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Canadian  
Home Builders'  
Association



Association canadienne  
des constructeurs  
d'habitations

To: Local HBA Presidents and Executive Officers  
Provincial HBA Presidents and Executive Officers

cc: CHBA Board of Directors

From: Victor Fiume, President

Date: April 15, 2010

Re: **New Altus Group report on *Building From the Ground Up – Enhancing Affordable Housing in Canada* by the Conference Board of Canada**

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Last month the Conference Board of Canada released its report entitled [\*Building From the Ground Up – Enhancing Affordable Housing in Canada\*](#). This report received considerable media attention, primarily related to the material presented in the report's Executive Summary.

The Conference Board concluded that "housing unaffordability" is a widespread and growing problem, and that government should look to mechanisms such as inclusionary zoning and density bonusing to address this "problem".

Unfortunately, the conclusions and recommendations presented in the report's Executive Summary appear to have little connection with the detailed analysis presented in the main report. Media coverage focused on this Summary.

In order to respond to this situation, the CHBA had the Altus Group prepare the attached review of the Conference Board's report.

The Altus Group's review makes it plain that there is a stark and curious disconnection between the main report and the Executive Summary. The main report is, in many ways, quite thorough and relevant, and much of the information presented is consistent with CHBA's views and our policy positions. The bottom-line is that the Executive Summary contradicts much of the information presented in the report.

I'd ask you to use this review in your consultations with municipal and provincial governments, so that we can be certain that the summary and media coverage of the Conference Board report does not stand unchallenged. As well, I have attached the CHBA's *Housing Affordability and Accessibility - A Synopsis of Solutions* report, which lays out the Association's views on how best to address housing affordability issues.

The CHBA has also engaged the Altus Group to prepare a new report on municipal financing that will examine alternatives to Development Charges. This will provide all HBAs with a valuable tool for engaging municipalities in discussions about Development Charges, the negative impact these have on housing affordability, and the alternatives available for financing municipal infrastructure. I expect this report to be completed later this year.

Best regards.