



Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

RE: PH35.2 - Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods: Major Streets - Interim Report

About More Neighbours Toronto

[More Neighbours Toronto](#) is a volunteer-only organization of housing advocates that believe in building more multi-family homes of all kinds for those who dream of building their lives in Toronto. We advocate for reforms to increase our city's ability to build more homes in every neighbourhood. We are a big-tent organization with members across the political spectrum who are committed to counterbalancing the anti-housing agenda that has dominated Toronto's politics, created an affordability crisis, and has cost-burdened a new generation of aspiring residents. We are firmly committed to the principle that housing is a human right and believe Toronto should be inclusive and welcoming to all.

Summary of Position

More Neighbours Toronto supports the review of the Official Plan and zoning permissions along major streets in Neighbourhoods. With the CMHC's June 23 report estimating that Ontario needs to build 2.6 million homes in the next eight years to restore affordability, legalizing apartments on major streets will be absolutely necessary. We strongly suggest that you consider the approach of the [Housing Affordability Task Force report's](#) recommendation 9: "allow 'as of right' zoning of six to 11 storeys with no minimum parking requirements on any streets utilized by public transit (including streets on bus and streetcar routes)". The CMHC makes it clear that incremental tinkering around the edges of a broken system is no longer sufficient. Bold action now is required.

Position

Toronto is in a housing crisis. Rents are unaffordable for students, new immigrants, service workers, and nurses. Even the upper middle class is encouraged to "drive until they qualify" because homeownership in Toronto is no longer attainable. While Toronto has doubled in population between 1970 and 2016, the vast majority of Toronto's neighbourhoods have lost population in that same time frame, with growth limited to the downtown core and other small pockets of land. This is despite many of the neighbourhoods experiencing population loss being located very close to jobs and transit, and being very desirable places to live. The recently-released population counts from the 2021 census show a continuation of the same trend.

The exclusion of Toronto's growth from Toronto's Neighbourhoods is a primary factor exacerbating the housing crisis, and in turn has consequences for our economy, our

environment, and our equity. The EHON initiative is the most direct initiative by the city to address exclusionary zoning, and it's been long awaited.

The CMHC recently released an [alarming report](#) that quantifies the urgency of our housing crisis. It estimates that Ontario needs to build 1.85 million homes over current projections (0.75 million units) by 2030, representing a need for 2.6 million new homes in total, based on data in the report. Under business-as-usual city planning, housing units per-person will decrease over the next decade, worsening Ontario's housing crisis. Only bold action immediately can restore housing affordability.

Accelerating housing construction—including in established neighbourhoods—must be a top priority for any municipal government serious about tackling the housing crisis. Permitting the gentlest of density through the multiplex study is a good start, but will not be nearly sufficient. The city must seize this opportunity to permit low-rise and mid-rise apartment buildings along transit if it wants to be serious about addressing the housing crisis.

Sincerely,

Jacob Dawang
More Neighbours Toronto