

John Tory

Candidate for Mayor of Toronto
City of Toronto

The following answers were provided by the candidate in response to [a letter sent by the Toronto Society of Architects on September 20, 2022](#) outlining three questions related to issues of the built environment. Answers have been copied and pasted into this page for clarity and ease of access, but all answers are verbatim and no changes or edits have been made.

Q1: Housing is a fundamental human right, and yet an increasing number of residents across the Greater Toronto Area are struggling to pay rent or find an affordable place to live. What policies and actions do you believe need to be implemented to address this crisis?

A: The Mayor has put forward a five-point housing plan that outlines the steps he will take to get more homes built, faster, with an emphasis on affordable and supportive housing. The five key pillars of his plan are:

1. Expanding housing options first by permitting “Missing Middle” housing in neighbourhoods, and second, by allowing even greater mid-range density on major roads and in areas served by transit.
2. Cutting red tape and speeding up approval times by creating a Development and Growth Division to streamline the process to get more housing built faster.
3. Making sure projects move forward and that land that could be used for housing does not sit idle by asking the province to allow the City to enact a “use it or lose it” policy for developers sitting on approved, but undeveloped, land.
4. Enabling more co-op, supportive and affordable housing by allocating a portion of City owned land to be developed by non-profits.
5. Incentivizing the construction of purpose-built rental housing by reducing fees and charges, as well as prioritizing those applications.

Q2: The design, construction and operation of our built environment accounts for nearly 40% of energy related carbon emissions, contributing to the ongoing climate crisis affecting us today. What do you believe needs to be prioritised to reduce carbon emissions within the built environment?

A: In November 2021, Mayor Tory announced an ambitious strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Toronto to net-zero by 2040 - 10 years earlier than initially proposed - making Toronto one of only three big cities in North America with this target.

As part of these efforts, the Net Zero Existing Buildings Strategy has been created to significantly reduce the use of

fossil fuels in all existing residential, commercial and institutional buildings within the next 30 years. The Mayor also introduced the Deep Retrofit Challenge, a competition-style program funded by the Federal government to support deep retrofit projects that significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in up to 16 buildings in Toronto.

Just this year the Mayor introduced groundbreaking innovation at Western Hospital to implement an environmentally friendly way to heat and cool its buildings and significantly reduce its carbon emissions. The project is a prime example of public-private partnership to help meet Toronto's climate change commitments. In the next 30 years, this project will cumulatively reduce 250,000 tonnes of GHGs.

Additionally, the Mayor led the City in adopting the Net Zero Carbon Plan to reduce emissions from more than 2,500 City-owned buildings by at least 80 per cent by 2040. The Mayor also launched the BetterHomesTO and the Home Energy Loan Programs, providing resources and support for homeowners, including low-interest loans for home energy retrofits. And in April 2022, the Mayor launched the Deep Retrofit Challenge to accelerate energy efficiency in existing buildings to help meet the goal of net zero emissions.

Q3: In towns and cities, so much of life happens in the shared public spaces—in our parks, libraries and streets. How can we ensure these civic spaces achieve design excellence in their initial conception and construction, and that they are properly maintained so they may continue to serve future generations?

A: The Mayor is committed to making Toronto cleaner and greener by continuing to invest in our parks, and building even more of them.

He has introduced the city's first Ravine Strategy to protect Toronto's ravine network, one of the largest in the world and providing more than 300 kilometres and 11,000 hectares of unparalleled green space. He has also championed the Meadoway in Scarborough that will provide residents and visitors alike with trails, meadowlands and urban agriculture sites. And he has secured \$1.185 billion from all three levels of government for the historic Port Lands Flood Protection Project. This project will create 64 acres of parks, 75 acres of wildlife habitat, and a new 1.5-kilometer meandering river course and was dubbed by Bloomberg as "one of the most ambitious urban resilience projects in the world".

If re-elected, he wants to turn our parks and open spaces into public galleries with art installations, work with Hydro One to develop the Etobicoke Greenway, prioritize building the Bathurst Quay park, take on the challenge of the University Avenue Park, and keep championing the Scarborough Meadoway.

In addition, the Mayor appreciates that great - and beautiful - public buildings require significant investments in the City's capital budget. By introducing the City Building Levy, he secured a historic \$6.6 billion in recoverable debt to support necessary city-building projects for housing and transit priorities. Further, thanks to the Mayor's strong partnerships and collaboration with other governments, he also secured over \$3.2 billion in emergency relief from both the Federal and Provincial governments to offset the pandemic's impacts on the City's finances - preserving critical capital projects in the face of the most difficult financial challenge in the City's history.

Finally, under Mayor Tory's leadership the City of Toronto is leading in innovative and climate-forward design by incorporating mass timber into an affordable housing pilot project at 1117 Dundas Street West. This first-of-its-kind

development would be one of the largest wood building in Toronto, use mass timber and other low-carbon materials for construction, and would create 100 rental units to further add to the City's housing stock and drive housing affordability. Once the pilot project is up and running the results could lead to a new development model which would add a new way for us to address the City's affordable housing challenges.