

January 29, 2019

Mayor John Tory and Council members
City of Toronto
c/o Marilyn Toft
12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Re: Agenda item EX1.1 – Implementing the “Housing Now” initiative

I am writing on behalf of the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO), a community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario to provide legal services to low-income tenants across Ontario on the systemic issues that affect their ability to provide and maintain decent homes for themselves and their families.

We support your “Housing Now” initiative to use surplus municipal land to build much needed affordable housing, but recommend that this publicly-owned resource – and other municipal contributions such as development fee waivers - should prioritize addressing the greatest need in our city – namely, for rental housing for low-income tenants who cannot afford private market rents. The active waiting list for rent-geared-to-income housing in Toronto, as of the 3rd quarter in 2018, was 96,828 households.

We ask that you consider amending this initiative as follows:

1. Increase the target for deeply affordable rental units to be at least 33% of all rental units built.
2. Tie the deeply affordable rents to the incomes of the tenants rather than average market rents.
3. Prioritize ownership of the new affordable rental housing by non-profits and co-op housing providers.

Thank you for your serious consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Per: Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario



Mary Todorow
Research and Policy Analyst