comprehensive environmental performance review of residential development in Canada.

The Board believes that in the context of a variety of industry and governmental initiatives, it is now opportune to pull together an in-depth and comprehensive picture. This review would consider both dwelling stock and community developments. It would address environmental performance in relation to the goals of clean air, clean water, clean land, and efficient transportation.

This enterprise would have the following benefits:

- It would offer a sound basis on which all key decision-makers in the sector – including private sector companies, governments, and consumers – could consider how to improve their practices so as to lead to better environmental outcomes. The overall focus of the review would be one of documenting the range of benefits of different environmental practices, and also the opportunities arising from shared investments between the public and private sectors.
- It would offer a solid context to assess the many individual studies undertaken by CMHC each year on various specific topics that have environmental implications and to measure their commercial potential for improved environmental performance “on the ground”.
- It would enable CMHC to address the need to develop business cases for the commercialization of new environmental technologies, techniques, systems and products in residential development. In other words, to connect research effort to commercial assessment and application.

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- It would offer a sound basis for integrating the research being conducted by CMHC on innovative forms of residential development and new technologies, and identifying ways to communicate results to the industry and encourage their application.
- It would open the door to capturing private sector expertise and experience, and to identify the conditions for successful innovative practices. This would enable CMHC to support “champion projects” in such areas as district energy systems and on-site water management.
- It would contribute to an information base for encouraging interdepartmental and intergovernmental initiatives on such matters as climate change, cleaning up contaminated sites and water conservation as these relate to residential development, thereby enhancing opportunities to “leverage” government programs on the environmental front.

In concluding, I should also note that all of the above elements have great pertinence for the action-oriented working group, comprising Infrastructure Canada, CMHC and CHBA, now being discussed by the Minister of Labour and Housing and the Minister of State (Infrastructure and Communities).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



John Kenward
Chief Operating Officer