

## HOUSING ONTARIO'S PEOPLE EVERYWHERE (HOPE)

### RESCON'S 15 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION ON HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & SUPPLY

#### Municipal

1. Immediately implement major changes in municipal planning and development divisions that will specifically expedite residential housing applications and streamline approvals with mandated specific timelines and ensure the full use of the strong mayor powers provided to the mayors of Toronto and Ottawa, commencing this fall.
2. Taxes, fees and levies are the highest in North America. Reverse or reduce significant increases in these charges at the municipal level and advocate for more equitable transfers to municipalities from the federal government which collects, but does not adequately return, the largest share of taxes accrued from the construction sector. Undertake a full and thorough municipal review of the impact of any future local increases in taxes, fees and levies prior to implementing such changes.
3. Expedited implementation of digitization and upgrade of systems to reflect modern business practices, including the creation and regular updating of publicly facing dashboards for all residential planning applications with real-time reporting.
4. Prohibit the inappropriate use of the heritage listing and designation process so that it cannot be activated to delay or prevent residential development and densification where there is no reasonable heritage value associated with a subject building or site.
5. End exclusionary zoning regulations in vast areas of municipalities, particularly within the City of Toronto, to permit "as-of-right" light density and reasonable densification as well as reviewing blanket prohibitions on employment land conversions for residential development.

#### Provincial

1. Review and consider potential changes to the Planning Act that would mandate major municipalities to establish an independent Planning and Development Ombudsman operating under the accountability officer model with the statutory power to intercede and issue directives to ensure that residential development applications are advanced efficiently and without delay.
2. Consider expediting the appointment of significant additional members to the Ontario Land Tribunal and compress adjudication timelines to ensure that case conferences occur within three months of an appeal submission and final decisions are issued within 18 months from the receipt of an appeal. Also, review the scope of appeals permitted to the Ontario Land Tribunal, and in particular with respect to employment land conversions where municipal policies or decisions either delay or prohibit consideration of such conversions where reasonable.

3. Ensure that adjudicative technical panels and agencies make decisions in a timely manner, issue written determinations expeditiously and that these are implemented province-wide without further need for additional submissions from other municipalities, individuals, companies or stakeholders.
4. Within the context of the Provincial Growth Plan and established provincial priorities, consider the implementation of mandated policies that require municipalities to permit maximum reasonable residential development densities on all sites being used to build all forms of housing, including the construction of mass timber residential buildings up to 18 storeys.
5. Working with municipalities, and via implementation of legislation if required, ensure that all municipalities fully end exclusionary zoning policies and that permissions are established “as of right” (absent parking requirements that are unnecessary in areas served by mass transit) for the construction of triplexes, fourplexes and all other forms of reasonable light densification, including special consideration for increased densities along avenues and corridors.

## **Federal**

1. Either exempt or rebate the collection of the Harmonized Sales Tax on the construction of residential buildings, including condominiums and purpose-built rental projects, and significantly increase transfer payments to municipalities from federal taxes collected from the construction sector in order to facilitate reduced infrastructure cost pressures on cities and towns which have limited funding tools.
2. Establish tax incentive programs that eliminate the collection of taxes on profits emanating from residential construction projects where such funds are re-invested into advancing similar projects – programs that operated with great success in the 1960s and 1970s, creating tens of thousands of units of housing (Multiple Unit Residential Benefit initiative and Limited Dividends – affordable housing)
3. Establish for the Province of Ontario, a similar immigration system as that which exists in the province of Quebec (Arrima). Such a system would allow Ontario to identify eligible skilled workers and then ensure that special policies are created by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada so that permanent residency applications for these skilled workers are processed separately from all other immigration designations and that their review and approval is conducted expeditiously.
4. Expand recruitment efforts at Canadian embassies and consulates around the world to encourage targeted skilled workers (informal skills) to consider relocating to Canada.
5. Institute policies that serve to activate federally owned land (also to be initiated by the province and municipalities) to support the creation of residential housing for both the profit and non-profit sectors, including free-of-charge provision of land for affordable housing projects.