



October 20, 2020

10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Nancy Martins

RE: PHC 17.9 Development Pipeline

Dear Chair Ana Bailão and Members, Planning and Housing Committee,

This report is a veritable goldmine of information on the overall status of development projects based on applications over the past five years. In reading the report we found it helpful to summarize the key data as follows:

Category	Residential (# units)	Non-Residential (sq. metres)
Proposed ¹	435,069	12,085,148
Approved	241,438	7,551,367
Approved - Built	92,641	2,293,315
Approved - not built ²	148,797	5,258,052
Still under review ³	193,631	4,533,781

We understand that this information report is a regular update. But its gold mine should be exploited to help ensure that the City's development approval processes are efficient and effective, given Toronto's growth pressures, the demands from the building industry, and Provincial legislation reducing processing time frames. 2020 will be a very different year, given the COVID 19 related impacts such as City offices shutdown and the use of virtual meetings, and the variable impacts on the real estate and construction sectors. A more detailed breakdown of information will be needed to understand the changes.

We suggest that the following kinds of questions are raised by the information, and should be addressed:

¹ Development projects submitted Jan 1 2015 to Dec 31, 2019

² Received at least one planning approval but which have not yet been built including

- May or may not have SPA submitted or approved
- For which building permits have been applied for or issued but for which construction has not yet started
- Under construction but not yet built

³ Those which are not yet approved or refused and those which are under appeal

- How does the information in the report differ from past years and why? 2019 saw a lot more applications made than 2018. The report suggests the 2019 results are very good compared to 2018. What are reasonable expectations for the speed of approvals given that the City must act in a responsible way, which includes public consultation?
- What are the expectations for 2020 given the COVID 19 delays and market changes?
- The City data appears to show that there are plenty of units already approved, but the building industry isn't constructing them in a timely manner. To what extent is the "approved not built" category caused by the fact that the City Planning and Building approval processes has not been completed or because the developer has not completed construction? Should the categories in the 2019 data collection be more detailed?
- A recent report comparing Planning staffing levels among GTA municipalities found that the ratio of Planning staff levels in Toronto as a proportion of population is well below that of other municipalities? How does the Pipeline information inform the implication that staffing numbers should increase?
- How does the information validate the street level impression that there are vacant lots (and lakes!) overdue for development? How can their development be encouraged/expedited?
- How can public approval and private construction processes be better adjusted to address timely and suitable development of housing in the Yellowbelt initiative?
- Should the City could invite the public and private sector stakeholders to come forward to discuss the policy and procedural questions raised by the report, and what can be done about those?

We recommend that

- Planning and Housing Committee request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division to report back to the Committee on the policy issues and implications arising from the report.

Yours truly,

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Cc: Gregg Lintern, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

The Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations (FoNTRA) is a non-profit, volunteer organization comprised of over 30 member organizations. Its members, all residents' associations, include at least 170,000 Toronto residents within their boundaries. The residents' associations that make up FoNTRA believe that Ontario and Toronto can and should achieve better development. Its central issue is not *whether* Toronto will grow, but *how*. FoNTRA believes that sustainable urban regions are characterized by environmental balance, fiscal viability, infrastructure investment and social renewal.