

Roadmap for Redevelopment Plans to Confront Systemic Racism

2023 Roadmap Resident Summit Summary

Key Takeaways

Event Date : April 26th 2023

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1

Executive Summary



This report summarizes the key takeaways from CP Planning's Inaugural Roadmap Resident Summit held on April 26th, 2023, in Toronto. The event brought together community residents, non-profit leaders, and government officials from Toronto, Peel, Hamilton, and Ottawa to address affordable housing challenges in transit-affected neighborhoods. The objectives were to foster collaboration, share community learnings, and develop a consensus on affordable housing protection and development. This summary highlights the event's successes, key challenges identified, and proposed action items to improve future programming.

In response to the Summit outcomes, CP Planning commits to the following action items:

Action 1. Strengthen strategies to develop community land trusts, implement anti-displacement measures, and engage property owners and government through improved policies and regulations.

Action 2. Incorporate learnings into knowledge exchange webinars planned for Fall 2023 - Winter 2024.

Action 3. Encourage for dedicated funding for grassroots organizations to engage local residents in affordable housing strategies.

Action 4. Facilitate opportunities for elected officials to meet community leaders, fostering relationship building and knowledge exchange.

Action 5. Invite participants to the Roadmap Annual Gathering which will include the launch of the Roadmap report reflecting consensus on the top 5 affordable housing challenges and solutions based on engagements with community, non-profit, public, and private sector leaders.

Action 6. Provide ample lead time for the 2024 Roadmap Resident Summit to ensure programming reflects community needs and opportunities to catalyze on strengths.

By implementing these action items, CP Planning aims to sustain momentum, foster collaboration, and create an inclusive planning economy that meets the needs of racialized communities across Ontario. Through ongoing engagement with diverse stakeholders, significant progress can be made in addressing the affordable housing crisis and promoting equitable solutions.



2575 Eglinton West in Little Jamaica, Toronto

2 Introduction



This report is a summary of the key takeaways from CP Planning's Inaugural Roadmap Resident Summit held on April 26th, 2023, at the York South Weston Community Hub, located at 2575 Eglinton West in Little Jamaica, Toronto. The event was attended by community residents and non-profit leaders from neighborhoods in the cities of Toronto, Peel, Hamilton, and Ottawa. Invited guest speakers included Kumsa Baker (Toronto Community Benefits Network), Hannia Cheng (Frankel Lambert Organizing Committee), and Adam Vaughan (former Councillor, Member of Parliament, and an architect of the National Housing Strategy).

The purpose of this summary is to communicate the planning that took place to support the success of the event, information shared at the event, and itemized key successes and areas of improvement that can be implemented to improve future events and programming of the Roadmap.

The objectives of this event were to:

- Gather community residents, organizations, and leaders from across Ontario cities with recent major investments in transit.
- Share community learnings and strategies.
- Develop a consensus among community members on their most pressing concerns regarding affordable housing protection and development.

Background

This event was hosted as part of CP Planning's [Roadmap for Redevelopment Plans to Confront Systemic Racism](#) ("Roadmap").

CP Planning is a non-profit urban planning organization practicing a human rights approach to community planning. The organization was founded in Toronto, Ontario, and provides services across Ontario, and supports the coordination of work in British Columbia, Quebec, as well as solutions of a national scope.

The Roadmap builds the capacity of racialized communities to identify and lead the implementation of solutions to protect and increase affordable housing in areas experiencing gentrification due to transit infrastructure investment. Priority cities of the Roadmap are: Toronto, Ottawa, Peel, York, Hamilton, and Kitchener-Waterloo. The Roadmap aligns with the National Housing Strategy goals to increase affordable supply and its key principle to account for a human rights-based approach to housing.

As of July 2023, CP Planning is actively supporting community organizations in the following neighbourhoods:

- Toronto: Little Jamaica East and West, Danforth-Main, Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Mt Dennis
- Peel Region: Cooksville (Mississauga)
- Ottawa: Overbrooke/Vanier
- Hamilton: Gibson/Landsdale

**The number of neighborhoods supported will increase in Fall and Winter 2023/24, including additions in York Region and the Kitchener-Waterloo Region.*

To varying degrees, neighbourhoods supported by the Roadmap are receiving support in the following areas:

- Developing Community Land Trusts
- Identifying and implementing anti-displacement strategies and
- Developing Property Ownership Engagement (POE) strategies.

Event Summary

The Summit event was organized to highlight successes and progress from community residents, leaders, and organizations. The event sought to develop consensus on potential affordable housing solutions and identify key barriers to solutions-building. Most attendees were from Toronto, with two individuals from Peel Region, one from Hamilton, and one from Ottawa (CP Planning Community Planner – Sally El Sayed).

The Summit featured a panel discussion with three key affordable housing leaders in Toronto: Adam Vaughan, Hannia Cheng and Kumsa Baker. Following the panel, attendees were invited to participate in Roundtable discussions aimed at identifying strategies to engage residents and stakeholders in Property Ownership Engagement, Anti-Displacement and Community Land Trust strategies.

3 Key Takeaways



Key Takeaways: Themes

Key takeaways identified in this report are grouped under 5 themes:

Theme 1. Policies, Regulation, and Government Engagement

This theme focuses on the need for policies and regulations that support affordable housing development and the importance of government engagement in addressing housing challenges.

Theme 2. Community Engagement, Capacity Building, and Information Sharing

This theme emphasizes the importance of involving communities in decision-making processes, building capacity within communities to address housing issues, and sharing information to promote understanding and collaboration.

Theme 3. Funding and Financing of Affordable Housing Development

This theme highlights the need for innovative funding and financing mechanisms to support affordable housing development and increased access to capital for housing projects.

Theme 4. Equity and Community Understanding

This theme addresses the importance of promoting equity in housing initiatives and enhancing community understanding of the benefits and challenges of affordable housing.

Theme 5. Affordable Housing and Displacement

This theme focuses on mitigating displacement risks and developing strategies to preserve affordable housing in the face of gentrification and other factors.

Panel Discussion

For the Panel Discussions, guest speakers Adam Vaughan, Hannia Cheng and Kumsa Baker were asked to identify barriers and opportunities to increasing affordable housing supply. Their responses centred on the importance of collaboration between community and agencies, boards, and bodies of government.



Hannia Cheng, Community Organizer

Hannia Cheng is a community organizer and artist based in Spadina Fort-York. They co-founded Teabase in 2019 and supported its establishment as a well-respected art collective. Hannia's recent work has included applying their creative talents to supporting the Chinatown Community Land Trust, and the Frankel Lambert Outreach Committee in their strategies of building community power to establish affordable housing development solutions.



Kumsa Baker, Campaigns Director

Kumsa Baker is the Campaigns Director for the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN) with a strong community and neighbourhood organizing background. He primarily focuses on leveraging community investments and resources, and coalition building. He utilizes these tools alongside his experiences in creating alliances with organizations in Finch West and Eglinton West. TCBN's additional goals include looking into sustainable career building for racialized folks in the housing industry.



Adam Vaughan, Community Organizer

Adam Vaughan is a community organizer who previously worked in government as a representative for the municipal and provincial government. Initially, he was a city councillor for Ward 20 (Trinity – Spadina) before the wards were disaggregated into 25 wards, from 2006 until 2014 where he ran for the provincial seat. He was then the MPP of Spadina – Fort York from 2014 until 2021. Now he works as the principal for a consulting firm called Navigator and does community organizing on the side.

Theme 1. Policies, Regulation, and Government Engagement

The panelists discussed current policies that have affected the development of affordable housing and how public assets could be utilized to develop new affordable housing supply.

Key Takeaways:

- [Bill 23](#) (More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022)¹ has caused delays and confusion in the process of developing affordable housing, particularly when it comes to the ability of local municipalities to utilize inclusionary zoning;
- Governments can utilize the public assets that they have – such as parking lots and school land – to develop affordable housing.

Theme 2. Community Engagement, Capacity Building, and Information Sharing

Panelists noted the importance of increasing community capacity to lead the planning of affordable housing in their neighbourhood.

Key Takeaways:

- More training and information-sharing sessions should be available for community members to gain knowledge and networks on developing affordable housing;
- There is value in there being more public panels, workshops, and opportunities to exchange stories of local accomplishments;
- It is encouraged that government entities collaborate with communities to progress on developing affordable housing on underutilized land.

Theme 3. Funding and Financing of Affordable Housing Development

The panelists communicated how funding is at the heart of sustainable affordable housing solutions, such as public housing, non-profit housing co-ops, community land trusts and other affordable housing options.

¹ HYPERLINK “<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-23>” [Bill 23](#): The More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, carries a myriad of standards for housing production, with the goal of ensuring that cities, towns, and rural communities grow with a mix of ownership and rental housing types that meet the needs of all Ontarians. This act was proposed by the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism on October 25th, 2022. The main tenants of the Act outline supporting growth and housing in regions like York and Durham, utilizing the Greenbelt as space for the production of Housing, and allowing Development Charge exemptions for a myriad of conditions. To read more HYPERLINK “<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-23>” [click here](#)

Key Takeaways:

- There is currently a lack of funding available for non-profit affordable housing development;
- Grassroots groups are successfully applying for funding to do engagement work to build affordable housing development strategies; however, they are only able to secure funding for program implementation of less than a year.

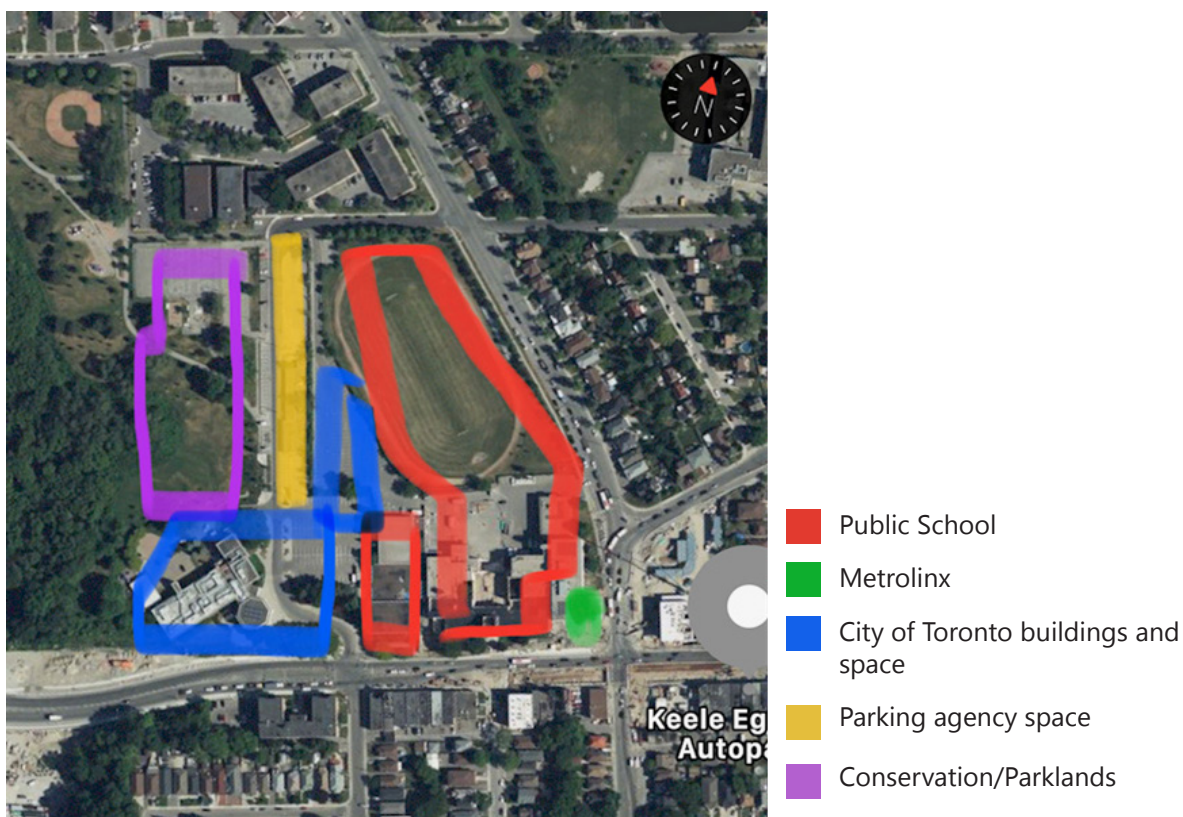


Figure 1: [Bill 23](#): The More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, carries a myriad of standards for housing production, with the goal of ensuring that cities, towns, and rural communities grow with a mix of ownership and rental housing types that meet the needs of all Ontarians. This act was proposed by the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism on October 25th, 2022. The main tenants of the Act outline supporting growth and housing in regions like York and Durham, utilizing the Greenbelt as space for the production of Housing, and allowing Development Charge exemptions for a myriad of conditions. To read more [click here](#)

Community Updates

After the panel, the event moved on to give a more in-depth update on community progress.

Theme 1. Policies, Regulation, and Government Engagement

Community residents, leaders, and organizations have been hosting various events and making ongoing efforts to build relationships with all levels of government.

Key Takeaways:

- In Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Toronto, leaders were able to get elected representatives from all three levels of government in their ward to attend a meeting centred on affordable housing;
- Katie King, representing the Hamilton Community Benefits Network, shared how they effectively coordinated with their municipal council of Hamilton to pursue affordable housing protection and development policy creation.

Theme 2. Community Engagement, Capacity Building, and Information Sharing

The Roadmap is supporting groups in leveraging their strengths and increasing their capacity to shape the planning of their neighbourhood.

Key Takeaways:

- In Peel, the local community organization Indus Community Services collaborates with local organizations to hosts roundtable discussions on the topics of homelessness, food security and harm reduction;
- In Ottawa, CP Planning is collaborating with Dr. Menna Agha of the Azraeli School of Architecture at Carleton University to build the Ottawa Affordable Housing Coalition, host conversations and resource a neighbourhood to advance the implementation of the City of Ottawa's [Anti-Racism Strategy](#);
- In Toronto:
 - The Bengali Community Centre and Services in the Danforth-Main neighbourhood of Toronto has established a working group and planned various activities to engage community members in exploring and advancing affordable housing development strategies;

- The Oakwood-Vaughan Community Organization (OVCO) in Little Jamaica continues to organize with their Affordable Housing Working Group and their Anti-Displacement Working Group in developing a Right to Remain policy. They are seeking to create a Community Land Trust in Eglinton West in partnership with the Keele & Eglinton Residents.

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Round Table Discussions



Roundtable Discussion on Community Engagement



Theme 1. Policies, Regulation, and Government Engagement

Community leaders are using a variety of methods to mobilize communities to collaborate with their local governments in exploring and developing affordable housing solutions.

Key Takeaways:

- Community is having to repeatedly express their affordable housing requests to government;
- Publicly owned land is a prioritized opportunity for affordable housing development, and a lot of community effort has gone into engaging government on the identification of these lands;
- Renoviction continues to be a worsening and increasing issue requiring government intervention to address.

Theme 2. Community Engagement, Capacity Building, and Information Sharing

Community organizations are developing initiatives and events to build relationships with their community members and mobilize knowledge on implementing affordable housing solutions.

Key Takeaways:

- Community organizations are using their existing mailing lists and contacts to invite participation in community-led strategy and learning sessions;
- Community organizations are aware of the volume of development coming into their neighbourhoods, and the lack of affordable housing included within these proposals – and are sharing this knowledge with their contacts;
- Community organizations are using arts-based methods and other fun approaches to attract residents to engage in understanding community strategies;
- Youth is identified as a key demographic to engage, as once supported they can loop their parents and families into community efforts.

Theme 4. Equity and Community Understanding

Community members expressed the need for major stakeholders (developers, policymakers, planners) to build a stronger understanding of the impacts of excluding affordable housing in neighbourhood development plans. Additionally, community members identify that such stakeholders need to have an understanding of what residents experience in their communities before making major decisions on housing developments. There was an expressed sense that politicians and many local residents are unaware of the local housing issues occurring in their neighbourhoods.

Key Takeaways:

- Community leaders feel that elected officials should conduct a walk with local organizations, as part of exploring affordable housing solutions;
- Community members feel there is a lack of understanding or appreciation of the barriers they must overcome to engage and have any representation to be able to support affordable housing development;
- The lack of affordable housing has impacts on mental health and job security.

Roundtable Discussion on Property Owner Engagement (POE)



During this roundtable discussion, Isaac Francis (Project Coordinator, Partna) presented the progress made in the Roadmap's work regarding Property Ownership Engagement. A progress update was shared on engagement with 4 - 5 property owners who have expressed interest in developing affordable housing on their properties.

Jason Allen John (Finance Director, Partna) and Isaac Francis' presentation on Partna's model included how Partna has been going through the City and the approval process with certain property owners to develop laneway suites.

Theme 1. Policies, Regulation, and Government Engagement

Key Takeaways:

- Participants expressed concerns about the inconsistency of 'affordable housing' definitions across cities;
- Concerns were voiced that while a city may have an income-based definition in their policy, this is not being implemented in their policy or funding processes;
- Communities desire for "affordable housing" definitions to be consistent across geographies and based on income.

Theme 2. Community Engagement, Capacity Building, and Information Sharing

During this roundtable discussion, community members provided feedback on an outreach strategy for property owner engagement.

Key Takeaways:

- Community members identify the below as approaches to outreach to property owners:
 - Door knocking
 - Flyer distribution
 - Promotional guidebooks with contact details
 - Property Owner Engagement (POE) Strategy Feedback survey
- Community members view property owner engagement as positive and desire to see increased support to ensure successful execution.

Theme 3. Funding and Financing of Affordable Housing Development

Residents and guest speakers shared insights on utilizing financial tools that could be used to help fund equitable affordable housing development. Although there were concerns brought up on the affordability of these projects that would be produced through the Property Owner Engagement (POE) strategy, ultimately the way that the Partna business model helps fund for an increase supply of affordable housing was overall a net positive for communities.

Key Takeaways:

- Community members desire to see deeply affordable housing, and for housing to be affordable for terms longer than 15 years;
- Community members are interested in social finance solutions to affordable housing development, including community bonds as provided by Tapestry Community Capital;
- Further financing is required in order to ensure newly developed affordable housing has units priced below 80% Average Market Rent – to reflect lower income household incomes;
- Community members are hesitant to fully support ‘affordable housing’ that is 80% Average Market Rent, but more likely to fully support more deeply affordable housing.

In response to the key takeaways and feedback from the Roadmap Resident Summit, CP Planning is committed to a comprehensive approach that continues to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing across neighbourhoods and cities. To overcome challenges, it is imperative to collaborate and identify common challenges and opportunities to ease the process of affordable housing development.

Emergent action items in response to the Roadmap Resident Summit include:

Action 1. Applying learnings on desired policies, regulations, and government engagement to strengthen strategies to develop community land trusts, implement anti-displacement and property owner engagement strategies. This includes supporting non-profit affordable housing development on publicly owned land.

Action 2. Inviting community leaders to participate in upcoming (Fall 2023 – Winter 2024) knowledge exchange webinars on proven strategies that communities and organizations have used to engage developers and government leaders in supporting and integrating affordable housing in development proposals.

Action 3. Communicating to funders and government leaders the value of deploying dedicated funding for grassroots community organizations to engage local residents and stakeholders in the establishment and implementation of strategies to build affordable housing.

Action 4. Contributing to or facilitating opportunities for elected officials to meet with community leaders of their local districts, as to contribute to relationship building and knowledge exchange on community identified strategies to increase affordable housing supply, and the barriers they are having to overcome to have representation in planning processes, as to support affordable housing development

Action 5. Inviting community leaders to participate in the Roadmap Annual Gathering, where CP Planning will launch report reflecting consensus from government, community, non-profit and private sector engagement on what the top 5 issues and solutions are to increase affordable housing supply.

Action 6. Ensuring ample lead time in advance of the 2024 Roadmap Resident Summit, currently planned to take place in the Summer. This will enable the program to better reflect community needs and to catalyze the further development of community strengths.

As we continue our journey to address the affordable housing crisis, it is crucial to sustain momentum, learn from experiences, and adapt strategies as needed. By fostering collaboration among local community groups, organizations, and housing partners, we can make significant progress in creating a more inclusive planning economy that meets the needs of racialized communities across Ontario.

4 Next Steps

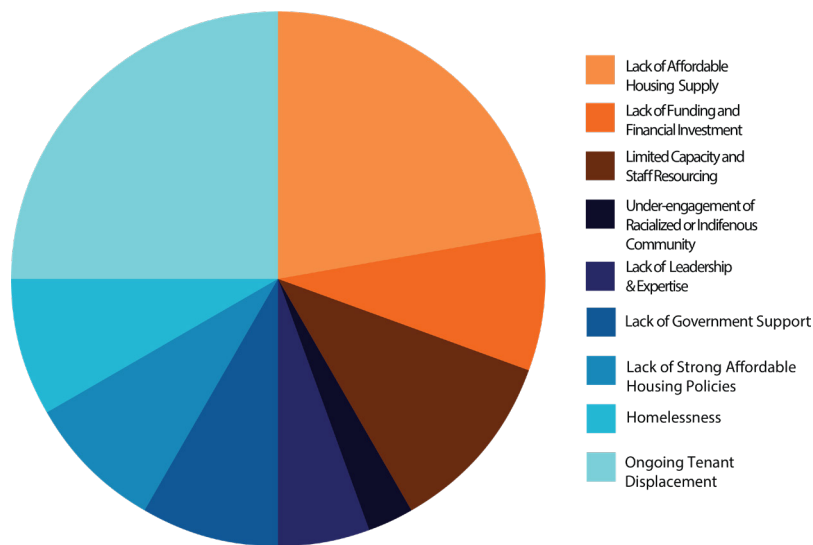


4 Appendix:

Dotmocracy Activity

Below is a summary of the results of the dotmocracy activity:

What are the 2 key challenges experienced by communities to protect and increase affordable housing supply?



Options	Results
Lack of Affordable Housing Supply	8
Limited Understanding of Planning Approval Processes	0
Lack of Funding & Financial Investments	3
Limited Capacity and Staff Resources	4
Under-engagement of Racialized or Indigenous Communities	1
Lack of Leadership & Expertise	2
Lack of Government Support	3
Lack of Strong Affordable Housing Policies	3
Homelessness	3
Ongoing Tenant Displacement	9
Other _____	0

Post-Event Feedback

After the Summit, a survey was distributed to all attendees requesting their input and feedback on their major learnings from the Summit. Of those who received the survey, 6 completed the survey. All 6 were members of non-profit organizations based in Toronto.

Feedback:

- All respondents noted they were satisfied with the event.
- 4 noted they met someone new they will keep in contact with, and 3 noted they met someone outside of their neighbourhood. This indicated crosspollination suggests that the Roadmap is fulfilling its objectives of promoting knowledge exchange across neighbourhoods.
- All respondents expressed that they have learned something new from the event.
- Most were excited to learn about the organization's work and the diverse issues each neighbourhood was experiencing, as well as engagement and work strategies that were shared during the event. One strategy that residents highlighted and appreciated was the development of affordable housing on public land, specifically parking lots. Another respondent appreciated learning about the updated City of Toronto definition of affordable housing to align with Rent-Geared-to-Income considerations.
- Respondents expressed interest in future gatherings featuring speakers from well-known organizations, grassroots groups, co-op and non-profit housing developers
- Respondents expressed a desire for the next gathering to be in a larger space, to accommodate the demand and volume of participation of organizations who attended the first Summit.

Report prepared by:



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With reference to: participation at the Roadmap Resident Summit event that took place on April 26th, 2023, at the York South Weston Community Hub located at 2575 Eglinton West in Little Jamaica, Toronto

