



**MORE NEIGHBOURS
TORONTO**

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

RE: PH11.1 - Housing Now - Bloor-Islington and Islington Bus Terminal - City-Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment and Plan of Subdivision - Decision Report - Approval

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 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.

Position

More Neighbours Toronto is enthusiastically supporting the Housing Now Site initiative outlined in agenda item 2024.PH11.1, including the planned height and density.

We've seen firsthand the struggles our neighbors face due to the lack of affordable housing, finding adequate housing in Toronto has become almost impossible. With the creation of ~1,500 new homes, including 471 rental units made affordable for 99 years through the Housing Now Site, we see a glimmer of hope on the horizon.

We appreciate the land and the \$23.4 million in incentives that the City of Toronto has contributed to help achieve this level of affordability. This demonstrates the importance of making affordable housing a priority and we encourage other levels of government to contribute in order to increase affordability. Important societal projects should be funded from the overall tax base and not by fees on new housing that limit new construction during a housing shortage or get passed on to new residents.

We are particularly heartened by the proposed location of the Housing Now Site adjacent to a transit station, which presents a unique opportunity to integrate affordable housing seamlessly into our city's transportation network and to creatively leverage height-limited hydro lands and a parking lot to host bus bays. This strategic placement not only enhances accessibility for residents but also aligns with our vision of creating a complete community where individuals can live, work, and thrive.

However, we know that time is of the essence. Each day that passes makes this project even more expensive. As we advocate for financial assistance from other levels of government and procedural assistance from provincial agencies, it's imperative that we, as a city, do everything within our power to expedite this vital project.

We want to see this HousingNow site built and we urge all members of the committee to vote for the motion taking an important step to make this a reality.

Regards,
Zakere Farah, Colleen Bailey
More Neighbours Toronto



Olivia Chow tour of Islington station Housing Now site with representatives from More Neighbours Toronto, HousingNowTO, RESCON, Urban Land Institute and Toronto Metropolitan University during the 2023 Mayoral by-election campaign. Islington Station parking lot, May 7, 2023.