

# Next 10 Years of Tower Renewal: Achieving city-wide improvement

Through the implementation of Tower Renewal projects, we can achieve:

- A cleaner and healthier environment
- Social and cultural benefits supporting stronger communities
- Enhanced local economic activity

The best outcomes will result from comprehensive and transformative change. Deep retrofits that include building envelop cladding to add insulation and high efficiency heating systems can result in 50% utility use reduction leading to a 5% reduction in overall city Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Neighbourhoods can be transformed by identifying and providing necessary amenities and services, addressing sense of security issues and by providing animation and good pedestrian environments.

Although challenging, it is technically and financially possible to make the buildings, sites and communities we work in perform to as high a standard as newly constructed facilities. It is the goal of Tower Renewal to support this transformative change.

In 2011 the Tower Renewal Program commenced city-wide roll-out. There has been substantial progress made in the engagement of property owners, residents and other stakeholders. Experience to date has provided us with the basis to project the rate and type of progress that can be expected from the current resource level. Given the magnitude of the 1,200 buildings that could potentially be involved in the program, we have also projected the rate of progress for a more intensive approach.

## Key Strategies for Success

### A. 10 Year Outcomes Within Current Resources:

#### 1. Site Focused Attention, Information and Guidance

Tower Renewal provides a systems approach to improvement through the STEP program. Designed to incrementally build capacity to undertake more substantial improvement projects, the STEP program can be used by all owners of apartment buildings to achieve energy efficiency, utility savings and improved living conditions for tenants. It also identifies the types of support available to owners from the City and other Tower Renewal partners.

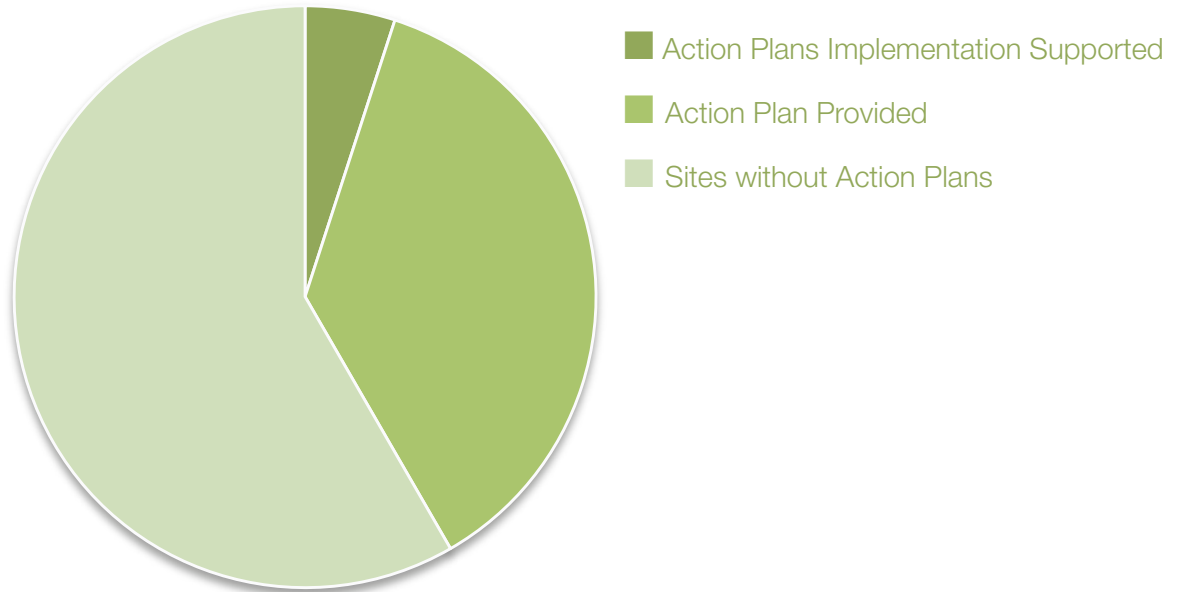
There are about 300 buildings that have made a connection with Tower Renewal. Most of these buildings have undertaken introductory-level improvements. Our approach to date has consisted of taking in information about buildings and then providing an analysis of performance and opportunities for improvement. About 50 buildings in the city have been fully assessed and provided with an action plan for improvement. In a few cases, site actions and outcomes have been tracked.

Where it has been possible, a structured process of follow-up has proven to have significant impact on facilitating actions and it also allows us to measure the impact of Tower Renewal intervention. Far better outcomes could be expected if regular follow-ups on action plans could be provided. However, with existing resources, systematic follow-ups are not feasible.

## 10 Year Goal:

Five hundred apartment sites will receive suggested action plans for improvements. Approximately 60 or one in 20 apartments achieve measured and substantial improvements with supportive contact and tracking of results.

### Projected Apartment Building Reach



## 2. Collaboration to Maximize Impacts

Staff in the Tower Renewal Office collaborate with City and external stakeholders to ensure that strategies, programs and services effectively meet the needs of the 500,000 people living in Toronto's apartment communities. The broad range of City strategies and programs that can be applied to Tower Renewal is illustrated below.



## **10 Year Goal:**

**Support implementation of City strategies and programs and provide information to assist in the development and design of City strategies and programs.**

Many apartments are in communities that are in need of new investment and functional improvements. Revitalization projects that include improvements to public and private spaces and buildings, coupled with better delivery of community services, require a broad scope of partners. To project manage the collaborations needed for tailored revitalization projects, about 10 of the apartment clusters across the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas could be provided with revitalization support.

## **10 Year Goal:**

**Undertake at least one Community Revitalization project per year (10 projects over 10 years).**

### **3. Enabling Change to Achieve Improved Performance**

Although improving apartment buildings makes good business sense, there are many reasons that these improvements do not happen. Through stakeholder consultation, we are able to identify these barriers and then find ways to address the issues and enable the improvements needed. This requires substantial expert knowledge of and research into policies, regulations and programs.

There have been significant advancements in several areas such as zoning permissions and financing. More challenges lie ahead, such as:

- Financing a large number of retrofits with long-term paybacks will require a more robust financing program than what is currently available.
- There is a need for the industry retrofit sector to improve how it markets products and services to achieve greater market uptake.
- The low marketability of some older high-rise communities must be addressed to improve the prospects for private sector investments.
- Effective resident engagement systems need to be established.
- Certain undesirable building characteristics, such as the acute impacts of frequent electrical and water disruptions or being in areas unfriendly to pedestrians, must be examined and addressed.

With current resources, these barriers will be addressed at a rate of about one per year and will rely heavily on securing external supports such as academic researchers to undertake the work as well as grant funding.

## **10 Year Goal:**

**Identify and secure supports to undertake regulatory and policy work that is needed to enable improvements.**

## B. Greater Outcomes Possible with Intensified Resources Applied:

With an intensified level of resources – an estimated \$250,000 for 2 staff and program budget – it would be possible to achieve greater outcomes at a faster rate.

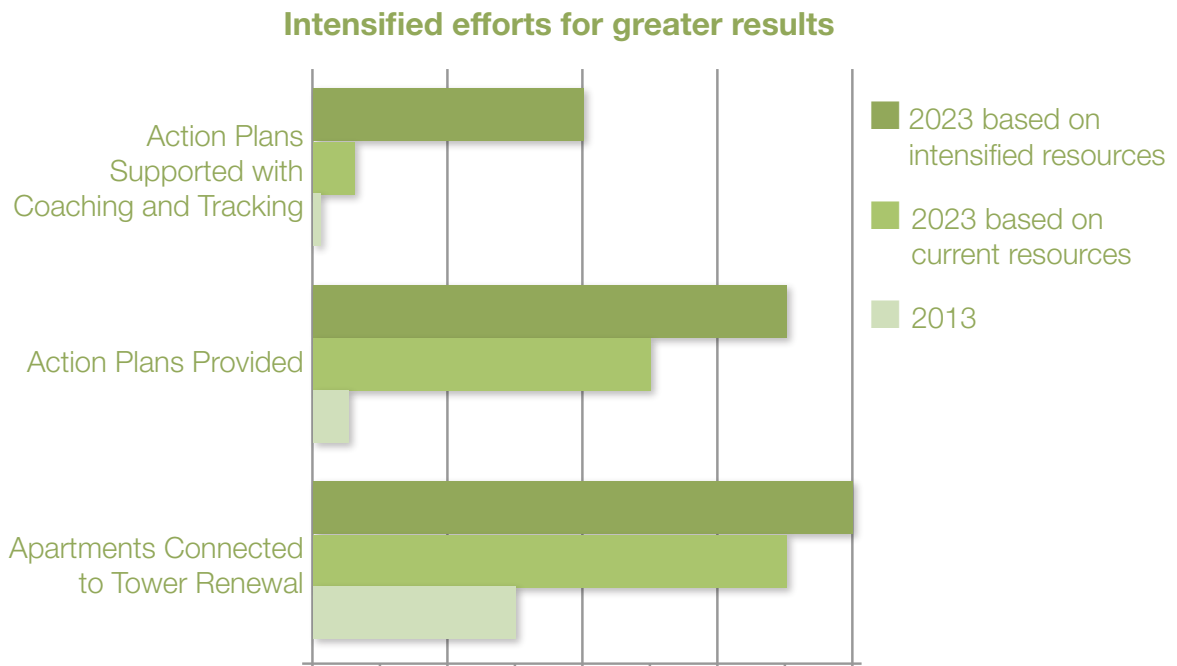
### 1. Site focused attention, information and guidance

To achieve change across the city, our current approach of providing information could be coupled with regular contact with building owners. This would allow us to encourage action on the part of building owners and to track the results. With greater outreach more buildings would be provided with action plans and obtain a higher level of improvements by receiving site specific supports and guidance. This would also allow us to track what is done and the related outcomes. Additional resources would support:

- Developing stronger links to stakeholders engaged in property management and community development
- Increasing Tower Renewal’s capacity to undertake follow-up discussions with property owners to communicate the benefits and methods of achieving improvements
- Undertaking resident engagement activities to capitalize on the synergies that arise from addressing improvements on a community level

#### Intensified 10 Year Goal:

- **Increase to 700 apartments receiving suggested action plans for improvements.**
- **Increase to 1 in 3 (about 400) apartments achieving measured and substantial improvements through supportive contact and tracking of results.**



## 2. Collaboration to maximize impacts

Coordination across disciplines to develop integrated solutions will allow City program to have their greatest impact. For example with LIC energy retrofit financing, we can leverage utility efficiency projects to achieve quality of life improvement projects. However, significant effort is needed to find and provide information on best practices and engage a range of stakeholders in undertaking these comprehensive projects.

### Intensified 10 Year Goal:

- **Proactively identify opportunities where the City can develop strategies and policies and apply programs to achieve better outcomes for residents in apartment communities.**

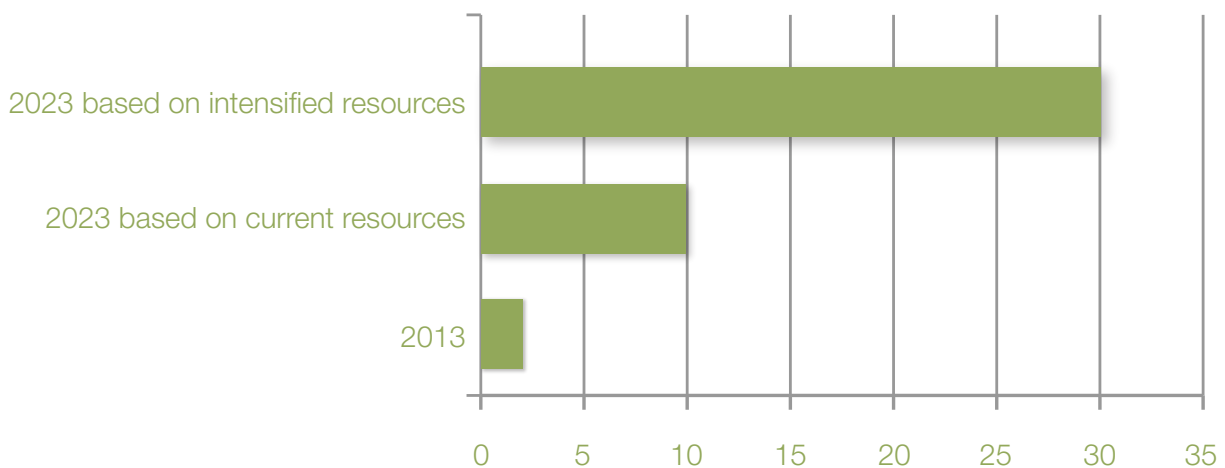
More community improvement funding opportunities are available to undertake revitalization projects than we can currently pursue. These opportunities can be captured if there are staff resources to manage resident engagement, and the design and implementation of projects.

Desirable revitalization can be enabled by supports such as the new Residential Apartment Commercial Zone permission that allows for new land uses. New uses can bring greater effectiveness and vitality to communities. However, the zoning permission alone is unlikely to bring about substantial change. To receive the full benefit of zoning change, complementary community engagement and development activities are needed.

### Intensified 10 Year Goal:

- **Support a revitalization project in most apartment clusters in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. (Target 30 projects over 10 years).**

### Community Revitalization Projects



### 3. Enabling change to achieve improved performance

Identifying barriers is relatively straightforward. Assessing their scope, developing and analyzing options, consulting stakeholders, building consensus and achieving change requires expertise and time. A City-led initiative will bring greater control over the direction of investigations, scope of work undertaken and the timeliness of delivery.

#### **Intensified 10 Year Goal:**

- **Apply resources to directly address issues standing in the way of necessary improvements, and identify and seek external support in bringing about regulatory and policy changes that will better enable improvements.**

#### **Conclusion**

Apartment communities are important to the city. The need for improvements spans 1,200 buildings. Over time, as improvements are implemented, there will be cleaner, safer and more appealing apartment neighbourhoods across the city. The faster the rate of achieving improvements, the greater will be the benefits to the city.