



# ACORN Canada

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October 28, 2021

## **To City Councillors on the Planning & Housing Committee**

RE: PH28.1 Inclusionary Zoning Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and Draft Implementation Guidelines

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PH28.4 Official Plan Amendment on Updating the Definitions of Affordable Rental and Ownership Housing (Ward All - Statutory: Planning Act, RSO 1990)

For the past 3 years the City of Toronto has been working on a new policy that would force new developments to set aside a percentage of units as affordable housing. This is thanks to the pressure of ACORN members, and allies, across Ontario who won Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) policies in 2018 from the Provincial Government after years of campaigning. ACORN members fought for Inclusionary Zoning because we are facing the housing crisis every day.

Not only that, but the City of Toronto has also been working on a new definition of what is 'affordable housing'. So far the City has used a definition based on 'average market rent', resulting in 'affordable housing' units that charge \$2000/month or more. ACORN pushed for a definition based on 30% of household income, similar to a definition used by Federal and Provincial Governments, and we are happy to see that this is close to being accomplished.

However, the housing crisis continues to grow, and policies such as Inclusionary Zoning are one tool that can help address the problem while also taking profit away from rich developers and delivering them to low and moderate income communities in the form of affordable housing. This is why there is an organized push by developers to push back and weaken what is currently being proposed.

After 3 years, ACORN has moved the proposed bylaw from a weak policy to something much bolder. We've gone from units being affordable for 25 years, to units being kept affordable for 99 years. We've moved the definition of affordable from average market rent to a definition based on 30% of household income. We've gone from bad to better. However, what is being proposed is still too low. We cannot accept set aside rates that are way below what the City's own studies prove is possible. And we cannot accept delaying the IZ requirements and phase in until

2030. All because developers are trying to protect their profit margins, while being guaranteed a 15% profit!

The currently proposed policy is not good enough. Working class Torontonians cannot wait years, and they cannot accept such weak policies. We need to see something much more bold which will speed up and strengthen the program. We need to see our right to housing protected and for the City to take advantage of this major opportunity.

ACORN members demand the following:

- Require the MAXIMUM amount of units possible set aside as permanent, deeply affordable, rental housing
- Inclusionary Zoning must be fully phased in by 2025 - we can't wait till 2030
- It must be fully phased in at 20 to 30% - which city studies have shown will allow developers to get 15% profit and landowners to get 10% above the value of their land
- It must prioritize affordable rental housing, which is more affordable for lower income households, in all developments, by targeting set aside rates which will incentivize rental over ownership
- Maintain the current proposal of units being affordable for 99 years
- Bring in a new definition of 'affordable', based on income NOT market rent
- That Inclusionary Zoning policies apply to all new developments with 60 units or more

On behalf of Toronto ACORN,

Marva Burnett,

President, ACORN Canada

Chair, Scarborough ACORN