



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 11, 2016

**Community Groups across Ontario Tell the Province
“The Time for Inclusionary Zoning is NOW”**

March 11th, 2016 (Toronto, ON) – Dozens of community groups and networks across Ontario are urging the Province to stop blocking municipalities from adopting inclusionary zoning policies to build desperately needed affordable housing. Through inclusionary zoning policies, cities and regions can create thousands of units of affordable housing within each new residential development.

“The City of Toronto and municipalities across Ontario have repeatedly asked the Province for inclusionary zoning powers. The Province needs to stop dragging its feet and act now before more opportunities to build affordable housing are lost”, said Toronto City Councillor Mike Layton.

ACORN spokesperson Alejandra Ruiz Vargas remarked, *“Hundreds of thousands of Ontarians are struggling with the high cost of housing. The Province is failing these communities when it blocks a viable way to build new affordable homes. It’s time for leadership from this government.”*

Social Planning Toronto’s Executive Director Sean Meagher explained, *“Fifty-seven community groups and networks across Ontario have aired their frustration by sending an open letter to Minister McMeekin. There is a clear community and municipal demand for inclusionary zoning; why is the Province stalling, and most importantly, missing the opportunity to build thousands of affordable housing units?”*

For years, municipalities, planners and community organizations have asked the provincial government to pass enabling legislation to allow municipalities to adopt inclusionary zoning policies. Through inclusionary zoning, the City of Toronto could have created over 12,000 affordable housing units in the last 5 years alone, according to the City’s Chief Planner Jennifer Keesmaat.

There are already two private members’ bills (Bill 3 and Bill 39) on inclusionary zoning before the legislature. In the latest effort, fifty-seven community groups have called on the Ontario government to move one of these bills forward before June 9 when the legislature breaks for the summer and give municipalities these important powers.

For more information please contact:

Sean Meagher, Executive Director, Social Planning Toronto
416-820-7889 or smeagher@socialplanningtoronto.org

City Councillor Mike Layton

Michal Hay, Executive Assistant to Councillor, cell: 647 802-4131, mhay@toronto.ca

Alejandra Ruiz Vargas, ACORN spokesperson
647-204-2767