

Toronto Home Retrofits
September 18, 2023

Subject: Support for Items IE6.4 and IE6.5 on Building Decarbonization

To The Infrastructure and Environment Committee:

On behalf of Toronto Home Retrofits (THR), I am writing to express our strong support for the recommendations and status updates outlined in Items IE6.4 and IE6.5, which address the urgent challenge of achieving net-zero emissions from existing buildings. The alignment of these initiatives with our mission emphasizes the growing recognition of the importance of retrofitting to achieve the City of Toronto's ambitious climate goals.

As a non-profit organization dedicated to enabling communities across Toronto to accelerate single family home retrofitting, THR values the overarching aim of the city's approach. Our model, inspired by the success of the Pocket Change Project, underscores the significance of retrofit coordination in achieving tangible greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. Our unique, community-centric approach addresses various homeowner barriers, ranging from technical understanding and contractor selection to financing and accessing available incentives. By partnering with community groups, we ensure that homeowners receive tailored advice, tools, and the necessary support to move forward confidently with their retrofitting projects.

The City's Net Zero Existing Building's Strategy, showcases a comprehensive roadmap for Toronto's building sector to transition towards a sustainable and resilient future. The commitment to the net-zero target by 2040, and identification of key actions such as integrated retrofit support and retrofit expansion are essential and commendable. Items IE6.4 and IE 6.5 both advance implementation of important measures to accelerate the rate of retrofits

The ongoing work to establish mandatory emission performance standards, over time, for all types of buildings, as reported upon in IE6.4, will provide an important signal of future expectations and requirements for emissions reductions that will stimulate all retrofit activities, including our work on single family homes.

Addressing income inequality and making retrofitting accessible to all homeowners, regardless of their financial standing, is a core tenet of THR. Funding and financing remain barriers to many homeowners considering improvements to their homes to reduce emissions. Pursuit of a range of options to address affordability, consistent with the proposed design principles in Item IE6.5, such as delivering a high-quality customer experience and leveraging municipal expertise, is essential to broadening access to these home improvements.

In conclusion, Toronto Home Retrofits stands alongside the City of Toronto in its pursuit of building decarbonization, and we wholeheartedly endorse the recommendations set forth in these items. It is with collective efforts like these that we can pave the way for a greener, more sustainable future for our city and its residents.

Warm regards,

Paul Dowsett, Vice Chair
Toronto Home Retrofits (THR)