



September 15, 2023

Dear Head of Council,

**Subject: Responding to the Housing Affordability Task Force's
Recommendations**

As you know, in February 2022, the Housing Affordability Task Force delivered [its final report](#) with recommendations to help Ontario tackle the housing supply crisis and build at least 1.5 million homes by 2031. Including sub-items and appendices, the Task Force made 74 unique recommendations. While Ontario has made progress in acting on these recommendations — with 23 implemented to date helping to achieve the highest level of housing starts in over three decades — as the province grows at incredible speed, all levels of government need to do more.

To bring the dream of home ownership into reach for more people, I have asked my ministry to renew its efforts to review and, where possible, implement the Task Force's remaining recommendations with minimal delay. As part of that review, I am asking for your position, as head of council, on all 74 recommendations, as well as for you to prioritize your top five recommendations for future consideration. For these top five priorities, this could include your advice to revisit the way a recommendation has been implemented up to this point (for example, the Task Force's recommendation to allow as-of-right zoning for four units on a single residential lot, compared to the province's current baseline of allowing three units as-of-right with the option for municipalities to adopt a higher density threshold if they choose), as well as how some of the recommendations could or should be implemented with amendments.

Accompanying this letter, you will find a chart containing the full list of 74 Task Force recommendations. Please fill in this chart, indicating whether you as the leader of your municipality support each recommendation. At the top of the chart, I ask that you rank the top five Task Force recommendations that you feel would be, or have been, the most useful in increasing housing supply in your community and across Ontario.

As we look to do more to solve the housing supply and affordability crisis together, it's important for the province to have a full understanding of our municipal partners' positions on these recommendations as quickly as possible. I ask that you **please return the completed chart to housingsupply@ontario.ca no later than October 16, 2023.**

At the same time, we cannot afford to deploy resources or enable tools where they won't be used or optimized. Now more than ever, we need clarity about your views. As such, failing to return this chart completed in full by October 16, 2023 **will disqualify your municipality from being eligible for the province's new \$1.2 billion Building Faster Fund** that was announced at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August. To make this process easy and efficient for you, we have standardized the feedback form with very simple 'support' or 'oppose' options.

I look forward to continuing our work together to ensure that more people can afford a place to call home.

Sincerely,



The Hon. Paul Calandra
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

c: Hon. Rob Flack, Associate Minister of Housing
Kirstin Jensen, Interim Chief of Staff, Minister's Office
Martha Greenberg, Deputy Minister
Joshua Paul, Assistant Deputy Minister, Market Housing Division
Sean Fraser, Assistant Deputy Minister, Planning and Growth Division
Caspar Hall, Assistant Deputy Minister, Local Government Division

Attachment:

List of 74 Housing Affordability Task Force (HATF) Recommendations for Response

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Please identify the top 5 HATF recommendations that you support, and rationale / comments	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

HATF Recommendation <i>(Note: Bracketed numbers are per the numbering in the original Task Force report; numbering in the first column is for Ministry use)</i> <i>Recommendations with an asterisk * have been implemented</i>		Support or Oppose (Mandatory Field – Please only mark with an ‘X’ as appropriate)	
1.	1) Set a goal of building 1.5 million new homes in ten years.*	Support	Oppose
2.	2) Amending the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, and Growth Plans to set “growth in the full spectrum of housing supply” and “intensification within existing built-up areas” of municipalities as the most important residential housing priorities in the mandate and purpose.	Support	Oppose
3.	3) a) Limit exclusionary zoning in municipalities through binding provincial action: allow “as of right” residential housing up to four units and up to four storeys on a single residential lot.*	Support	Oppose
4.	3 b) Modernize the Building Code and other policies to remove any barriers to affordable construction and to ensure meaningful implementation (e.g., allow single-staircase construction for up to four storeys, allow single egress, etc.)	Support	Oppose
5.	4) Permit “as of right” conversion of underutilized or redundant commercial properties to residential or mixed residential and commercial use.	Support	Oppose
6.	5) Permit “as of right” secondary suites, garden suites, and laneway houses province-wide.*	Support	Oppose

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7.	6) Permit “as of right” multi-tenant housing (renting rooms within a dwelling) province-wide.		Support	Oppose
8.	7) Encourage and incentivize municipalities to increase density in areas with excess school capacity to benefit families with children.		Support	Oppose
9.	8) Allow “as of right” zoning up to unlimited height and unlimited density in the immediate proximity of individual major transit stations within two years if municipal zoning remains insufficient to meet provincial density targets.		Support	Oppose
10.	9) Allow “as of right” zoning of six to 11 storeys with no minimum parking requirements on any streets that have direct access to public transit (including streets on bus and streetcar routes).		Support	Oppose
11.	10) Designate or rezone as mixed commercial and residential use all land along transit corridors and re-designate all Residential Apartment to mixed commercial and residential zoning in Toronto.		Support	Oppose
12.	11) Support responsible housing growth on undeveloped land, including outside existing municipal boundaries, by building necessary infrastructure to support higher density housing and complete communities and applying the recommendations of this report to all undeveloped land.		Support	Oppose
13.	12) a) Create a more permissive land use, planning, and approvals system: Repeal or override municipal policies, zoning, or plans that prioritize the preservation of physical character of neighbourhood.*		Support	Oppose
14.	12 b) Exempt from site plan approval and public consultation all projects of 10 units or less that conform to the Official Plan and require only minor variances.*		Support	Oppose
15.	12 c) Establish provinciewide zoning standards, or prohibitions, for minimum lot sizes, maximum building setbacks, minimum heights, angular planes, shadow rules, front doors, building depth, landscaping, floor space index, and heritage view cones, and planes; restore pre-2006 site plan exclusions (colour, texture, and type of materials, window details, etc.) to the Planning Act and reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements.		Support	Oppose
16.	12 d) Remove any floorplate (sic) restrictions to allow larger, more efficient high-density towers.		Support	Oppose

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17.	13) Limit municipalities from requesting or hosting additional public meetings beyond those that are required under the Planning Act.		Support		Oppose
18.	14) Require that public consultations provide digital participation options.		Support		Oppose
19.	15) Require mandatory delegation of site plan approvals and minor variances to staff or pre-approved qualified third-party technical consultants through a simplified review and approval process, without the ability to withdraw Council's delegation.*		Support		Oppose
20.	16) a) Prevent abuse of the heritage preservation and designation process by: prohibiting the use of bulk listing on municipal heritage registers.*		Support		Oppose
21.	16 b) Prohibiting reactive heritage designations after a Planning Act development application has been filed.*		Support		Oppose
22.	17) Requiring municipalities to compensate property owners for loss of property value as a result of heritage designations, based on the principle of best economic use of land.		Support		Oppose
23.	18) Restore the right of developers to appeal Official Plans and Municipal Comprehensive Reviews.*		Support		Oppose
24.	19) Legislate timelines at each stage of the provincial and municipal review process, including site plan, minor variance, and provincial reviews, and deem an application approved if the legislated response time is exceeded.*		Support		Oppose
25.	20) Fund the creation of “approvals facilitators” with the authority to quickly resolve conflicts among municipal and/or provincial authorities and ensure timelines are met.*		Support		Oppose
26.	21) Require a pre-consultation with all relevant parties at which the municipality sets out a binding list that defines what constitutes a complete application; confirms the number of consultations established in the previous recommendations; and clarifies that if a member of a regulated profession such as a professional engineer has stamped an application, the municipality has no liability and no additional stamp is needed.		Support		Oppose
27.	22) Simplify planning legislation and policy documents.		Support		Oppose

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28.	23) Create a common, province-wide definition of plan of subdivision and standard set of conditions which clarify which may be included; require the use of standard province-wide legal agreements and, where feasible, plans of subdivision.		Support		Oppose
29.	24) Allow wood construction of up to 12 storeys.*		Support		Oppose
30.	25) Require municipalities to provide the option of pay on demand surety bonds and letters of credit.		Support		Oppose
31.	26) Require appellants to promptly seek permission (“leave to appeal”) of the OLT and demonstrate that an appeal has merit, relying on evidence and expert reports, before it is accepted.		Support		Oppose
32.	27) a) Prevent abuse of process: remove right of appeal for projects with at least 30% affordable housing in which units are guaranteed affordable for 40 years.		Support		Oppose
33.	27 b) Require a \$10,000 filing fee for third party appeals.*		Support		Oppose
34.	27 c) Provide discretion to adjudicators to award full costs to the successful party in any appeal brought by a third party or by a municipality where its council has overridden a recommended staff approval.		Support		Oppose
35.	28) Encourage greater use of oral decisions issued the day of the hearing, with written reasons to follow, and allow those decisions to become binding the day that they are issued.*		Support		Oppose
36.	29) Where it is found that a municipality has refused an application simply to avoid a deemed approval for lack of decision, allow the Tribunal to award punitive damages.		Support		Oppose
37.	30) Provide funding to increase staffing (adjudicators and case managers), provide market-competitive salaries, outsource more matters to mediators, and set shorter time targets.		Support		Oppose
38.	31) In clearing the existing backlog, encourage the Tribunal to prioritize projects close to the finish line that will support housing growth and intensification, as well as regional water or utility infrastructure decisions that will unlock significant housing capacity.		Support		Oppose

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39.	32) Waive development charges and parkland cash-in-lieu and charge only modest connection fees for all infill residential projects up to 10 units or for any development where no new material infrastructure will be required.		Support		Oppose
40.	33) Waive development charges on all forms of affordable housing guaranteed to be affordable for 40 years.		Support		Oppose
41.	34) Prohibit interest rates on development charges higher than a municipality's borrowing rate.*		Support		Oppose
42.	35 a) Regarding cash in lieu of parkland, s.37, Community Benefit Charges, and development charges: Provincial review of reserve levels, collections and drawdowns annually to ensure funds are being used in a timely fashion and for the intended purpose, and, where review points to a significant concern, do not allow further collection until the situation has been corrected.		Support		Oppose
43.	35 b) Except where allocated towards municipality-wide infrastructure projects, require municipalities to spend funds in the neighbourhoods where they were collected. However, where there's a significant community need in a priority area of the City, allow for specific ward to ward allocation of unspent and unallocated reserves.		Support		Oppose
44.	36) Recommend that the federal government and provincial governments update HST rebate to reflect current home prices and begin indexing, and that the federal government match the provincial 75% rebate and remove any clawback.		Support		Oppose
45.	37) Align property taxes for purpose-built rental with those of condos and low-rise homes.		Support		Oppose
46.	38) Amend the Planning Act and Perpetuities Act to extend the maximum period for land leases and restrictive covenants on land to 40 or more years.*		Support		Oppose
47.	39) Eliminate or reduce tax disincentives to housing growth.		Support		Oppose
48.	40) Call on the Federal Government to implement an Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy.*		Support		Oppose

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49.	41) Funding for pilot projects that create innovative pathways to homeownership, for Black, Indigenous, and marginalized people and first-generation homeowners.		Support		Oppose
50.	42) Provide provincial and federal loan guarantees for purpose-built rental, affordable rental and affordable ownership projects.		Support		Oppose
51.	43) Enable municipalities, subject to adverse external economic events, to withdraw infrastructure allocations from any permitted projects where construction has not been initiated within three years of build permits being issued.		Support		Oppose
52.	44) Work with municipalities to develop and implement a municipal services corporation utility model for water and wastewater under which the municipal corporation would borrow and amortize costs among customers instead of using development charges.		Support		Oppose
53.	45) Improve funding for colleges, trade schools, and apprenticeships, encourage and incentivize municipalities, unions and employers to provide more on-the-job training.*		Support		Oppose
54.	46) Undertake multi-stakeholder education program to promote skilled trades.*		Support		Oppose
55.	47) Recommend that the federal and provincial government prioritize skilled trades and adjust the immigration points system to strongly favour needed trades and expedite immigration status for these workers and encourage the federal government to increase from 9,000 to 20,000 the number of immigrants admitted through Ontario's program.*		Support		Oppose
56.	48) The Ontario government should establish a large "Ontario Housing Delivery Fund" and encourage the federal government to match funding. This fund should reward: a) Annual housing growth that meets or exceeds provincial targets b) Reductions in total approval times for new housing c) The speedy removal of exclusionary zoning practices		Support		Oppose
57.	49) Reductions in funding to municipalities that fail to meet provincial housing growth and approval timeline targets		Support		Oppose
58.	50) Fund the adoption of consistent municipal e-permitting systems and encourage the federal government to match funding. Fund the development of a common data architecture standard, supported by an external expert committee, across municipalities and provincial agencies/ministries		Support		Oppose

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	and require municipalities to provide their zoning bylaws with open data standards. Set an implementation goal of 2025 and make funding conditional on established targets.				
59.	51) Require municipalities and the provincial government to use the Ministry of Finance population projections as the basis for housing need analysis and related land use requirements.		Support		Oppose
60.	52) Resume reporting on housing data and require consistent municipal reporting, enforcing compliance as a requirement for accessing programs under the Ontario Housing Delivery Fund.*		Support		Oppose
61.	53) Report each year at the municipal and provincial level on any gap between demand and supply by housing type and location, and make underlying data freely available to the public.		Support		Oppose
62.	54) Empower the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to lead an all of government committee that meets weekly to ensure our remaining recommendations and any other productive ideas are implemented.		Support		Oppose
63.	55) Commit to evaluate these recommendations for the next three years with public reporting on progress.*		Support		Oppose
64.	B-1) Call upon the federal government to provide equitable affordable housing funding to Ontario.*		Support		Oppose
65.	B-2) Develop and legislate a clear, province-wide definition of “affordable housing” to create certainty and predictability.		Support		Oppose
66.	B-3) Create an Affordable Housing Trust from a portion of Land Transfer Tax Revenue (i.e., the windfall resulting from property price appreciation) to be used in partnership with developers, non-profits, and municipalities in the creation of more affordable housing units. This Trust should create incentives for projects serving and brought forward by Black- and Indigenous-led developers and marginalized groups.		Support		Oppose
67.	B-4) Amend legislation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow cash-in-lieu payments for Inclusionary Zoning units at the discretion of the municipality. • Require that municipalities utilize density bonusing or other incentives in all Inclusionary Zoning and Affordable Housing policies that apply to market housing. 		Support		Oppose

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit municipalities that have not passed Inclusionary Zoning policies to offer incentives and bonuses for affordable housing units. 				
68.	B-5) Encourage government to closely monitor the effectiveness of Inclusionary Zoning policy in creating new affordable housing and to explore alternative funding methods that are predictable, consistent and transparent as a more viable alternative option to Inclusionary Zoning policies in the provision of affordable housing.		Support		Oppose
69.	B-6) Rebate MPAC market rate property tax assessment on below-market affordable homes.		Support		Oppose
70.	C-1) Review surplus lands and accelerate the sale and development through RFP of surplus government land and surrounding land by provincially pre-zoning for density, affordable housing, and mixed or residential use.		Support		Oppose
71.	C-2) All future government land sales, whether commercial or residential, should have an affordable housing component of at least 20%.		Support		Oppose
72.	C-3) Purposefully upzone underdeveloped or underutilized Crown property (e.g., LCBO).		Support		Oppose
73.	C-4) Sell Crown land and reoccupy as a tenant in a higher density building or relocate services outside of major population centres where land is considerably less expensive.		Support		Oppose
74.	C-5) The policy priority of adding to the housing supply, including affordable units, should be reflected in the way surplus land is offered for sale, allowing bidders to structure their proposals accordingly.		Support		Oppose