

1) If elected, what would you do to address the housing crisis in our community?

Homes You Can Afford is the NDP's comprehensive plan tackling the housing crisis. It is grounded in the fundamental principle that housing is a human right. Everyone deserves a home that is affordable, meets their needs, and is located where they want to live — close to jobs, transit, parks, schools, health services, friends and family. To address the housing crisis, Ontario needs to build at least 1.5 million new market and non-market homes over the next decade, located in the communities where people want to live. The NDP agrees with OREA that we must end exclusionary zoning, and update zoning rules to enable the construction of affordable “missing middle” housing — like duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes — wherever residential development is allowed. We will work with municipalities to update their planning processes and provide funding for the crucial infrastructure and services that will be necessary to support this growth — including new provincial funding to improve municipal transit service and boost ridership. We will also reform the Ontario Land Tribunal to make sure that the planning appeal process is fair, efficient and serves the public interest.

The NDP agrees with OREA's call to “get dirty money out of real estate.” An Ontario NDP government will crack down on money laundering and other financial games that are driving up home prices beyond the reach of regular Ontarians. This includes a new, provincial beneficial ownership registry that will be freely accessible by the public.

The Ontario NDP recognizes that there may still be housing gaps that the private market cannot fill. This is why the NDP has proposed a new housing agency, to be called Housing Ontario, to finance and build 250,000 new affordable and non-market homes over ten years. Our plan will also repair 260,000 existing affordable homes, provide income supports to 311,000 tenant households, and create 60,000 new supportive homes. For homeowners seeking to reduce their energy bills as well as their carbon footprint, the NDP has proposed a massive Home Retrofit Program that will provide grants averaging \$7,000 to \$11,000, plus an easy zero-interest on-bill financing, to help up to 175,000 families a year electrify their homes and make them more energy efficient.

2) What is your position on addressing the Landlord and Tenant issues and what role does this play in affordable housing?

We're going to make renting more affordable and give renters more security. As part of our commitments above, we'll provide income supports to 311,000 tenant households. Through Housing Ontario, we'll purchase and rehabilitate existing privately-owned rental buildings, converting them to non-market, permanently protecting these tenants from speculation and housing financialization. We're going to bring back rent control, and end vacancy decontrol — which means a landlord can't hike prices in between tenants. We're also going to regulate short-term rentals so they don't drive up market prices and end “renovictions,” which means renters won't face unfair rent hikes or eviction as a result of renovations.

3) How do you support making it easier for First Time Home Buyers to get into the market?

We need to increase protections and supports for first-time home buyers. Our housing platform includes new consumer protections for new home buyers, as well as a down payment assistance program called Home in Ontario, which will provide first-time home buyers with 10% down so they don't have to depend on having wealthy parents in order to buy a home.