



# RESCON FEEDBACK TO BILL 109, MORE HOMES FOR EVERYONE ACT

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly

April 11, 2022

*Submitted by Amina Dibe, Manager Government Relations, RESCON  
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## **Introductions**

Good afternoon, Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. My name is Amina Dibe, and I am the Manager of Government and Stakeholder Relations at RESCON.

Good afternoon, my name is Richard Lyall, and I am the President of RESCON.

## **About RESCON**

Thank you for providing us time to share our feedback to Bill 109, More Homes for Everyone Act. RESCON represents over 200 builders of all forms of high-rise, mid-rise and low-rise, housing in the province. We work in cooperation with government and related stakeholders to offer realistic solutions to a variety of challenges affecting residential construction, many of which have wider societal impacts. We are committed to providing leadership and fostering innovation in the industry through the following six core focuses: Health and Safety; Training and Apprenticeship; Government Relations; Labour Relations; Building Science and Innovation; Regulatory Reform and Technical Standards.

Specific to housing, RESCON sits on a variety of committees and organizations including the Construction Design Alliance of Ontario, and the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario.

RESCON commends the government for their commitment to addressing the housing supply and affordability crisis.

## **Housing Supply and Affordability Crisis**

Ontario and Canada are not at the forefront of innovation, which is clear from international rankings.

Canada ranks 34th out of 35 OECD countries in the length of time it takes to get a general construction project approved and ranks 64th out of 190 by the World Bank on construction permitting. We also have the highest amount of immigration amongst G7 countries per capita, but the lowest housing supply and the highest housing costs. According to a new report from Scotiabank, Ontario needs 650,000 more units just to hit the Canadian average per capita – and 1.2 million units to hit the G7 average. RBC notes housing supply and affordability issues are affecting our ability to attract and retain skilled talent in Ontario and Canada. We have been long sponsoring research and promoting solutions on these issues for some time, most recently at our inaugural Housing Supply Summit which brought together federal, provincial and municipal leaders, as well as housing experts from around the world to discuss the myriad of solutions that can be implemented in Ontario.

We are pleased from outcomes of the Housing Supply Summit and that the Premier and Minister Clark are committed to increasing housing supply and removing red tape.

RESCON was glad to have been consulted on by the Housing Affordability Task Force and were pleased with the 55 recommendations, many of which, if implemented, would address exclusionary zoning, and would speed up the approvals process by removing red tape at the municipal level through modernization of zoning and size plan approvals.

### **Support for Bill 109**

The state of our housing supply crisis has gotten so bad that short term solutions will not be suitable. That is why we are glad to see that Bill 109 includes a commitment by the government to producing a housing supply action plan every year over four years. This commitment will ensure that we are moving towards housing policy and programs that are up-to-date and reflect the current housing supply and affordability landscape.

The number of development applications continue to increase to meet housing demands, yet limited resources at the municipal approvals level act as a bottleneck in the ability of the private sector to deliver much needed housing. The reliance on paper-based submissions, staffing constraints due to COVID-19 and the sheer number of approval agencies involved in getting a development application approved has slowed approval timelines and thus slowed the overall construction process. This drives up costs, delays for example cost an average \$2,000 per unit on a typical condo project.

That is why the measures proposed in Bill 109 to streamline municipal approval processes are welcomed by RESCON. Specifically, we are hopeful that the requirement for municipalities to refund application fees if a decision isn't made within the legislative timelines will provide needed discipline.

We're also glad to see that the province is empowering municipalities to innovate the approvals process through the Community Infrastructure and Housing Accelerator tool. RESCON has long been a supporter of the One Ontario initiative by AECO Innovation Lab, which proposes a centralized data exchange and e-permitting platform for use by municipalities, Provincial Ministries, Conservation Authorities, and all applicable approval and law agencies in Ontario for the development and permitting processes. With the support of over 30 entities, including the City of Toronto, City of Windsor, Town of Oakville and AMO, One Ontario presents a solution to speeding up the development review process.

Changes proposed in Bill 109 would amend the Building Code to allow for more modular multi-unit residential units, low-rise multi-unit housing and 12 storey wood buildings, which are also positive proposals to expand housing options.

We're supportive of Bill 109 as it will encourage open and transparent data collection through amending the Planning Act to require public reporting by planning authorities on development applications that have been submitted, are complete, under review and approved. This will help all actors in the housing industry better understand, predict, and plan housing supply.

### **Conclusion**

Components in Bill 109, More Homes for Everyone Act, are important steps in the right direction to increasing housing supply and affordability and we are looking forward to learning about plans to implement the remaining recommendations from the Housing Affordability Task Force Report, including and most importantly, the recommendation to end exclusionary zoning. In the City of Toronto for example, 70% of land is zoned for single family homes.

To conclude the housing supply situation is dire, with over 1.2 million units needed. Process improvements are vital to increasing housing supply and bringing more homes to market.

Thank you for your time today and we look forward to answering questions from the committee.