

## CC2.1 2023 Housing Action Plan

**Submission by Melissa Goldstein, Dec. 14, 2022**

Yes, we have a housing and homelessness crisis and it's essential that we make addressing it a top priority. However, that doesn't justify throwing Toronto's brand new, democratically-developed and Council-approved, HousingTO Action Plan out the window and replacing it with a Plan created by the Mayor without any input from anyone. The Mayor's Plan to drastically change zoning rules is not evidence-based, is not likely to improve housing affordability, and is instead much more likely to cause the loss of existing affordable housing, the loss of existing housing affordability, the mass displacement of tenants, and an increase in homelessness.

Indeed, there is no acknowledgement anywhere in the Mayor's Plan of the City's commitment to furthering the realization of the right to adequate housing, of the need to preserve existing rental housing affordability, of the need to prevent tenant displacement, or the need to mitigate the effects of tenant displacement as a result of regulatory changes to increase the housing supply. It also fails to address homelessness or the housing needs of vulnerable populations.

The Housing System Policy and Program Components of the Plan are welcome, however, the items that are not already included in the HousingTO Plan could have simply been added to it to ensure that the City continues to move forward with its comprehensive approach to addressing housing and homelessness issues.

For years now I have been requesting a publicly available database that tracks affordable rental units approved, under construction, and built, so I am happy to see this directive. However, if public accountability and progress towards overall goals is the objective, what is needed is data pertaining to the overall affordable housing supply and housing affordability, so what is also needed is publicly available data that tracks affordable and mid-range units preserved, replaced, and lost to redevelopment and conversion.

I hope that after many attempts, Council will finally agree to legalize multi-tenant homes across the city. It's unfortunate that in the middle of a housing crisis where politicians are taking Bold Action To Improve Housing Supply At All Costs, multi-tenant home operators are still being required to comply with mountains of red tape—far more than operators of large apartment buildings—before being able to increase the supply of affordable rental housing.

Finally, Toronto's affordable housing and homelessness crises are not new, and while they were created by poor policy decisions, these crises will not be fixed by undermining and overriding democratic policy-making and decision-making (or threatening to do so) or by eliminating opportunities for the public to provide input. It is incredibly alarming that the Mayor is essentially arguing that democracy and realizing people's right to adequate housing are incompatible, when it is housing policy that treats housing as a commodity that is incompatible with realizing people's right to adequate housing.