

Housing Affordability Task Force Report

City Response &
Recommendations

March 2, 2022



The Report

- Released Feb 28,2022
- 8 member Task Force Chaired by Jake Lawrence, Chief Executive Officer and Group Head at Scotiabank
- The scope focuses on market housing – excludes affordable housing and uses of Provincial Lands
- Concludes Ontario needs 1.5 million houses on market in the next 10 years
- Offers 55 recommendations to help reach this target

Report's Key Assumptions

- Lack of housing supply is at the root of Ontario's affordability crisis
- Significant responsibility for low supply is due to municipal planning process and related charges:
 - slow planning and building approvals
 - outdated zoning
 - high municipal fees (DCs, CIL)
 - frivolous appeals
- Community opposition is partially contributing to the lack of supply

Challenging The Assumptions

- Planning process is necessary for creating great neighbourhoods – the focus is on positively managing change – not preventing it, but not allowing it unbridled
- Municipal planning processes are not the root cause of affordable housing crisis:
 - Housing Market/Tolerance
 - Value of land, cost of supplies and labour
 - Financing Lending System
 - Planning Legislation
 - Demographics
- Municipal fees are only a small percentage of the overall cost to deliver housing
- Land developer/builders cannot be absolved – they play a role in contributing to the housing supply/affordability crisis

Areas of Alignment

Commitment to facilitate affordable housing for middle income households

- More As-Of- Right Permissions (Gentle Infill)
- Prioritize Transit Oriented Development
- More Mixed Use Development
- Improved Planning Legislative Framework
- Support For Continuous improvement
- Provide New Funding Programs
- Support Labour Market

Areas of Disagreement

Local planning and the quality of urban environments are important

- Province-wide policies/zoning will be ineffective
- Heritage planning and urban design adds value
- Transit service varies – density cannot be justified everywhere
- Conversion of neighbourhood commercial needs careful planning
- Public Participation can facilitate effective decision-making
- The Rights to Appeal should be afforded to everyone – not only a developer
- OPAs destabilize land values – the OP needs to be protected
- Eliminating growth related charges creates a financial risk

Conclusion:

In the absence of concrete recommendations to address the primary influencing factors – the report will have little impact on housing affordability– but significant impact on the quality of neighbourhoods

Next Steps:

- Forward comments to Ministry
- Continue to work with agencies (i.e. OBCM, BILD)
- Launch public education/communication