



To: Toronto City Council

Re: PH14.3, Housing Now Initiative - Annual Progress Report

Because Doug Ford got rid of rent control in 2018, new rental housing buildings have no rent control. ACORN supports and fights for more affordable housing, because our members are increasingly finding life in Toronto unaffordable. The Housing Now and Open Door programs which gives public land or provides tax breaks to developers to build mixed "affordable" housing sites have been one attempt by the city to deal with the issue, however the programs have failed to deliver real results for low and moderate income tenants. We have a major opportunity to require rent control on these sites - this would be the ONLY chance for ANY rent control in all of Toronto.

A 2% yearly increase ON TOP of the yearly guideline increase (up to 2.2%) is unacceptable. We need to prioritize the right to housing OVER developer profits by capping rent increases at the provincial guideline. Further, we need these programs to be transparent so that citizens can judge for themselves whether or not these programs are working, and if they aren't working, then who are they working for?

We are urging you to make the following changes to the annual report, so that this program can deliver on it's goals and create more affordable housing, so ACORN members and thousands of working people can afford to live in this city.

- Rent control with a maximum increase capped at the provincial guideline
  - Create strong rules that blocks unfair Above-Guideline-Increases
  - Protect long term tenants through vacancy control (rents stay same when tenants move out)
  - Expand rent control to 'Open Door' sites that get tax breaks from the city
- All staff recommendations as to Housing Now developments (notably the appropriate number and depth of affordable units to be included) should be explained with regard to the economic assumptions (including the assumed rate of return to developer) underlying these recommendations. Ideally this would be with reference to the proforma Staff is relying on. Staff should put forward a number of possible options for each site, with a variety of amounts and depths of affordable units.
- More transparency about the selection process (how many proposals responded to the RFP for each Housing Now site, and on exactly what grounds were they ranked?)
  - Prioritize the right to housing over developer's right to profit

Thank you, and I hope you will support ACORN's campaign demands

Sincerely,

Marva Burnett,  
President, ACORN Canada