

November 24, 2021

Planning & Housing Committee
City of Toronto
City Hall, 100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Re: PH29.9 – Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Multiplex Study - Interim Report

Dear Committee Members:

As the leading non-profit organization working hard to create affordable homeownership opportunities for families in Toronto and the wider region, Habitat for Humanity GTA (Habitat GTA) is fully in support of the report *“PH29.9 – Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Multiplex Study - Interim Report.”*

The zoning and residential topography of the majority of Toronto’s neighbourhoods reflects an era long past and must be updated to reflect the needs of people living in the city today and in the future.

The vast majority of Toronto’s neighbourhoods were built during the first half of the 20th century and reflected a city being built for a population of 1 to 2 million. They also reflected an era where a middle-income household could reasonably aspire to work hard and buy a home with a yard. They were built in an era where everyone owned a car. This is no longer the case. Countless Torontonians are being left out of having a home they can afford to either rent or own. In contrast, residents and particularly homeowners in established neighbourhoods have been empowered by traditional zoning practices to preserve “neighbourhood character”, rather than enabling neighbourhoods to evolve so that more people can enjoy the same privilege that we all want and deserve – namely, a safe, affordable place to live.

The policies now in question have created a world in which higher-income communities where families are most likely to be homeowners, 74% of families are white, while in lower-income communities where families are more likely to rent, 69% of residents are racialized. Thus, we are especially supportive to see the report commit to engage with marginalized groups, low-income households, Black and racialized groups, seniors, women and indigenous peoples as these voices are typically left out of the conversation and face the greatest inequity.

The “*Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Multiplex Study - Interim Report*” sets out a vision of a future more reflective of a city projected to grow to a population of nearly 4 million people by 2046. Habitat GTA is fully supportive of this vision. It promises us a future that is more inclusive, more affordable, and more environmentally sustainable than the course we are on today.

Sincerely,



Ene Underwood
CEO