Supporting Multiplex Housing

Report to the Executive Committee

of Toronto City Council

June 10, 2026

Introduction

On May 20, 2026, Toronto City Council requested Toronto Hydro bring forward a report at its Annual General Meeting in June 2026 regarding multi-unit housing. Specifically, Council requested a Toronto Hydro action plan to help make it faster and more affordable to connect multi-unit housing to the electricity grid. While connecting housing to the grid is affected by many factors, Council requested that Toronto Hydro focus its report on actions within the utility's control. Toronto Hydro further understands the intention is for this report to focus on "mid-rise" or "multiplex" housing, as opposed to multi-unit condominium towers.

Executive Summary

Toronto Hydro's role in Toronto's housing future is clear: we must make it faster, simpler and more predictable to connect homes to the grid. This report is centred around four priorities that reflect an organizational commitment to help increase housing supply:

1. **Simplifying processes** to support faster project delivery
2. **Modernizing standards** to support a wider range of connection options for multiplexes
3. **Improving cost predictability** and reducing financial burden
4. **Enhancing the customer experience** through proactive and transparent engagement

The actions in this plan build on real progress already made. They are shaped by what we have heard from the customers, developers, builders, and communities (collectively "stakeholders") who are working to deliver the housing Toronto urgently needs. They reflect Toronto Hydro's recognition that our processes, standards, and customer experience must continue to evolve alongside the city we serve.

Toronto Hydro recognizes that increasing housing supply and improving its affordability is a shared responsibility. Within our regulated mandate, we are committed to taking practical, measurable actions to support the efficient delivery of multi-unit housing, while continuing to uphold our core responsibility of providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity to the people and businesses of Toronto.

Toronto Hydro looks forward to continuing to work in close partnership with the City of Toronto, including the City Manager's Office and Housing Development Office, the development community, and all those committed to making Toronto a more affordable, liveable, and well-connected city.

Strategic Objectives

Connecting customers to the grid is core to Toronto Hydro's business model and extensive action is already underway and planned in this area. However, it is clear from our regular engagements with stakeholders that there are opportunities to enhance what we do. We are committed to improving multi-unit housing connection processes, related connection standards, cost predictability, and the

customer experience. Improving how we connect multi-unit housing – with a strong focus on speeding up connection timelines – is good for our stakeholders, our community, our utility business, and the City as our shareholder, and is a key objective of Toronto Hydro's refreshed strategy.

Strategic Transformation Underway

Following the Mayor's election in 2023, and Council's subsequent refresh of the Board of Directors and recruitment of a new President & CEO, Toronto Hydro began transforming its values, strategy, culture, and customer-facing work. Supporting the efficient growth of housing is central to Toronto Hydro's:

- Role in the community as a provider of critical infrastructure,
- Purpose, values, and strategy, and
- Provincially regulated mandate.

As this report reflects, the prioritization of our connections work has translated into:

1) Listening to stakeholders and responding to their feedback,
2) Designing and executing tangible, responsive actions that have been undertaken over the past year,
3) A further ramp-up of additional planned actions with incremental outcomes to be delivered over the coming 12-month period, including reduced timelines and increased cost predictability that benefit multiplex housing development,
4) Actions that with longer development paths that are being launched in 2026, recognizing that while some transformation is possible through quick fixes and intensive immediate measures, other solutions are more complex, and
5) A commitment to enhancing a performance outcomes culture that enables us and our stakeholders to assess whether our actions have in fact improved multiplex housing connections and respond accordingly.

Early Signs of Success

As Toronto grows and its housing supply grows with it, through a wide range of actions, including those set out in this report, Toronto Hydro is repositioning itself to be a better collaborator, facilitator, and enabler of community growth. In 2024 and 2025, Toronto Hydro connected 129 and 179 multiplexes, respectively. As of the end of May 2026, 61 multiplexes, have been connected and we are on track to connect approximately 200 by the end of 2026. This is 4 times the volume of connections completed 4 years ago (51 in 2022). Toronto is growing, multiplex housing is becoming more prevalent as part of that growth, and Toronto Hydro has been scaling to meet this increase in demand.

Sizing up the Challenge & Learning While Doing

Multiplexes require much larger electricity infrastructure connections than the buildings that preceded them. In some cases, as much as 10 times larger (e.g. 60 amp services increasing to 600 amp services; 80 amp services to 800 amp services). This is a new engineering challenge, not just for Toronto Hydro, but for many utilities across Canada and the United States.

Further, the unique characteristics that make Toronto an interesting place to live, can also sometimes necessitate very different options for serving identical buildings in different parts of the city. Diversity in pre-municipal amalgamation neighbourhood and infrastructure configurations often has implications for the rights-of-way required for new and expanded infrastructure options to serve new housing load. Understandably, not all complexities are known to developers – or Toronto Hydro – until a project is proposed, designs are prepared, and in some cases until discoveries are unearthed during construction.

As part of Toronto Hydro's commitment to connecting customers and enabling housing, we are committed to learning from these experiences, and to sharing our learning with stakeholders to help them better plan, price, and develop multiplex projects. We appreciate that "growing pains" are disproportionately borne by the "first movers", which is why we are not only focused on addressing the technical challenges of connection timelines, processes, standards, and cost predictability, but also the customer experience of those who are helping build a better Toronto.

Utility Operations, Corporate Governance and Regulatory Oversight

As this report illustrates, Toronto Hydro is focused on improving multiplex housing connections by simplifying processes and reducing their timelines, modernizing standards, improving cost predictability, and enhancing the customer experience. As a business corporation, the design and delivery of these utility operations actions are the responsibility of management. The Board of Directors fulfils a legally defined governance function: ensuring that the work of management is aligned with the best interests of the corporation, which accounts for the interests of the shareholder and other stakeholders.

Customer connections are a regulated function within Toronto Hydro's electricity distribution utility. Connection standards, cost responsibility rules, and certain processes are prescribed by provincial legislation, regulations, and codes under the oversight of the Electrical Safety Authority and Ontario Energy Board. The regulatory framework prioritizes safety, reliability, and fairness of cost allocation between new and existing customers. Toronto Hydro is required to comply with these regulations, and confirms that the actions proposed in this report comply with regulatory requirements.

On June 9, 2026, the Ontario Energy Board gave notice that it is commencing another round of policy consultation on the topic of customer connections. This follows a consultation in 2025 that was initiated by the Minister of Energy and Mines through a Ministerial Directive to the regulator. Preliminary indications are that the objectives of the Ontario Government are similar to those of Toronto Hydro, the City of Toronto, and stakeholders: providing for faster, easier, more standard connections of new and expanded housing to the electricity grid.

The Contextual Challenges

Modern multiplexes are a new form of building from an electricity service perspective in part because of the size of the electricity loads, and in part because of the premium placed on every square foot of space within the property. This is very different from traditional duplexes and townhomes, which typically require electricity connections comparable to a single detached house, and from large multi-

unit developments (e.g. condominium towers), which require large on-site transformers to serve the load, but are designed to accommodate the necessary infrastructure on the property.

A multiplex's size of electricity connection and lack of space for electrical equipment on the property, combined with little space on (or even under) the right-of-way, increases complexity, and results in heightened safety and reliability risks that must be addressed, resulting in higher costs.

By way of comparison, the electricity connection equipment necessary to serve a six-unit multiplex is comparable to that of a strip mall or an auto mechanic shop. The physics of going from service connections of 80-200 amps to 400-800 amps on a property requires much larger utility and customer equipment. A builder of a commercial development will factor in and accommodate large powerlines and transformer equipment on site, such as in in its parking lot or an on-property underground vault. However, these are often unforeseen requirements during multiplex planning, design, and construction until the developer contacts Toronto Hydro. When this occurs during the construction process, it can have a significant impact on the project budget and timeline.

In a rural or less urban setting, some of these challenges can be mitigated late in the development stage of a housing project by constructing new overhead powerlines and transformers on "unused land". While Toronto's density is often its strength, in this particular case it can eliminate design options and impose additional costs. For example, where there are already powerlines running on both sides of a road, sometimes overhead and other times underground, or where urban planning has allocated that space for tree coverage. In Toronto, the prospect of finding "unused land" adjacent to a new development, even underground, is increasingly unlikely.

Moreover, new electrification technologies (e.g. in-home EV chargers, customer-owned battery systems, solar panels) sized for a multiplex make connecting this type of housing to the grid a more complex undertaking than connecting a single detached home, even though the property footprint may be similar.

Overall, this presents a range of challenges in **connection processes**, **utility standards**, **cost predictability**, and **customer experience**. At the same time, priorities of public safety, electrical worker safety, customer reliability, grid reliability, and fairness of cost responsibility continue to be important principles and guideposts.

Progress in Action

To date, we have connected 476 multiplexes over the past 4 years, and through those experiences we have learned a great deal through collaboration with customers, developers, City Staff, provincial regulatory officials, and others involved in these projects. While not every project has gone as smoothly as anyone would have preferred, we have been learning and adapting. Our progress is addressed below, as is our commitment to deeply advancing comprehensive action plans that will guide and document our step-change enhancements in connecting multiplex housing.

In the sections below, we set out our commitment to action across four categories in detail. Within each category, we list our actions to date, planned actions with outcomes expected within the next 12 months, and planned actions where the outcomes will take more than 12 months to materialize. This

phased approach reflects stakeholder feedback to deliver "quick wins" as well as proceed with initiatives that are of value but will require sustained effort over a longer period.

Action Category: Simplifying Processes

What are Multiplex Connection Processes?

Toronto Hydro is one of Canada's largest urban utilities with a workforce of more than 1,400 employees and hundreds of contractors. Through our processes, Toronto Hydro strives to provide predictability to its workforce and those we serve in the community. Our processes are intended to reflect compliance obligations, best practices, lessons learned, and in-field wisdom accumulated over time. Processes can incorporate flexibility, while preserving consistency of experience and outcome quality. When new considerations arise, such as multiplex connections, certain existing processes can continue, while others need to be amended to reflect distinctive factors.

Stakeholder Feedback

A consistent message from stakeholders on the connections process has been a desire for transparency and predictability. Builders cited inconsistent experiences involving the application of standards, limited information on technical decisions, and unforeseen change orders that impacted construction schedules and resulted in replanning.

Beyond the core connection process, we also received feedback with respect to our disconnect and reconnect services, where even less complicated connections can incur long scheduling waits, added costs, and resource coordination challenges.

Actions to Date	Planned Actions: Completion within 12 months	Planned Actions: Completion beyond 12 months
Established a transparent **customer connections risk identification framework** (2025) now in active use to proactively surface issues, address root causes, and improve delivery consistency across projects. Partnered with **Toronto Building** to update permit language and introduce a self-declaration form, reducing compliance friction and back-and-forth with the City. Project to upgrade the **Service Request portal** to improve how applications are submitted, tracked, and processed. (Go live expected in June 2026.)	**Standardize recurring technical requirements** and review processes to reduce the need for project-by-project assessments and minimize delays caused by inconsistent decision-making. **Establish a dedicated, end-to-end single point of contact** for multiplex connection projects, improving coordination, reducing handoffs, and providing builders with consistent guidance from intake to energization. Improve **transparency of requirements and timelines** to support more complete initial submissions and faster approvals – reducing the revision cycles that	Introduce differentiated **fast-track connection pathways** for less complex multiplex housing projects, enabling simpler applications to move from approval to delivery significantly faster. Enable more **agile and concurrent workflows** across the connection process to reduce overall cycle times and eliminate unnecessary sequential steps.

	currently extend project timelines unnecessarily. Further **explore issues with disconnect/reconnect and subcontracted services** with stakeholders to better understand drivers.	

Action Category: Modernizing Standards

What are Multiplex Connection Standards?

As a provincially regulated utility, and as a matter of good utility practice and professional engineering obligations, Toronto Hydro has compliance obligations to prepare, maintain, and adhere to grid design and operations standards. Standards serve many practical purposes, including as a source of assurance that connections will be designed and built safely, with a view to reliability, and according to established cost responsibility principles. Provincial, professional, and utility standards apply to customer connections, including multiplex connections.

Stakeholder Feedback

Feedback from developers on our standards has focused on three core themes: service flexibility, alignment with provincial code, and design fit for smaller developments.

- On flexibility, the current range of configurations was described as too narrow – with specific requests for aerial connections, multiple 200 amp services to a single premises, smart panels, smaller transformers, and more flexible metering options.
- On code alignment, requirements were said to exceed provincial minimums without clear justification, with calls to review how load calculations, code interpretations, and service sizing decisions are applied.
- On design fit, stakeholders called for an intermediate standard allowing below-grade vaults, smaller transformers, and pole-based connections. There was strong interest in smart panels, energy management systems, and distributed energy resources ran across all three themes.

Actions to Date	Planned Actions: Completion within 12 months	Planned Actions: Completion beyond 12 months
Updated **Conditions of Service** to expand supply offerings for mid-rise developments along major streets and avenues – enabling up to 200A at 600V service and eliminating the need for an on-site transformer where applicable.	**Review and expand supply offerings** to improve flexibility for a broader range of multiplex development types and configurations, where feasible. **Continue to support and expand load management and energy**	**Advance targeted updates to technical standards** to reduce complexity for the most common multiplex development scenarios.

Extended **three-phase supply** to residential apartment buildings where infrastructure permits, reducing or eliminating the need for an on-site transformer. Updated technical standards to enable **6-meter ganged meter installations** for multiplex developments, reducing the infrastructure footprint for common configurations. Participating in **Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) working groups** to expand the use of energy management systems in residential applications, supporting more efficient use of available capacity. **Participated in a national consortium** focused on advancing power-efficient building design across Canada, resulting in reports and tools that outline a range of efficiency strategies and their role in avoiding electrical service upsizing for both existing and new developments.	**management solutions** as practical alternatives to infrastructure upgrades. Starting in 2026, conduct regular **jurisdictional scans** that identify leading and proven standards that are benefiting multiplex housing electricity grid connections, especially in other large urban centres. Through jurisdiction scans and other reviews, establish a **transparent understanding of where it is regulatory codes or Toronto Hydro policy** that is driving connections requirements, including for current and historic installations. **Strengthen stakeholder engagement on standards updates** – ensuring changes are practical, clearly communicated, and developed with meaningful industry input.	**Formalize a process for developer input** into our structured, ongoing standards improvement process. Continue to work with the **Electrical Safety Authority** to support alignment with the OESC while maintaining standards that reflect utility-specific safety and system requirements.

Action Category: Improving Cost Predictability

What are Multiplex Connection Costs?

Through rules and regulatory principles set by the Ontario Energy Board, Toronto Hydro and other utilities allocate costs to customers according to a "beneficiary pays" principle. Given the size and complexity of multiplex grid connections, these costs can be significantly higher than those for detached houses, and more like those for small commercial buildings.

Stakeholder Feedback

Cost certainty and scale was expressed as an urgent and widely shared concern, particularly the cost of 400 amp service connections, which developers said can even threaten project viability. Another area of stakeholder concern involves unpredictability as the timing of estimates can impact project financing. To address this, stakeholders have asked for earlier cost transparency.

Actions to Date	Planned Actions: Completion within 12 months	Planned Actions: Completion beyond 12 months
Launched the **Multiplex Power Play Pilot** (March 2026) to demonstrate	Expand **early-stage planning support** through non-binding	Improve **cost predictability** through standardized connection

how smart load management systems can enable full electrification without costly service upgrades, supporting up to six multiplex developments. **Increased the basic connection allowance** from $1,396 to $3,059, directly reducing upfront costs for new developments. Expanded use of **non-binding estimates**, giving developers earlier visibility into service requirements, indicative costs, and timelines.	estimates and high-level cost and feasibility guidance, helping developers understand connection scope and cost before committing to detailed design. Improve **transparency of key cost drivers** – including the criteria for when underground service is required – to support better planning and budgeting from the outset. **Review and expand supply offerings** to provide more cost-effective connection pathways for a broader range of multiplex housing types. **Scale the Multiplex Power Play Pilot**: subject to outcomes of the initial six-project pilot, expand access to load management funding to support 30-50 installs	approaches and enhanced pricing transparency across common multiplex scenarios. Continue to advance **load management and energy management solutions** as scalable alternatives to costly service upgrades.

Action Category: Enhancing the Customer Experience

What is the Multiplex Customer Experience?

Customer experience begins with the first outreach by a developer seeking information about a connection to the grid, continues through the project phase, to energization of the completed multiplex, and then spans across the many decades that occupants of the house are served by Toronto Hydro. A positive customer experience includes timely connections enabled by collaborative navigation through the connection process, understanding of applicable standards, and more predictable costs. The net effect is faster and more affordable build-out of multiplex housing, as well as the constructive beginning to a utility-customer relationship that may span decades.

Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders shared with us that the current customer experience can leave stakeholders navigating complex requirements without the benefit of tailored guidance or visibility into what to expect. The most consistent ask was for earlier, more accessible engagement – such as illustrated guides, Toronto-specific resources, and plain-language explanations of requirements – before entering the formal connection process. They also asked for integration of Toronto Hydro requirements into City planning and other coordination with the City where possible so electrical considerations can be identified earlier in their project planning processes.

To address the need for greater transparency, stakeholders suggested clearer commitments on response times, approval timelines, and project status, with the time condensed between initial submission and final connection information.

Actions to Date	Planned Actions: Completion within 12 months	Planned Actions: Completion beyond 12 months
Conducted three **developer webinars with 100+ participants** in Q4 2024, Q1 2025, and Q4 2025, in collaboration with City of Toronto representatives, covering connection requirements, timelines, and common challenges. Participated in the **Missing Middle Housing Summit** in 2024 and 2025, with a presenter role planned for 2026. **Enhanced customer tools and resources:** loading capacity maps; updated customer connection guides and developer manuals; improved service request portal. Expanded use of **non-binding estimates**, giving developers earlier visibility into requirements, costs, and timelines. Introduced a **same-day outreach approach** for new inquiries, providing immediate clarity on next steps and enabling faster progression through the connection process.	**Analyse historical connections** to understand average connection timelines for different types of multi-plex projects and establish timeline reduction targets. Launch a **multiplex housing connections guide** and dedicated webpage – a plain-language, illustrated resource covering requirements, timelines, and connection options for multiplex projects. Strengthen **early-stage planning support** by expanding awareness of development planning services within Toronto Hydro and providing non-binding cost and feasibility guidance before applicants enter the formal connection process. Develop and implement an **updated internal training program** for engineering, design, and other Toronto Hydro teams involved in connections to ensure up-to-date knowledge about multiplex connections and drive an improved customer experience. Improve **transparency of requirements and timelines** – including clearer communication at key project milestones – to reduce uncertainty and support more complete initial submissions. **Expand outreach** through developer roadshows and industry forums to share information on available tools, programs, and processes and collaborate on future improvements and solutions.	Launch a **dedicated centre of excellence** for multiplex and small developers, providing a single point of accountability, consistent end-to-end support, and structured intake pathways from first inquiry through project completion.

	Create a **registry of stakeholder inputs** with respect to their observations of technical challenges and potential opportunities in relation to multiplex connections. In collaboration with the City Manager's Office and Housing Development Office, **deepen coordination with City of Toronto** planning and permitting to integrate Toronto Hydro requirements earlier in the development process, reducing late-stage surprises for builders navigating both systems.	

Performance Outcomes

Toronto Hydro recognizes the need to connect multiplexes to the electricity grid as part of making it faster and more affordable to urgently build multi-unit housing in Toronto. As set out in this report, Toronto Hydro is committed to action: delivering specific initiatives to achieve outcomes a) within the next 12-months, and b) beyond the next 12-months. This reflects stakeholder feedback to deliver "quick wins" where possible, as well as to set to work (or continue work) on initiatives that will require sustained effort over a longer period to work through more complex connection challenges. Our action plan will be monitored through our corporate governance framework and Toronto Hydro will ensure ongoing compliance with regulatory oversight, including as it evolves through active provincial policy consultations.

The actions set out in this report have been formulated in response to performance outcome feedback received from stakeholders who are active in moving multi-unit housing forward in our communities. Our ongoing engagement and collaboration with these customers, developers and builders will be a vital source of guidance as we design and deliver actions. Further, through a new Toronto Hydro registry of stakeholder inputs for multiplex housing, these stakeholder inputs will help generate additional recommendations for standards, processes, cost predictability, and customer experience. Ongoing consultation and collaboration with stakeholders as well as City Administration is fundamental, enabling Toronto Hydro to adapt to evolving circumstances in the multiplex market, customer-side electric technologies, grid-side technologies, and regulatory standards.