

February 28, 2022

Chair and Members  
Corporate Services Committee

**RE: Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Board Update**

Following feedback from members at the January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Board, AMO has released their updated housing advocacy document, *A Blueprint for Action: An Integrated Approach to Address the Ontario Housing Crisis*.

As a member of AMO's Executive and Chair of the Large Urban Caucus, I am pleased to provide a summary of AMO's updated housing positions, which will inform municipal association advocacy going forward.

**SUMMARY**

Released on February 17, AMO's *Blueprint for Action* is intended to support ongoing intergovernmental advocacy and align municipal-sector messaging related to the housing sector.

Importantly, the Blueprint includes principles and recommendations that reflect London's housing-related needs. Given the approaching Provincial election, the Blueprint will serve as an important resource to political parties and candidates on municipal housing priorities, lending province-wide support to ongoing local efforts.

The Blueprint incorporates twelve high-level principles that served as a guide to the development of the recommendations for action. A summary version of each principle is below:

1. All governments and developers must work together to ensure Ontarians have access to affordable, quality housing.
2. The path toward housing affordability must be based on a human rights approach, address inequities faced by Black, Indigenous and other racialized people in accessing housing.
3. Housing must be treated primarily as an essential social good.
4. Must plan and account for growth and actively provide solutions for different housing markets, with different needs, across Ontario.
5. Foster 'complete communities' with a diverse range and mix of housing options.

6. Provincial and federal governments must enable and support municipal governments in a way that provides flexibility – rather than ‘one size fits all’ solutions.
7. All orders of government and the private sector should work in partnership with Indigenous communities to advance Indigenous-led housing solutions.
8. All governments need to work together to foster community support and address barriers to increase housing supply.
9. Municipalities and District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSABs) best positioned to plan and manage housing and homelessness prevention services in their communities
10. It is unsustainable and not good policy to fund affordable housing and homelessness prevention programs primarily through property tax revenue.
11. All governments must work together to end homelessness with appropriate housing solutions that are affordable and supportive.
12. The Province must help dispel myths about development charges (DCs), property taxes, and user fees by promoting how they create livable homes and communities.

## **Proposed Actions**

The Blueprint includes a total of 89 recommendations, divided between actions at the Municipal, Provincial, Federal, and Developer levels. A summary of each category of actions under each of the target levels follows:

### **Provincial Actions:**

#### **Collaboration & Coordination – 5 recommendations**

Supply for student residents, help change public attitudes towards new developments, and improve landlord & tenant relations

#### **Innovation – 12 recommendations**

Research and share best management practices, enable local flexibility to find and implement local solutions

#### **Improving Outcomes for People – 11 recommendations**

Apply an equity lens, build and retrofit housing to support climate change adaptation and mitigation, improve social assistance, preserve existing community and supportive housing stock

#### **Streamlining Processes – 11 recommendations**

One-window approach, improve Ontario Land Tribunal, streamline approval timelines for provincial agencies, facilitate inclusionary zoning, clarify changing policy landscape

### **Funding & Incentives – 12 recommendations**

Multi-year funding, discuss incentives like tax credits, ensure growth pays for growth, fund updates to zoning by-laws, implement vacant homes tax

### **Workforce Development & Supply – 4 recommendations**

Explore ways to address shortage of skilled labour, increase supply of building and planning department staff, and build 'local' supply chains

## **Federal Actions:**

### **Collaboration & Coordination – 2 recommendations**

Support a national growth strategy and accelerate development of a national urban, rural, and northern Indigenous Housing Strategy

### **Improving Outcomes for People – 1 recommendation**

Protect lower-rent housing from "renovictions"

### **Funding & Incentives – 9 recommendations**

Review and the Expand Rapid Housing Initiative, Canada Housing Benefit, Housing Accelerator Fund, Rental Construction Financing Initiative, National Housing Co-investment Fund, Federal Lands Initiative

### **Workforce Development & Supply – 2 recommendations**

Change immigration selection criteria and work with industry to address supply chain issues

## **Municipal Actions:**

### **Collaboration & Coordination – 1 recommendation**

Encourage innovative local housing solutions while still conforming to the Building Code

### **Innovation – 4 recommendations**

Support the use of new technology (e-permitting, lean sigma methodologies), explore Community Planning Permit System, revisit planning best practices

### **Streamlining Processes – 5 recommendations**

Modernize zoning by-laws, consider innovative planning tools, champion local, no one size fits all solutions

### **Funding & Incentives – 1 recommendation**

Consider local vacant homes tax if feasible/desirable

### **Workforce Development & Supply – 1 recommendation**

Develop and implement municipal succession management strategies

### **Developer Actions:**

#### **Collaboration & Coordination – 1 recommendation**

Work with municipalities on partnerships with private and non-profit developers and other groups.

#### **Collaboration & Coordination – 2 recommendations**

Consider potential of expandable/reducible units, design buildings that are accessible

#### **Streamlining Processes – 5 recommendations**

Submit quality applications, prepare comprehensive site plans, fulfill contractual Clearing Conditions, conduct timely building inspections, identify factors that contribute to delays post-approvals being granted

### **CONCLUSION:**

AMO's work to coordinate municipal advocacy has proven valuable for advancing City of London priorities, and their updated housing policy aligns well with much of the work we have been undertaking as a Council.

I appreciate your continued support for my work to represent London at the AMO Board, Executive Committee, Large Urban Caucus, and at meetings of the Provincial Memorandum of Understanding Table. I will continue to keep you informed on AMO's advocacy work on behalf of Ontario municipalities.

Respectfully submitted by:

---

Anna Hopkins  
Councillor, Ward 9