

7.0

Conclusion

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For the past few years, the Government of Ontario has been pursuing a number of policy initiatives that, collectively, are intended to revitalize and improve the sustainability and livability of communities across the province. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe captured this with the introduction of the concept of “complete communities”. The Growth Plan provides the following definition for complete communities:

Complete communities meet people’s needs for daily living throughout an entire lifetime by providing convenient access to an appropriate mix of jobs, local services, a full range of housing, and community infrastructure including affordable housing, schools, recreation and open space for their residents. Convenient access to public transportation and options for safe, non-motorized travel is also provided.

As part of the complete communities agenda, in addition to adopting the Growth Plan, the Province has created Metrolinx and introduced a Regional Transportation Plan for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. It has launched a Poverty Reduction Strategy aimed at reducing the root causes of poverty, particularly amongst youth and New Canadians. And it has adopted substantial greenhouse gas reduction targets and a plan to achieve them, known as the Go Green Action Plan.

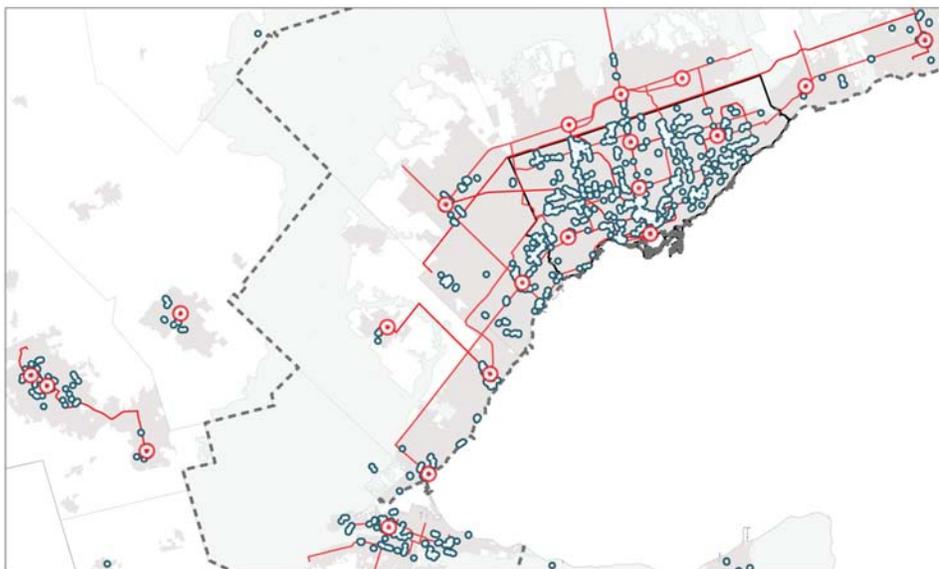
There are few locations in the province that could benefit more from the Province’s complete communities and sustainability agenda, and contribute more to their success, than the post-war Apartment Tower Neighbourhoods that have been the subject of this study.

With nearly 2,000 Apartment Towers in the Greater Golden Horseshoe spread across nearly every upper- and single-tier municipality, the potential of this housing resource is tremendous. This study has shown that Apartment Tower Neighbourhoods have the potential to serve as the anchors of an expanded regional rapid transit network. The location and the land areas associated with Apartment Towers Neighbourhoods provide significant opportunity for accommodating mixed-use growth, including the introduction of new housing types, retail and commercial space, and new services and amenities into what are often under-serviced neighbourhoods. As well, the frequency with which these towers are as-

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Legend

-  Apartment Towers (not to scale)
-  Existing and Planned Regional Rapid Transit*
-  Urban Growth Centre
-  Delineated Built up areas
-  Designated Greenbelt Area
-  Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH)
-  Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA)
-  Toronto
-  Boundary of upper and single-tier municipalities

*Planned transit refers to the Metrolinx 25 Year Regional Rapid Transit Network.

Base layers for this map, as well as designated Greenbelt Areas and Urban Growth Centre Locations provided by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing of the Ontario government.

Regional rapid transit corridors shown on this map are based on the research team’s interpretation of Schedule 2 of the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan entitled “25-Year Plan for the Regional Rapid Transit and Highway Network”.
Kitchener/Waterloo Light Rail alignment provided by the Region of Waterloo (TBC).

sociated with areas of social need and their role as affordable housing stock make them strong candidates for interventions aimed at poverty reduction and fostering social potential. Their size and energy inefficiency relative to other housing types, makes them ideally suited for environmental refurbishment, including district energy systems, to achieve significant greenhouse gas reductions.

Furthermore, their general organization into grouped clusters, housing thousands, presents the framework from which the above initiatives can converge to create well-designed, dynamic, sustainable and livable neighbourhoods throughout the region.

Across Europe, governments have been implementing Tower Neighbourhood Renewal strategies for several decades. In Ontario the potential exists for similar success. Building on the work of the City of Toronto's Tower Renewal program, there is a significant role for the Province to aid tower communities across the region to achieve their full potential as prosperous, vibrant and sustainable places, while simultaneously achieving key Provincial policy objectives.

There will be challenges to Tower Neighbourhood Renewal in Ontario. These include financing and coordinating the renewal of what are typically privately owned and often fragmented properties; avoiding displacement and economic eviction of existing residents as a result of neighbourhood improvement; and building the policy environment and technical expertise to support the full scope of renewal. This study has identified a number of areas of further research that would help address these challenges and move renewal forward in this province.

Developed as high-density alternatives to bungalow sprawl, Tower Neighbourhoods were progressive experiments in post-war planning. Largely neglected for the past several decades, the aim of Tower Neighbourhood Renewal is to examine the role of these neighbourhoods in achieving complete and sustainable communities across the region. In doing so, it can help implement a range of provincial policy objectives related to achieving a more prosperous, equitable and sustainable Greater Golden Horseshoe, and Ontario as a whole.



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07

Images - Apartment Towers Across the GTHA

- 01) Mississauga
- 02) Ajax
- 03) Stoney Creek
- 04) North York, Toronto
- 05) Hamilton
- 06) Etobicoke, Toronto
- 07) Oakville



02