

# Jane Finch Initiative

## Ideas Booklet:

# Housing



**This is one of 12 booklets that summarizes the Jane Finch Initiative Ideas Report. Booklet topics:**

- Arts & Culture
- Climate action
- Community Service Facilities
- Heritage
- Housing
- Inclusive employment opportunities
- Inclusive entrepreneurship opportunities
- Land use, built form, and urban design
- Mobility: getting around
- Parks & public spaces
- Resources, partnerships and governance
- Social development



**The Jane Finch Initiative is a resident-informed project to plan for the future of the area- so that residents, local groups and businesses are supported as the area changes over time with the opening of the Finch West Light Rail Transit.**

# Housing -

**Vision for the future: Jane and Finch is a place where current and future residents have good access to adequate, affordable and appropriate housing.**

In conversations with communities, housing affordability for both rental and ownership housing was a strong concern. People told us that they are concerned about the quality of existing housing and about maintenance issues as well as rent increases and evictions. Overall, there is a concern that the Finch West LRT, and the associated development that it will bring, will cause displacement of existing residents who feel they have few options for accessing decent, affordable housing.

The City of Toronto plays an important role in ensuring the provision of a diverse range of housing in terms of building form, tenure and affordability. People's housing needs vary across the housing spectrum which ranges from emergency shelters to supportive housing, seniors housing, social housing (including rent-geared-to-income housing), affordable housing and market rental and ownership housing.

Given that housing issues are prevalent in neighbourhoods across Toronto, the City's approach is to develop and implement housing policies on a city-wide basis. Local policies can then supplement these city-wide policies through secondary plans like the one being developed for Jane and Finch.

Development applications in Jane and Finch will need to conform to a number of existing, in-force city-wide housing policies in the Official Plan and housing-related by-laws.

**1. Use the suite of existing and forthcoming policies and programs to address displacement, improve and protect existing rental housing and create new affordable housing.**

A secondary plan for Jane and Finch, which will form part of the Official Plan, will build on and establish a foundation for implementing city-wide housing policies while also advancing area-specific policies to address the specific local context.

## Ideas

- Continue to apply the Official Plan's in-force housing-related policies to development applications within Jane and Finch to ensure the provision and protection of affordable and rental housing.
- Advance community consultation around the delineation of Protected Major Transit Station Areas along the Finch West LRT which will enable the application of inclusionary zoning policies to new development.

## **2. Provide for a diversity of housing types, forms, tenures and affordability.**

As the area changes over time, a diversity of housing types, forms, tenures and affordability should be achieved to support a complete community and healthy housing mix.

### Ideas

- Develop policy specific to the needs of Jane and Finch communities to encourage a diverse supply of housing types and forms, including affordable ownership and rental housing.

## **3. Require a range of housing, including affordable housing, on large sites as they are redeveloped.**

Large sites, particularly those near transit, offer the opportunity to create a more dense urban fabric provide a wide variety of housing types, including affordable housing and rental housing. The secondary plan area includes three mall sites located on the corners of Jane and Finch.

### Ideas

- Use all available municipal policy and programs tools to prioritize and maximize the provision of affordable housing as large sites are redeveloped.
- Explore all opportunities to combine Official Plan policies and affordable housing programs to amplify the supply and extend and deepen the affordability of units.

## **4. Support larger households and require family-sized units in new buildings.**

Given the number of large households, families with children and lone-parent families in the study area, family-sized units should be encouraged to address and improve housing suitability. Policies should also support high-quality living environments including requirements for storage, operable windows, balconies and indoor and outdoor amenity spaces suitable for a range of household sizes, including families with children.

### Ideas

- To achieve a balanced mix of units types and sizes, and to support the creation of housing suitable for larger households, build on the Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities urban design guidelines and its background research to assess the potential to advance policy requiring larger developments in Jane and Finch to:
  - Include a minimum percentage of total number of unit as two-bedroom and three-bedroom units;
  - Build minimum sizes for two-bedroom and three-bedroom units;
  - Include features supporting quality living environments such as storage space; operable windows; bedrooms with closets and balconies or terraces;
  - Include indoor and outdoor amenity spaces for the use of residents which are suitable for a range of unit types, including amenity areas suitable for families and pet owners.

## **5 Encourage multi-unit housing and additional units in Neighbourhoods.**

The study area includes some neighbourhood areas zoned Residential Semi-Detached (RS Zone), which generally only permit detached and semi-detached houses to be built. While there are a number of existing high-rise apartment buildings, about 43% of the existing housing stock in the Jane and Finch area is located in single-detached, semi-detached and row houses. There are opportunities to expand the types of housing that are permitted in these areas to offer more options of housing size, tenure and affordability.

Ideas

- Align the Jane Finch Initiative with planning work underway through the Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods (EHON) initiative that is exploring the introduction of gentle density in existing low-rise housing in residential Neighbourhoods to increase housing supply and encourage a range of housing options while creating a more equitable and sustainable city.

## **6. Identify priority improvements for rental intensification sites.**

In community consultations, many residents expressed their desire to have the City do what it can to improve existing rental housing before accommodating new development. Given the number of older apartment buildings in the study area, with many buildings ranging from 40–60 years old, there are opportunities to leverage new development to improve the existing rental housing stock through the application of OP policy 3.2.1.5 on rental intensification.

The required upgrades and improvements to existing buildings should be informed by community consultation, particularly with existing tenants, and be integrated with Community Development Plan initiatives, such as Tower Renewal.

Ideas

- Work with existing tenants' groups and other relevant stakeholders to identify needed improvements to existing buildings to ensure that community voices are heard when new amenities or improvements are secured as a condition of redevelopment or through Tower Renewal.

## **7. Prioritize affordable housing on publicly-owned land.**

Housing affordability, including creating home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income families, was raised as a key concern through community consultation. While inclusionary zoning is expected to apply to new developments on privately-owned land within the future Protected Major Transit Station Areas around Finch West LRT stops, the land use planning framework can also prioritize achieving affordable housing on publicly-owned land where development is appropriate.

## Ideas

- Prioritize affordable housing in the redevelopment of publicly-owned land.

### **8. Support community land trusts and co-ops in retaining and securing new affordable housing.**

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are member-based non-profit organizations that acquire and manage land for community benefit. Activities can range from creating and preserving affordable housing or commercial spaces, to securing community gardens or green spaces. CLTs often partner with non-profit developers or community services to achieve their goals. CLTs help to build community by increasing neighbourhood participation, investment and local decision making. In Toronto, high land values present a key challenge in land acquisition but two examples have found success and support in recent years: the Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust and the Kensington Market Community Land Trust. As part of work on the Jane Finch initiative, the City could also look for opportunities to support the creation of a Jane Finch community land trust.

## Ideas

- Consult with community members and stakeholder groups and undertake research to explore supporting community land trusts and co-ops in retaining and securing new affordable housing.

### **9. Align the Jane Finch Initiative to capital infrastructure planning for shelter and housing supports.**

People experience homelessness in all areas of Toronto. Etobicoke York represents 15% of the total number; 14% of those in shelters and 24% of those living outdoors. There are no permanent shelters located in the Jane Finch study area, however, there are programs located nearby. The City is developing a three year Capital Infrastructure Strategy (2022-2024) for both City-owned and agency-owned sites with City funded programs/services for people experiencing homelessness.

## Ideas

- Work with Shelter, Support and Housing Administration as they undertake their first Capital Infrastructure Strategy that will guide shelter infrastructure planning, to address needs and opportunities that may arise in Jane and Finch.

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**We want to hear what you think of these ideas - are we on the right track? What's missing? What could be better?**



Send us an email us at [janeфинch@toronto.ca](mailto:janeфинch@toronto.ca).



Find out more about the Jane Finch Initiative at [toronto.ca/janeфинch](https://toronto.ca/janeфинch), or scan the QR code below.



Give us a call at 416-338-0775.

