



Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force Report Comments

Development Services Committee
March 7, 2022



Context

- On December 6, 2021, the Province announced a new Housing Affordability Task Force
- Task Force was established to provide the government with recommendations on additional measures to address market housing supply and affordability
- Task Force members from the banking, home building, real estate, finance and representatives with expertise in the non-profit sector, Indigenous housing and economics
- Housing Affordability Task Force did not include any municipal representation



Task Force Members

- **Chair - Jake Lawrence**, Scotiabank
- **Lalit Aggarwal**, Manor Park Management
- **David Amborski**, Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning
- **Julie Di Lorenzo**, Diamante Urban Corp.
- **Andrew Garrett**, Real Estate, Investment Management Corporation of Ontario
- **Tim Hudak**, Ontario Real Estate Association
- **Justin Marchand**, Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services
- **Ene Underwood**, Habitat for Humanity Greater Toronto Area
- **David Wilkes**, Building Industry and Land Development Association



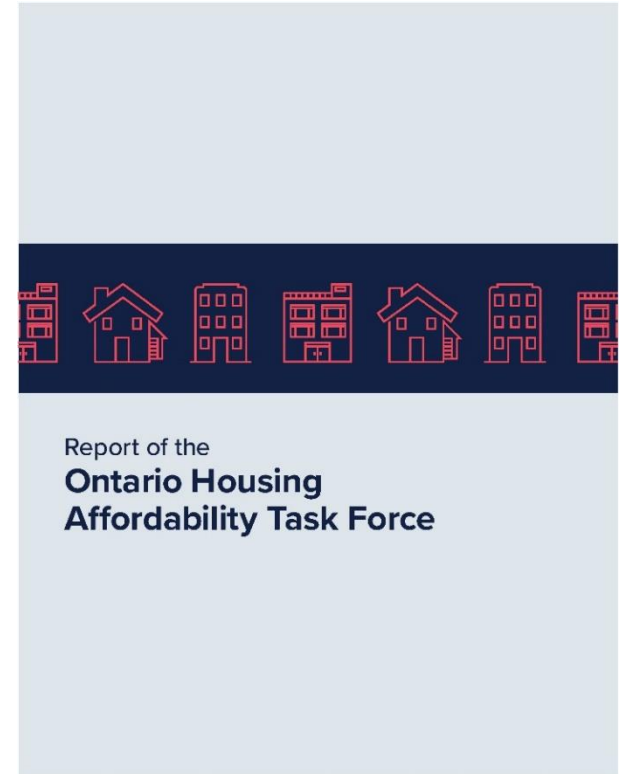
Task Force Mandate

- Increasing the supply of market rate rental and ownership housing;
- Building housing supply in complete communities;
- Reducing red tape and accelerating timelines;
- Encouraging innovation and digital modernization, such as in planning processes;
- Supporting economic recovery and job creation; and
- Balancing housing needs with protecting the environment.



Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force Report

- On February 8, 2022 the Report from the Housing Affordability Task Force was publicly released
- Goal to build 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years
- Included 55 Recommendations for provincial consideration
- Staff support 13, potentially support 17 and do not support 25 of the 55 recommendations





Supported Recommendations

- 14. Require that public consultations provide digital participation options.
- 22. Simplify planning legislation and policy documents.
- 24. Allow wood construction of up to 12 storeys.
- 28. Encourage greater use of oral decisions issued the day of the hearing, with written reasons to follow, and allow those decisions to become binding the day that they are issued.
- 30. Provide funding to increase staffing (adjudicators and case managers), provide market-competitive salaries, outsource more matters to mediators, and set shorter time targets.
- 37. Align property taxes for purpose-built rental with those of condos and low-rise homes



Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

- 38. Amend the Planning Act and Perpetuities Act to extend the maximum period for land leases and restrictive covenants on land to 40 or more years.
- 40. Call on the Federal Government to implement an Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy.
- 41. Funding for pilot projects that create innovative pathways to homeownership, for Black, Indigenous, and marginalized people and first-generation homeowners.
- 42. Provide provincial and federal loan guarantees for purpose-built rental, affordable rental and affordable ownership projects.
- 45. Improve funding for colleges, trade schools, and apprenticeships; encourage and incentivize municipalities, unions and employers to provide more on-the-job training.



Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

46. Undertake multi-stakeholder education program to promote skilled trades.
47. Recommend that the federal and provincial government prioritize skilled trades and adjust the immigration points system to strongly favour needed trades and expedite immigration status for these workers, and encourage the federal government to increase from 9,000 to 20,000 the number of immigrants admitted through Ontario's program.



Potentially Support Recommendations

1. Set a goal of building 1.5 million new homes in ten years.
2. Amend the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, and Growth Plans to set “growth in the full spectrum of housing supply” and “intensification within existing built-up areas” of municipalities as the most important residential housing priorities in the mandate and purpose.
5. Permit “as of right” secondary suites, garden suites, and laneway houses province-wide.
6. Permit “as of right” multi-tenant housing (renting rooms within a dwelling) province-wide.
7. Encourage and incentivize municipalities to increase density in areas with excess school capacity to benefit families with children.



Potentially Support Recommendations – Cont'd

15. Require mandatory delegation of site plan approvals and minor variances to staff or pre-approved qualified third-party technical consultants through a simplified review and approval process, without the ability to withdraw Council's delegation.
20. Fund the creation of “approvals facilitators” with the authority to quickly resolve conflicts among municipal and/or provincial authorities and ensure timelines are met.
25. Require municipalities to provide the option of pay on demand surety bonds and letters of credit.
26. Require appellants to promptly seek permission (“leave to appeal”) of the Tribunal and demonstrate that an appeal has merit, relying on evidence and expert reports, before it is accepted.



Potentially Support Recommendations – Cont'd

- 31. In clearing the existing backlog, encourage the Tribunal to prioritize projects close to the finish line that will support housing growth and intensification, as well as regional water or utility infrastructure decisions that will unlock significant housing capacity.
- 33. Waive development charges on all forms of affordable housing guaranteed to be affordable for 40 years.
- 36. Recommend that the federal government and provincial governments update HST rebate to reflect current home prices and begin indexing the thresholds to housing prices, and that the federal government match the provincial 75% rebate and remove any clawback.
- 43. Enable municipalities, subject to adverse external economic events, to withdraw infrastructure allocations from any permitted projects where construction has not been initiated within three years of build permits being issued.



Potentially Support Recommendations – Cont'd

48. The Ontario government should establish a large “Ontario Housing Delivery Fund” and encourage the federal government to match funding. This fund should reward:
- c) The speedy removal of exclusionary zoning practices.*
50. Fund the adoption of consistent municipal e-permitting systems and encourage the federal government to match funding. Fund the development of common data architecture standards across municipalities and provincial agencies and require municipalities to provide their zoning bylaws with open data standards. Set an implementation goal of 2025 and make funding conditional on established targets.
52. Resume reporting on housing data and require consistent municipal reporting, enforcing compliance as a requirement for accessing programs under the Ontario Housing Delivery Fund.

*Part a) and b) not supported



Potentially Support Recommendations – Cont'd

- 54. Empower the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to lead an all-of-government committee, including key provincial ministries and agencies, that meets weekly to ensure our remaining recommendations and any other productive ideas are implemented.

- 55. Commit to evaluate these recommendations for the next three years with public reporting on progress.



Not Supported Recommendations

3. Limit exclusionary zoning in municipalities through binding provincial action:
 - a) Allow “as of right” residential housing up to four units and up to four storeys on a single residential lot.
 - b) Modernize the Building Code and other policies to remove any barriers to affordable construction and to ensure meaningful implementation (e.g., allow single-staircase construction for up to four storeys, allow single egress, etc.).
4. Permit “as of right” conversion of underutilized or redundant commercial properties to residential or mixed residential and commercial use.
8. Allow “as of right” zoning up to unlimited height and unlimited density in the immediate proximity of individual major transit stations within two years if municipal zoning remains insufficient to meet provincial density targets.



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

9. Allow “as of right” zoning of six to 11 storeys with no minimum parking requirements on any streets utilized by public transit (including streets on bus and streetcar routes).
10. Designate or rezone as mixed commercial and residential use all land along transit corridors and redesignate all Residential Apartment to mixed commercial and residential zoning in Toronto.
11. Support responsible housing growth on undeveloped land, including outside existing municipal boundaries, by building necessary infrastructure to support higher density housing and complete communities and applying the recommendations of this report to all undeveloped land.



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

12. Create a more permissive land use, planning, and approvals system:
 - a) Repeal or override municipal policies, zoning, or plans that prioritize the preservation of physical character of neighbourhood
 - b) Exempt from site plan approval and public consultation all projects of 10 units or less that conform to the Official Plan and require only minor variances
 - c) Establish province-wide zoning standards, or prohibitions, for minimum lot sizes, maximum building setbacks, minimum heights, angular planes, shadow rules, front doors, building depth, landscaping, floor space index, and heritage view cones, and planes; restore pre-2006 site plan exclusions (colour, texture, and type of materials, window details, etc.) to the Planning Act and reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements; and
 - d) Remove any floorplate restrictions to allow larger, more efficient high-density towers.



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

13. Limit municipalities from requesting or hosting additional public meetings beyond those that are required under the Planning Act.
16. Prevent abuse of the heritage preservation and designation process by:
 - a) Prohibiting the use of bulk listing on municipal heritage registers
 - b) Prohibiting reactive heritage designations after a Planning Act development application has been filed.
17. Requiring municipalities to compensate property owners for loss of property value as a result of heritage designations, based on the principle of best economic use of land.
18. Restore the right of developers to appeal Official Plans and Municipal Comprehensive Reviews.



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

19. Legislate timelines at each stage of the provincial and municipal review process, including site plan, minor variance, and provincial reviews, and deem an application approved if the legislated response time is exceeded.
21. Require a pre-consultation with all relevant parties at which the municipality sets out a binding list that defines what constitutes a complete application; confirms the number of consultations established in the previous recommendations; and clarifies that if a member of a regulated profession such as a professional engineer has stamped an application, the municipality has no liability and no additional stamp is needed.
23. Create a common, province-wide definition of plan of subdivision and standard set of conditions which clarify which may be included; require the use of standard province-wide legal agreements and, where feasible, plans of subdivision.



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

27. Prevent abuse of process:

- a) Remove right of appeal for projects with at least 30% affordable housing in which units are guaranteed affordable for at least 40 years.
- b) Require a \$10,000 filing fee for third-party appeals.
- c) Provide discretion to adjudicators to award full costs to the successful party in any appeal brought by a third party or by a municipality where its council has overridden a recommended staff approval.

29. Where it is found that a municipality has refused an application simply to avoid a deemed approval for lack of decision, allow the Tribunal to award punitive damages.

32. Waive development charges and parkland cash-in-lieu and charge only modest connection fees for all infill residential projects up to 10 units or for any development where no new material infrastructure will be required.



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

34. Prohibit interest rates on development charges higher than a municipality's borrowing rate.
35. Regarding cash in lieu of parkland, s.37, Community Benefit Charges, and development charges:
 - a) Provincial review of reserve levels, collections and drawdowns annually to ensure funds are being used in a timely fashion and for the intended purpose, and, where review points to a significant concern, do not allow further collection until the situation has been corrected.
 - b) Except where allocated towards municipality-wide infrastructure projects, require municipalities to spend funds in the neighbourhoods where they were collected. However, where there's a significant community need in a priority area of the City, allow for specific ward-to-ward allocation of unspent and unallocated reserves.



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

- 39. Eliminate or reduce tax disincentives to housing growth.

- 44. Work with municipalities to develop and implement a municipal services corporation utility model for water and wastewater under which the municipal corporation would borrow and amortize costs among customers instead of using development charges.

- 48. The Ontario government should establish a large “Ontario Housing Delivery Fund” and encourage the federal government to match funding. This fund should reward:
 - a) Annual housing growth that meets or exceeds provincial targets
 - b) Reductions in total approval times for new housing



Not Supported Recommendations – Cont'd

- 49. Reductions in funding to municipalities that fail to meet provincial housing growth and approval timeline targets.

- 51. Require municipalities and the provincial government to use the Ministry of Finance population projections as the basis for housing need analysis and related land use requirements.

- 53. Report each year at the municipal and provincial level on any gap between demand and supply by housing type and location, and make underlying data freely available to the public.



Recommendations and Next Steps

- City request the province to undertake consultation on any recommendations considered for implementation
- This report be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Region of York
- Staff will report back to Development Services Committee when the province releases its response to the Task Force Report as appropriate
- City to continue supporting and implementing process improvements and increasing the supply of housing, in particular for affordable and rental housing