

Multi-bedroom housing units needed in GTHA: RESCON

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TORONTO—More three- and four-bedroom condominium apartments and townhomes are needed to meet the housing needs of millennials in the GTHA's housing spectrum, says the **Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON)**.



The council recently sponsored the [Consumers Council of Canada's](#) (CCC) independent research report called Residential Intensification: The Impact on Consumers.

In essence, [RESCON](#) states, builders believe housing consumers "deserve to have a voice on intensification." What's more, by filling this housing gap, the residential construction industry can meet the provincially mandated goal of more residential intensification for the region.

Ontario's Places to Grow plan calls for intensification in urban areas and transit corridors around the GTHA, stating it's essential for the region's "socio-economic success."

"But while builders have been moving toward intensifying their efforts, nothing has been done yet by the province to help facilitate the development of mid-rise," the release reads.

Intensification is defined as the development or redevelopment of a property, site or area at a density higher than what currently exists, RESCON explains.

"Many young new-home buyers and renters want to live in urban areas close to their workplaces, amenities and entertainment, and that's when intensification is the solution to their needs and wants," says Richard Lyall, president of RESCON, in a statement.

"Look at what's happening in the downtown areas of Toronto and the GTHA — people want to walk everywhere to live, work and play. And they're willing to sacrifice some square footage to eliminate a long commute and give themselves a lifestyle advantage. However, when they want to expand their households and families, they have fewer options."

The CCC's report contains 24 recommendations, some of which could help cut red tape, save time and money, allow more housing consumers to enjoy the benefits of intensification, and usher in an era of mid-rise construction, Lyall states.

The report recommends that the "Official Plans of Ontario municipalities should take note of or be amended to include municipal guidelines for urban design, tall buildings, mid-rise buildings, avenues, corridors and Metrolinx Mobility Hub Guidelines"; the province should provide the means to speed development reviews and approvals and allow municipalities to pre-designate, pre-zone and modify site plan approvals and introduce a development (community) permit system; and Ontario municipal planning rationales should include the provision of affordable housing for families that includes a variety of unit sizes.

"The days of everyone dreaming of the white picket fence are over," Lyall says.

"We're dealing with a whole new generation of first-time buyers that want urban benefits, but many people want to have families in that same setting of housing density, like in Europe.

"Builders want to build mid-rise — between four and 11 storeys high, with some between four and six storeys made of wood-frame construction. Our industry needs to develop the GTHA's housing spectrum."

According to the release, the CCC report required collaboration, with 12 professionals from different industries, including consumer advocates, taking part.

According to RESCON, millennials represent the biggest buying and renting block for residential construction in the near future.