



**MORE NEIGHBOURS  
TORONTO**

Dear Members of Planning and Housing Committee,

**RE: PH14.7 - Single Exit Stair: Ontario Building Code Feasibility Study**

***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 supports all three recommendations from the Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building.** It is promising to see the City taking proactive and innovative steps to address the housing crisis. While the report focuses on the feasibility of the change, I would like to highlight why single egress requirements will be so beneficial, especially as to why this case is important for adding more multi-family homes.

A major benefit of this change to the code beyond the fact that a single exit stair allows for less floor space wasted in hallways instead of units, but that it opens up a whole new design space for apartment building designs. The most common apartment building design in Toronto is the double-loaded corridor, with units on both sides of a central corridor. This design makes it especially hard to build 3+ bedroom units, contributing to the scarcity of multi-family homes in the city. Point access blocks, by contrast, can be built to wrap around their single exit stair and allow for a greater variety of apartment configurations, including those better suited to families.

Another major benefit is that the minimum size of an economically viable point access block design is smaller than a double-loaded corridor design, making increasing density feasible on more lots across the city, instead of developers needing to assemble large, contiguous sites. This makes infill development faster, cheaper and less disruptive to the community it serves.

Vancouver has recently joined other jurisdictions in North America, such as Seattle and New York, that allow for a single exit stair in mid rise apartments in an effort to tackle the challenge of the missing middle, showing that these changes can be implemented within the National Building Code.

I am especially encouraged by the involvement of the Fire Chief General and Manager, Toronto Fire Services and urge you to please follow the recommendations from the Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building.

Regards,

Will de la Guardia,  
More Neighbours Toronto