



Toronto ACORN Municipal Platform



Introduction

Toronto ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), is a membership based community union made up of low-to-moderate income people. ACORN was founded in 2004, with the first organized group in Canada being formed in Weston / Mt Dennis. Since then, ACORN has spread to every part of the city with six organized chapters and over 40,000 members in Toronto.

ACORN believes that social and economic justice can best be achieved with a city-wide membership who are invested in their organization and focused on building community power for change.

The Toronto municipal election is on October 24, 2022. In Toronto, 46.8% of tenant households spend more than 30% of their pretax income on shelter costs or to live in unaffordable housing.

This document provides a summary of the local campaigns Toronto ACORN members need candidates to commit to champion if elected! ACORN members need to see the following changes to make Toronto an **affordable and liveable city**.

Landlord Licensing

The city needs to strengthen the Rentsafe / Landlord Licensing program so it effectively enforces the Standards of Maintenance by-law, ensuring that buildings remain in good condition.

- Implementation of a strong RentSafe program.
- More funding for RentSafe. More inspectors to protect existing affordable housing. (Increase RentSafe budget by \$5.2 million. Hiring 100 bylaw officers and move to a ratio similar to the proposed ratio for rooming houses. Currently 28 inspectors for 3500 buildings. There should be 1 inspector per 12.5 buildings.)
- A new fine system to issue major financial penalties to negligent landlords.
- Automatic tickets by inspectors for any property standard violation.
- City steps in to do repairs automatically when landlords ignore, through remedial action - and bill the landlord on their property tax.



Affordable Housing

- Mandate 100% of developments in Housing Now are rental, with 50% of the development as affordable housing
- Strong inclusionary zoning: 20 to 30% of all new developments set aside as deeply affordable, permanent, rental housing.
- Put more money into the MURA program - to ensure that small buildings in financial distress aren't scooped up by big corporate landlords.

Fund Affordable Housing

- Tax all vacant units - housing not speculation! 5% vacant unit tax
- Tax all luxury homes - mansion tax - increase property taxes on houses worth more than 2 million.
- Increase the Municipal Land Transfer Tax on high value homes.
- Enforce property standards and fine slumlords.



No Tenant Displacement

- The City of Toronto needs to create strong protections against renovictions and strengthen demovictions protections. Take out the financial incentive landlords and developers have to displace tenants.
- Landlords/ developers need to get all permits (building, plumbing, development, special development, or heritage alteration) required by the City before they are able to renovate.
- Landlords/ developers must make arrangements for each tenant to continue their tenancy at the same rent during and after the renovation.
- Tenant relocation policy - if tenants have to move out, landlords must find them a new place close by, top up their rent so they don't pay more, and major financial penalties if the right to return is interfered with. This must be on top of any lump sum of money the tenant receives. This can be done as conditions on permits.
- Public register of tenant buyouts, building permits, home sales, and monitor sale of rental buildings and inform tenants of their rights.
- Landlord and tenant registry to track displacement during renovation.
- No public funds, or permit approvals, to predatory landlords.



Rent Control

- Any developments getting municipal public funds (Housing Now, Open Door or other) must have rent control on all units (not just the affordable units).
- Vacancy control on all units - so when tenants leave, landlords can't double the rent.
- Rental replacement should require rent control on replacement units, and extend the affordability period to 99 years.

No Evictions in TCHC

- No evictions for rental arrears in TCHC - Permanently.

Rent Relief

- Loan forgiveness to those who previously used the old loan-based Rent Bank program.

Retrofits

ACORN recognizes the urgent nature of the climate crisis and retrofitting Toronto's aging highrise communities from a resident-led perspective is an important step in achieving energy equity.

- Explore creating minimum efficiency standards and categories within Rentsafe and/or Landlord licensing system to ensure that costs of retrofits will not be passed on to low-income tenants.
- Ban rent increases and new rentals in substandard or lower energy efficiency buildings.
- Financing conditions required on retrofit funding to landlords, contingent on no costs passed onto tenants.

Affordable Internet

- Any infrastructure must be community controlled and publicly owned.
- City should create a municipal broadband network.
- Must provide \$10/month internet to all low- and moderate-income people.
- Free public wi-fi in all city owned buildings and facilities.



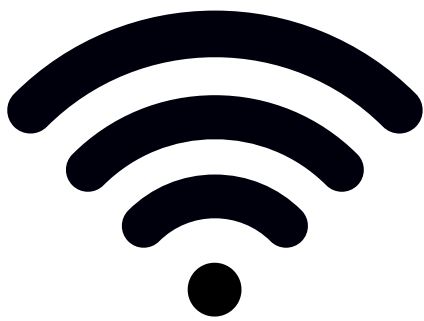
End Predatory Lending

- Cap the number of payday and instalment lenders in the city.
- Create minimum distance separation between payday and instalment lenders to stop them from clustering in low income neighbourhoods.
- No advertising of payday or instalment lenders on City or TTC property.



Community Funding

- Community programs should be affordable to low- and moderate-income people everywhere, not just affordable in NIA's.
- 10% of police budget to equity seeking groups, community programs in low -income communities.



Online actions

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/do-you-want-freedom-bell-and-telecom-monopoly>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/tenants-demand-colour-coded-signs>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/toronto-acorns-budget-demands-affordable-city>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/demand-city-budget-protects-tenants-affordable-housing>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/toronto-acorn-members-demand-healthy-homes-all>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/dont-let-developers-delay-tell-john-tory-we-need-affordable-housing-all-new-developments>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/urgent-stop-demoviction-scarborough>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/tell-john-tory-make-internet-affordable-now>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/toronto-tenants-need-rent-relief>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/stop-renovictions-toronto>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/toronto-needs-mansion-tax>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/toronto-needs-publicly-owned-internet-all>

<https://acorncanada.org/take-action/tell-city-council-support-real-rent-control>