

Affordable Housing Is A Right, Not A Privilege

Ontario needs a housing market that has a place for everyone

Affordable homeownership and rent are increasingly out of reach for everyday Ontarians, particularly millennials, new families and seniors. This province needs a housing plan that puts Ontarians at the centre and builds stronger, healthier communities. My housing plan offers bold solutions to address the housing supply and affordability crisis in Ontario and focuses on the three biggest challenges that need to be solved:

1. Housing is a complex policy area and is tied to jobs, transit, climate change, the mental health of youth and seniors, and social issues. We need to think outside the box to find solutions.
2. The current housing market excludes many young Ontarians or leaves them in crushing debt. We need to tackle the factors that limit the timely creation of new homes and have driven housing prices beyond the reach of many, particularly millennials.
3. Affordable housing units are expensive to create. We need new revenue to make them financially sustainable.

We need innovative solutions and bold decision-making if we want to ensure Ontario has affordable and sustainable housing now and into the future. My plan delivers both.

1. Going Bold – Beyond Conventional Solutions:

A. Design co-living for students and seniors

- Youth sharing a building with amenities. It is a successful social policy in Denmark and the Netherlands and has been an emerging trend in San Francisco to combat the high living expenses of students and provide opportunities for meaningful interactions for all involved.

B. Link affordable housing with transit development

- We can capture land value uplift of transit development to secure more affordable housing units using an inclusionary zoning model while maintaining the business case for residential development.

C. Building Ontario's cities using environmentally sustainable material

- Financial incentives for midrise eco-friendly development, built with engineered timber originating from Northern Ontario.

D. Supporting affordable ownership

- Provide free second mortgages to target demographics that qualify, by mandating developers to put money into an affordable housing trust fund.

2. Bold Decisions – Solve the Housing Supply Equation and Protect Renters:

A. Protecting renters by amending the Residential Tenancies Act to:

- Make the possibility of renovictions (kicking out tenants under the guise of a renovation) more difficult. This would mandate a 6-month notice to tenants in addition to providing 6-months rent if the landlord wishes to renovate, requiring the tenant to leave.

B. To move forward, we will convene a ‘Housing Crisis’ panel of experts:

- The panel will conduct a broad review of provincial legislation related to housing development and investigate the viability of policies that have been proposed by housing proponents on inclusively increasing housing supply during the last few years. The panel would also review some bold policies for halting the escalation of urban Ontario’s housing crisis. Policy ideas include:
 - i. Protecting the stability of renters: Incentivize purpose-built rental developments with reduced development charges.
 - ii. No more neighbourhoods with population decline in certain areas of big cities with very restrictive zoning (e.g. Yellow Belt):
 - Eliminating single-detached and semi-detached zoning and capping municipal residential zoning designations within 500 meters of transit stations.
 - The yellow-belt prohibits badly needed housing development that would have otherwise taken place to a point where, during the worst housing crisis in Ontario’s history, there are neighbourhoods in downtown Toronto that have fewer people in them than they did 20 years ago. This is a problem.
 - iii. Build the urban future faster and better: Reducing development approval time, by introducing municipal performance standards for residential development approvals.
 - iv. Housing for a greener future: Eliminating the imposition of parking minimums for new residential developments.

3. Make Affordable Housing Financially Sustainable in Ontario by Reducing Speculation:

We need to create new revenue sources to fund affordable housing.

A. Levy a Housing Crisis Tax on short-term rentals:

- The first unit listing would be subject to a 5% tax per booking.
- A second and subsequent unit listing would be subject to a 15% tax per booking.
- Short-term rental providers would be required to track and remit revenues to the province.

B. Increase Ontario’s non-resident speculation tax (NRST):

- Increase from 15% to 25% on the purchase of a residential property.

C. Institute an annual 2% vacancy tax on residential properties over \$2 million in the Greater Golden Horseshoe:

- Exceptions would apply to primary residences and long-term rentals.
- Homeowners who live in their properties — or rent them out — would receive an exemption by filing an annual declaration form.

D. Use the revenue from the above taxation proposals to fund affordable housing initiatives

- Work with municipalities to integrate municipal rental subsidy programs into a provincewide flexible Rental Subsidy program, which would include cost-sharing between the province and municipal sector.
- Make the province a meaningful partner once again in the development of affordable housing in the places that need it most. Using the revenue gained through the above taxation measures, the province would be able to fund thousands of new affordable housing units per year.

E. End chronic homelessness

- Reinstate homelessness data collection by municipalities that have been halted by the current provincial government