



## **Builders group: inclusionary zoning isn't 'silver bullet' for GTHA's affordability crunch**

VAUGHAN, ON, March 14, 2016 /CNW/ - A lot of work needs to be done to help low- and middle-income earners with housing, says the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), so the home-builders group applauds efforts to tackle a situation that impacts the health, prosperity and economic potential of families.

But RESCON also emphasizes that the provincial government's proposal today for inclusionary zoning is not a silver bullet solution.

"Something has to be done to help more people get into homes they can afford," says RESCON president Richard Lyall. "But the government and building industry have to get it right together. The status quo for housing in the GTHA is not working. While inclusionary zoning will help a few people, it will cause even bigger affordability problems for many others across the housing spectrum, including millennials who already struggle to get a foothold on the housing ladder. The money ultimately will be coming out of the pockets of other new-home buyers, not the government."

Lyall says data from the Shelter Consumption Affordability Ratio index, released recently in a report by the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis (CANCEA), shows that 26 per cent of Ontario households (homeowners and renters) are already under "significant pressure." About 60 per cent of that number are under the age of 45. The vast majority of those will not qualify for affordable housing: the pressure will continue to mount on them.

"While the province's announcement creates opportunities for social housing, we need to examine the approvals process linked to residential construction," Lyall says. "We must work together to remove barriers to affordability." Lyall added that more dialogue is needed in order to fill the holes of the housing spectrum through:

- Lowering development charges – which have increased 1,259 per cent over 17 years – to pave the way for the construction of three- and four-bedroom condos, allowing more families to stay in downtown areas, especially Toronto.
- Using as-of-right zoning to promote the construction of mid-rise wood-frame buildings and the intensification of city corridors. Both initiatives would reduce time required to get shovels in the ground (and thereby housing costs).
- Increasing the focus on purpose-built rentals to round out housing options for Ontarians.

To do this, Ontario needs to back up these goals by focusing on evidence-based decision-making.

"Gathering meaningful data is the first step in making good decisions," Lyall says. "In order to get it right, we need to focus on metrics so we can measure inputs and outcomes meaningfully and establish accurate quantitative analysis."

**What is RESCON?**

The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON) is a non-profit association for GTHA builders that commissioned this independent, peer-reviewed research report to better understand housing affordability in Ontario. For more, go to [rescon.com](http://rescon.com).

**What is CANCEA?**

CANCEA is a state-of-the-art interdisciplinary research organization that is dedicated to objective, independent and evidence-based analysis. They have a long history of providing holistic and collaborative understanding of the short- and long-term risks and returns behind policy decisions and prosperity. For more, go to [cancea.ca](http://cancea.ca).

SOURCE Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON)

For further information: Aonghus Kealy, Director of Communications, RESCON,

Tel: 905-760-7777, x. 111 / C: 647-530-4855, [kealy@rescon.com](mailto:kealy@rescon.com)