

Smart Growth an oxymoron

Thu., Nov. 3, 2016

Re: Is Ontario's anti-sprawl policy actually smart? Oct. 29

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The fact that this question can seriously be asked after a decade in the life of the great experiment that is Smart Growth, is telling indeed.

It is asked because we somehow have completely failed to link housing and transit planning. We have ignored the stratospheric climb in housing costs relative to incomes (192 per cent vs 40 per cent since 2000).

Growth plan employment forecasts have vaporized in the 905. Also, you can't drop new urbanism in the middle of a corn field without employment and transit. In any event, the proposed increase in intensification targets will make even Cornell-type projects impossible.

Just because it is called Smart Growth does not make it so. In the case of the GTHA, it is decidedly not. The province's requiring intensification without facilitating it in any meaningful way is intellectually dishonest and a practical failure.

The housing market has rocketed up in price because supply does not equal demand. Commensurate income growth and good job creation have been left in the dust.

Politics rather than practical considerations like housing supply continue to be the Smart Growth priority.

Richard Lyall