



# Preserving Black Communities Apartment Affordability around Transit in Toronto: Focus on the Jane Finch Community

ULI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL (TAP)

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

MARCH 6-8, 2024



# ULI TAP Team



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*As a Toronto Region based organization, we acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.*

*We are all Treaty peoples. Many of us of have come here as settlers, as migrants either in this generation or in generations past – and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery.*



## THE MISSION OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide

### MISSION COMMITMENTS

CONNECT active, passionate, diverse members through the foremost global network of interdisciplinary professionals

INSPIRE best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing

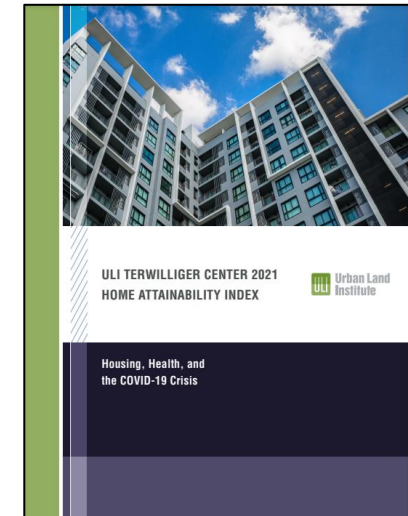
LEAD in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement

# About the Urban Land Institute

**ULI Mission: Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide**

A multi-disciplinary membership organization with more than 45,000 members in private enterprise and public service

- What the Urban Land Institute does:
  - Conducts **research**
  - Provides a forum for **sharing of best practices**
  - Writes, edits, and publishes **books and magazines**
  - Organizes and **conducts meetings**
  - Directs **outreach programs**
  - **Conducts Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs) and Advisory Service Panels (ASPs)**





# ABOUT THE TERWILLIGER CENTER FOR HOUSING

Established in 2007 with a gift from longtime member and former ULI chairman, J. Ronald Terwilliger.

The goal of the Terwilliger Center for Housing is to advance best practices in residential development and public policy, and to support ULI members and local communities in creating and sustaining a full spectrum of housing opportunities, particularly for low- and moderate-income households.

# Thank you to our sponsors!

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**CONFRONTING  
ANTI-BLACK  
RACISM**

City of Toronto

**Social Development,  
Finance and  
Administration**

**Cheryll Case  
Founder and  
Executive Director**



**Venue Host:**

**Goodmans<sup>LLP</sup>**

# Thank you to the 60 people who informed the TAP!

## **Residents, Community Leaders and Organizers, Private, Public, and Non-profit Developers, Governments, Financiers, Policy-makers, Academia, Planners, Architects, Energy and Environmental Consultants:**

Juliet Akhadia \* Stephanie Allen \* Scott R. Armstrong \* Mary-Kay Bachour \* Derek Ballantyne \* Leah Birnbaum \* Anna-Kay Brown \* Troy Budhu \* Denelle Carvalno \* Jimmy Castonguay \* Karen Chapple \* Jasmine Cracknell-Young \* Cassandra Creese \* Shenali Don \* Brian Doucet \* Alex Dow \* Andrew Farncombe \* Michael Fedchyshyn \* Andrew Garrett \* Marcel Greaux \* Jenn Green \* Graham Haines \* Shannon Holness \* Agnes Kazmierczak \* Sherry Larjani \* Mercedeh Madani \* Leighana Mais \* Kiran Marok \* William Mendes \* Camille Mitchell \* Nasra Mohamed \* Chris Moise \* Abigail Moriah \* Mwarigha \* Heela Omarkhail \* Onay Payne \* Samantha Ponting \* Bryan Purcell \* Emily Reisman \* Jo Reynolds \* Mark Richardson \* Melana Roberts \* Sarah Rodrigues \* Dan Rosen \* Ya'el Santopinto \* Manuela Sarnecki \* Nik Schruder \* Bahar Shadpour \* Matti Siemiatycki \* Julia Stefanishina \* Debbie Stewart \* Clara Stewart-Robertson \* Joe Svec \* Nicole Swerhun \* Howard Tam \* Tasleem Thawar \* Heather Tremain \* Nicolas Tyers \* Symone Walters \* Lily Wong



# What is a Technical Assistance Panel?

- Objective, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate challenges developed over the course of several days.
- ULI members from across the region (and continent!) contribute their time as panelists.
- Final deliverables include a PPT presentation and a formal report summarizing the panel's non-binding recommendations.



# TAP Chair & Panelists

TAP CHAIR



**Kirk Johnson**  
President,  
Eco-Efficiency  
Consulting



**Mitzie Hunter**  
President and CEO,  
The Canadian  
Women's Foundation



**Scott Kratz**  
Director, 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bridge Park,  
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**Dr. Nemoy Lewis**  
Assistant Professor,  
School of Urban and  
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**Robert Walter-Joseph**  
Principal, Gladki  
Planning Associates



**Barika X Williams**  
Executive Director, Assoc.  
for Neighborhood &  
Housing Development,  
NYC



**Agnieszka Wloch**  
VP Development, Minto

# TAP Purpose

Jurisdictions across the world watch as we invest billions of dollars in Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in 10+ communities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe region of Ontario, Canada.

**The purpose of this TAP is to recommend best practice policy, program, funding and delivery solutions to *improve affordability and reduce displacement for Black private apartment renters* impacted by Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Tower Renewal in the City of Toronto.**

The TAP's focus is the Jane Finch community, with replication potential across the city and beyond where TOD is happening.



# TAP Questions:

***How to create and preserve affordability and prevent high displacement of Black residents in private rental apartments in Toronto who are affected by transit-oriented developments (TOD) and private rental tower renewal (TR) upgrades?***

1. What are the **holistic, replicable principles, policies, programs, and strategies** the City of Toronto should consider implementing for **creating and preserving affordability and housing units for the Black populations impacted by Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** in new multi-family development and apartment tower redevelopment?
2. What are **key strategies and partnerships needed between the public, private, community, non-profits, and philanthropic sectors to minimize disruption & displacement** for Black populations during redevelopment in neighbourhoods, and private rental multi-family buildings while also **increasing affordable housing supply in TOD?**
3. What are **best practices to preserve a TOD Neighbourhood's community fabric and cultural assets** (learning from other communities like Little Jamaica?)

Questions continue on next slide

# TAP Questions continued:

***How to create and preserve affordability and prevent high displacement of Black residents in private rental apartments in Toronto who are affected by transit-oriented developments (TOD) and private rental tower renewal (TR) upgrades?***

4. What are the **financial levers available** to the different levels of government to make affordable housing projects viable?
  - What **synergies and funding opportunities** exist within current programs and incentives in areas of *technology, workforce, decarbonization/electrification, and economic and community development*?
  - How can the different levels of government (*Federal/Provincial/Municipal*) **collaborate to address projects' financial viability while still driving affordability** and preventing Black population displacement?
  
5. Where should the **City of Toronto focus its financial and operational resources (policies and programs)** in the *immediate- and medium-term* to achieve the greatest impact for delivering **affordable, inclusive new development and tower redevelopment for Black communities** adjacent to future transit investments?

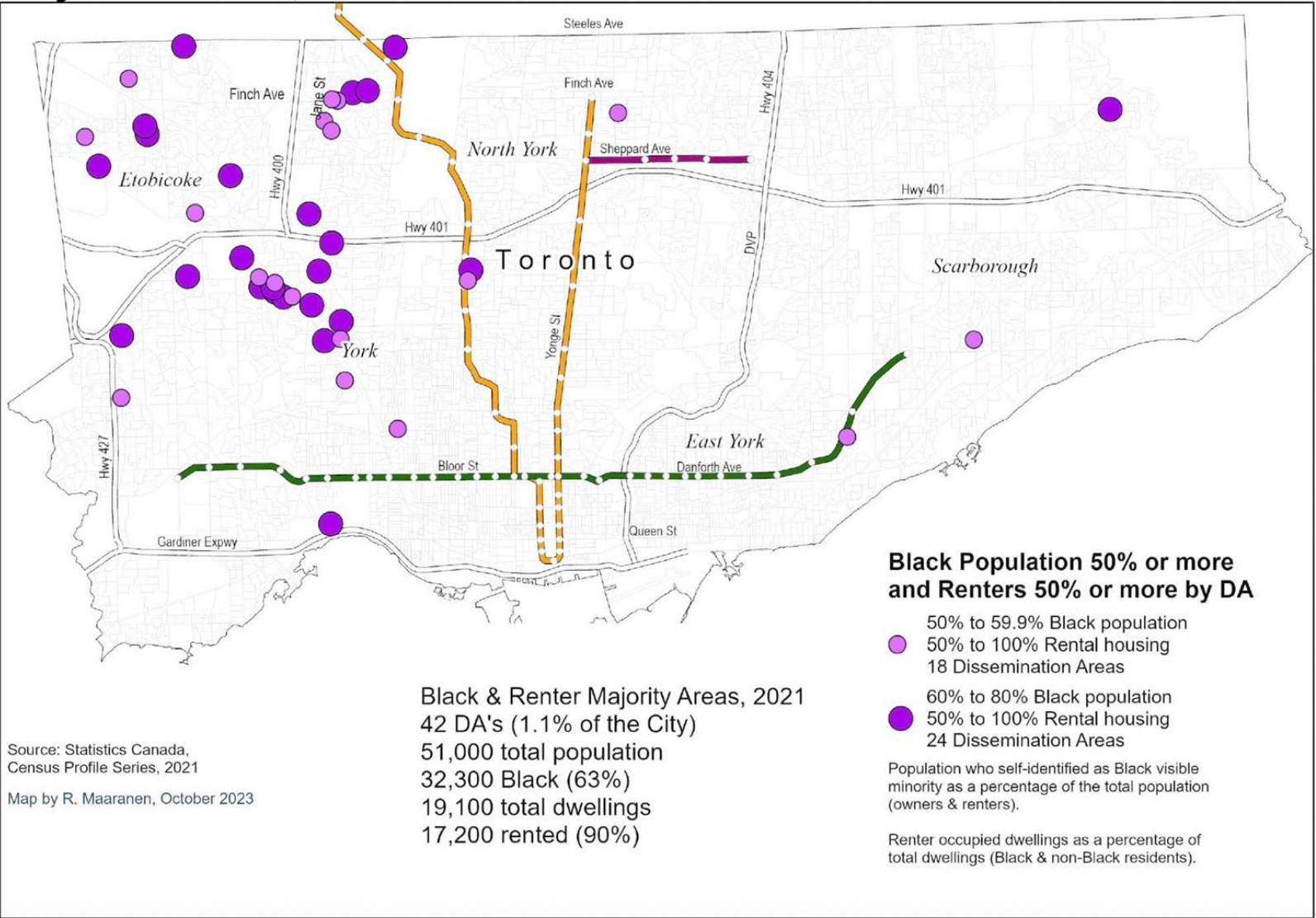
# TAP Presentation Agenda

- 1/ Introduction / Business as Usual Implications / Community Work to Date
- 2/ City & Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) Work to Date
- 3/ Competing Tensions
- 4/ Long-term Planning / Asset Mapping / Macro Policy
- 5/ Prioritizing Local Residents & Equitable Economic Development
- 6/ Sustainability & Affordability Incentives Alignment
- 7/ Affordable Housing Solutions
- 8/ Capacity Building for Non-Market Developers
- 9/ Land and Financing Solutions
- 10/ Short, Mid, and Long-Term Recommendations
- 11/ Q&A

# Introduction & Community Work to Date

## Mitzie Hunter

# Black Majority Populations in Renter Majority Dissemination Areas City of Toronto, 2021





# Introduction

## Jane & Finch: A Story of Strength and Resistance

The local history of Black Populations settlement

- Thrice removed/displaced
- Evidence of systemic / structural racism
- History of broken promises at all levels of government
- Created Black wealth gap. Lowest homeownership levels in Canada
- Black population built these communities in Jane & Finch, Eglinton West, Scarborough - nowhere else to go
- Black populations rely heavily on transit yet have the longest commute times
- Transit investment is good and needed but also brings affordability & displacement challenges
- Using a lens of anti-Black racism is part of the solution
- All while other groups received land grants or incentives for home ownership.
  - e.g., 1912 Thunder Bay 'back to the land' allowing Finnish immigrants to purchase land plots for \$1.50)



The Finnish Labour Temple in Thunder Bay, Ontario. | © Vidioman / WikiCommons

# Restoring Trust



**Former  
Jane-Finch  
Firgrove Crescent  
Housing Site**

**Community &  
Residents received  
mass eviction notices  
Christmas 2016  
(Dec 19th)**

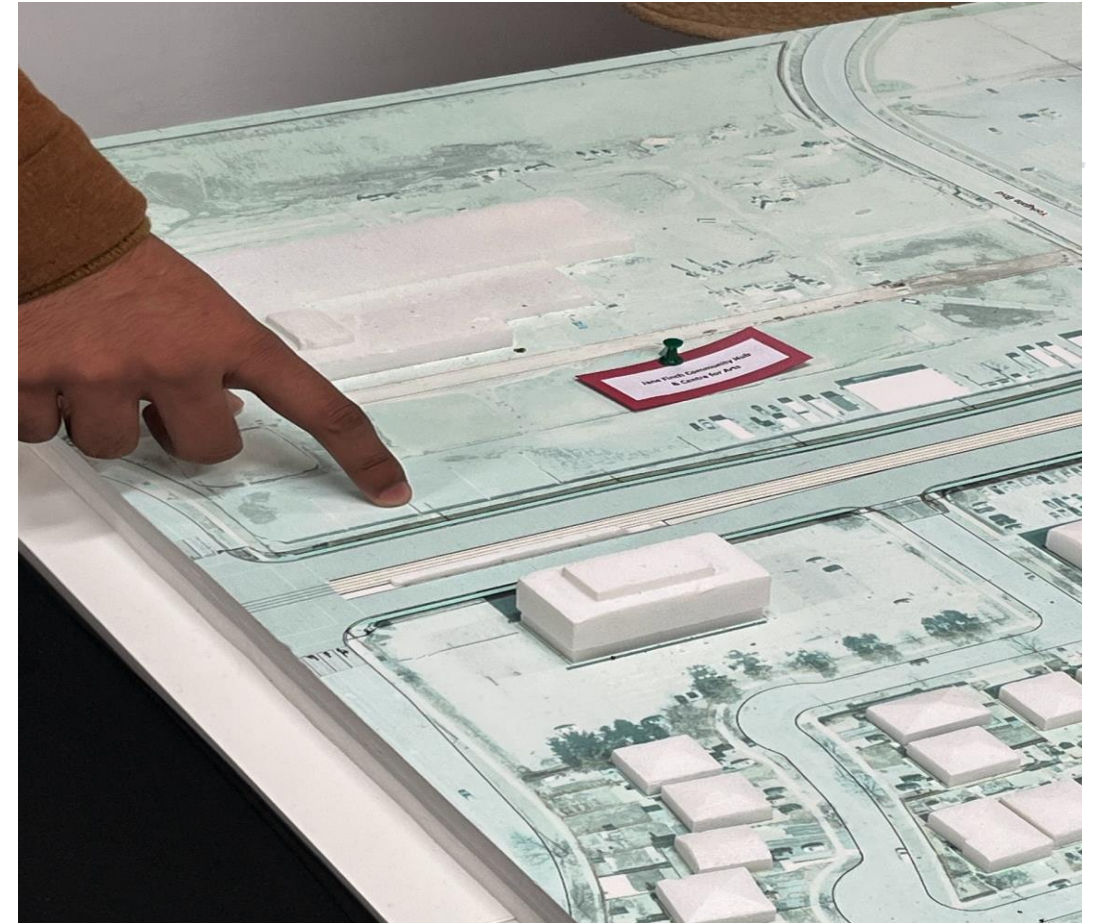
# If No Intervention - Business as Usual Implications

- **Why is it important to prioritize Black populations in Jane & Finch?**
  - Black populations face some of the highest levels of homelessness in Toronto
  - Black communities experience high rates of eviction
  - Increasing income polarization, displacement
  - Breaking down the economic vibrancy of the City of Toronto
  - Backbone of key essential services and City functions
  - Trust deficit exists based on lived experience
- **An anti-Black racism lens is needed**
  - Addressing new present & future TOD Vulnerabilities for Black Renter Populations
  - Recognizing a History of Exclusion
    - Systemic underinvestment in JF and other Black Rental Neighborhood community assets
    - Exclusion from Home Ownership pathways
- **New Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) Baseline**
  - Must be backed by early, consistent, and constructive actions
    - Difficult for the community to move forward otherwise
    - Recognize the talents, abilities of existing residents
      - African principle of Ubuntu: *"I Am Because We Are."*

# Jane & Finch Community Work Done to Date

## A Story of Strength and Resistance

- **Growing in Place**
  - Anti-Black racism planning analysis for urban development projects including TODs
- **JF Community Research Principles**
- **JF Community Centre -**
  - Metrolinx - 32 metre land setback (2X negotiated)
- **Community Network of Systems Thinkers**
  - A long history of grassroots organizing
  - Community members said clearly:  
*"Work with Us."*



Work to Date:  
City & Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG)  
Kirk Johnson

# City & ESG Work to Date

## City of Toronto

- Housing Now
- CABR & Housing Secretariat
- Jane Finch Initiative
- Community Development Plan
- City Acknowledgement
- MURA Program
- Rental Replacement Program

**From the CoT (EC10.1) - Jane Finch Community Development Plan 2024-2034 Council Briefing (adopted Feb 20 at committee**

without amendment and to be considered by City Council on March 20, 2024.)

*'The opening of the Finch West Light Rail Transit line stands to bring intensive and long-term change to the Jane Finch Area. Jane Finch is an area shaped by a history of underinvestment but also a history of community organizing and action responding to community needs. Growing evidence suggests that without focused investments in Reconciliation, equity and systems-wide strategies and supports, neighbourhoods with a history of underinvestment can experience increased levels of disruption and harm as a result of increased development pressure. For new investments to positively impact existing and new Jane Finch residents, holistic supports and policy frameworks must be put in place that reflect the diverse visions of Jane Finch residents, grassroots groups, local organizations, New policies, programs and partnerships must focus where the need is greatest and address the inequities that shape the lives of residents, with priority given to Indigenous, Black, and equity-deserving groups in Jane Finch.'*

## Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) Trends

- Patient Capital Investments (acquiring rental tower portfolios to retain present affordability levels)
- Early Adopter Developer/NGO Joint Venture Developments & Referral Programs
- Growing ESG traction (for larger publicly traded real estate firms)

# Competing Tensions

- Provincial **vs.** Municipal **vs.** Federal Government
- Decarbonization **vs.** Affordability
- Preservation **vs.** New Build
- Renters **vs.** Developers
- TOD Revitalization **vs.** Existing Community Heritage
- Targeted **vs.** Blanket Solutions
- Unintended Impact Data **vs.** Original Policy Intentions

# Long Range Planning / Asset Mapping

## Dr. Nemoy Lewis



# Long Range Equitable TOD Planning

- The best time to plant a tree was 50 years ago
  - The second best time is the present
- Translates into ETOD policy that connects providing
  - Community engagement
  - Placing the community in the driver seat to make decisions

## Asset Mapping

- Map who owns land in the community
- Understand who lives in the community
  - Local lens
- Expand Quantitative/Qualitative Social Mapping
  - Identify informal gathering spaces that foster and facilitate social cohesion
  - Work to protect and safeguard these informal spaces, while creating new spaces (the hub)



Photo source: Dr. Nemoy Lewis

# Macro Policy Issues & Solutions

## Issues:

- Over-emphasis on new supply ignores a **proportional consideration for rental stock preservation**
  - *Losing 15 affordable units in the housing market for every one new affordable unit of housing built (Pomeroy 2023)*
- Present policies prevent us from preserving our existing stock (*i.e. Vacancy De-Control*).

## Solution:

- Could be addressed by placing rent control back on new builds

# Macro Policy Issues & Solutions

## Issue:

- We can't just build **market-rent multi-family housing & rentals** as our way out of this current **affordability & housing supply crisis**

## Solutions:

- **Affordable housing covenants** attached to infrastructure investments - especially along *Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSA)*
- Leasing City-owned land in Protected Major Transit Station Areas (bidding process)
- Provide density bonuses to affordable developments that work with local/cultural not-for-profits

# Prioritizing Local Residents & Equitable Economic Development

Scott Kratz

# Put Residents at the Centre of this Work

## Work to understand:

- Neighbourhood's composition
- Expression of the community's rich & vibrant character
- Preservation of community spaces & places (place-keeping, not place-making)
- Value existing social infrastructure in the neighborhood
- Support ongoing capacity for Jane & Finch community non-profit / civic groups
- Build trust in the community - trust is fragile and needs constant tending and caring

## Heal existing wounds through investments in:

- Arts
- Culture
- Housing
- Employment
- Education
- Health



# Building an Inclusive & Equitable Neighbourhood

## Economic Development - a multi-sector approach

- **Support workforce development training**
  - Not only construction / maintenance jobs, but also program/project management, architects/engineering/specialist, marketing, planning, and finance roles)
  - Expand talent pool pipeline for union jobs
- **Create major civic assets** as destinations & gathering places - parks, meeting spaces, etc.
- **Target local capacity building**
  - Support entrepreneurship & leadership training & leadership training in the JF neighborhood
  - Support existing & new small businesses through technical assistance and funding
  - Celebrate and amplify JF arts & culture
- **Invest in health & wellness strategies**



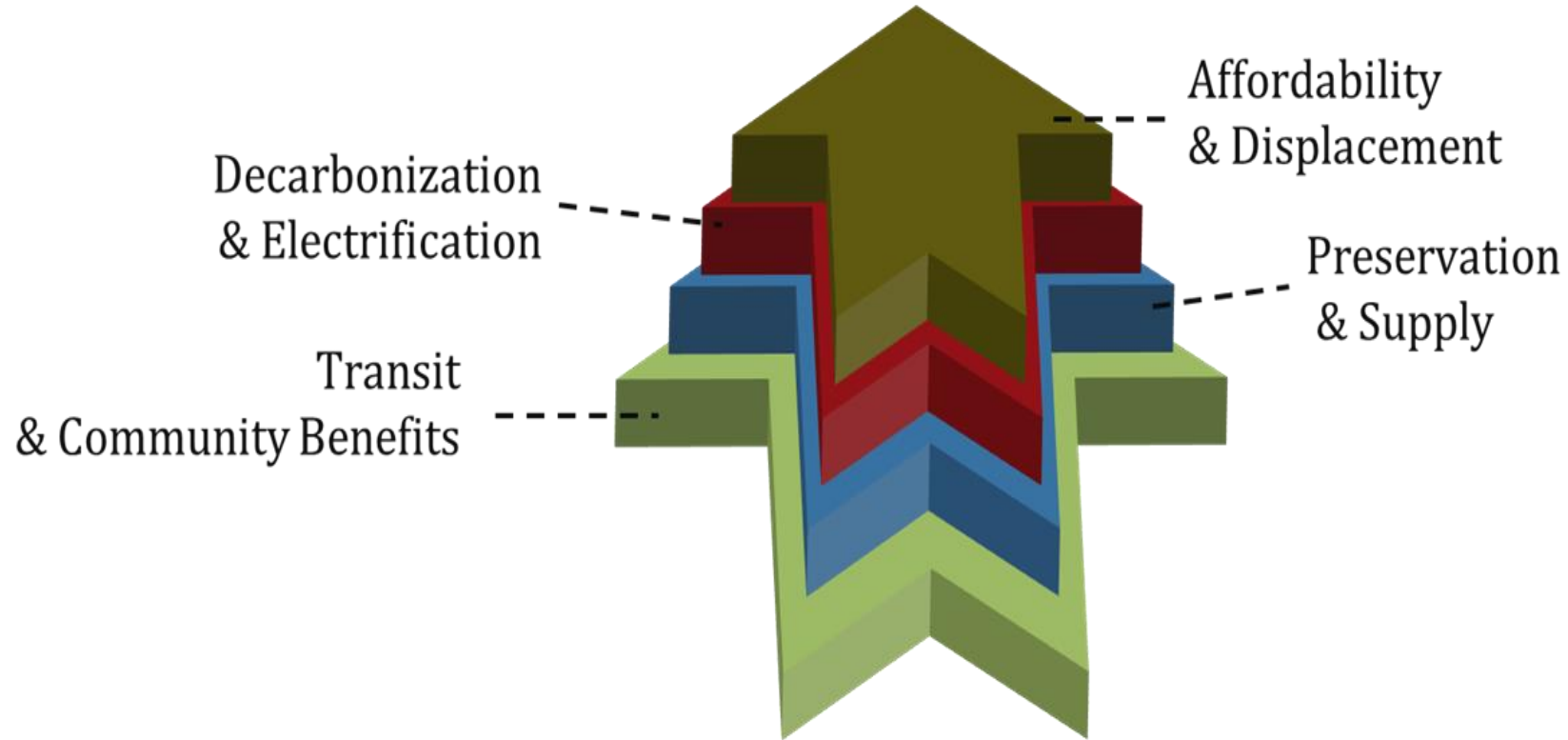
# Sustainability & Affordability Incentives Alignment Kirk Johnson

# Sustainability & Affordability Incentives Alignment

- **Align Sustainability Incentives** (*NRCan/IESO/TGS Tier 2*) and **Sustainability Targets in Financing Programs** (*CMHC/CIB/Hi-Ris*)
- **Encourage Anti-Displacement Decarbonization** that does not predicate or require mass displacement
- **Leverage imminent City of Toronto Building Performance Standards (BPS)** and building permitting rules
  - Minimize spurious repositioning & speculative ‘churn’
    - e.g. adapt *City of Hamilton Engineers Report* requirement
- **Augment Decarbonization & Electrification Program Grant Levels**
  - Continue with program guidelines to include ‘No AGI’ provisions
  - Investigate *Federal, IESO, and Toronto Hydro Beneficial Electrification* funding sources
- **Fund Equitable Decarbonization** - Establish *Equitable Decarbonization* funding prioritized for rental ETOD
- **Integrate Federal Multi Family Retrofit Accelerator Programs** and over-cladding capacity building resources
- **Prioritize ‘Envelope-First’ Renewal Upgrades** that *minimize construction timelines, reduce occupancy costs, and shorten resident displacement via envelope-first low carbon initiatives reducing electrical/heat loads*
  - Encourages *beneficial electrification* for electric vehicles & space heating
  - Does not require lengthy (50+ week) & expensive *Toronto Hydro* service upgrades
- **Provide a Toronto Hydro Fast Lane** for *Affordable New & Renewal Multi-Family Rental Projects*



# Sustainability, Transit & Development Incentives in Alignment



# Affordable Housing

## Barika Williams

# Affordable Multi-Family Housing Solutions

- **“Market rate” is outpacing / exceeding population incomes and demand**
  - Headed towards market rate equals luxury
- **Make affordable new construction less costly**
  - Reduce or waive development costs for affordable
  - Speed up and increase predictability of the development process
  - Fix and Improve the Fast track permits with affordable
  - Create a separate permit review group for affordable projects
  - Long-term to permanent affordability
    - Avoid the “expiring use” crisis upfront
- **How to get “affordable” to truly affordable**
  - Set local AMR/AMI targets to get the wanted local affordability levels
  - Definition of affordability based on % of income vs % of rents
- **We have to have solutions the keep our existing stock affordable**
  - Preservation financing to entice / encourage landlords to “re-up”
  - Capital financing for low-cost affordable existing housing
  - Maintenance funding for low-cost affordable existing housing

# Affordable Housing (Home/Community Ownership)

- **Detached / Single-Family Home Ownership**
  - Racial and Ethnic difference from rental population
  - Distinct policy asks / goals
  - Culture or class desirability or goals
  - People are paying in rent, what they could be paying in mortgages but not getting the asset benefit
  - Explore a Targeted '*Options for Homes (OFL)*' model which already has high Black population Rent-to Own participation metrics
  - Provide Down Payment Assistance Programs
    - Tackles concerns of thrice displacement & provides security and stability
- **Community or Purpose Driven Ownership**
  - Community Land Trusts
  - Missing Middle Solutions
    - Multiplex / 4plex Policies
    - Explore NRCan rapid housing accelerators & funding to create new pathways to ownership
  - Coops & Rent to own (for multi family)



# Capacity Building for Non-Market Developers

Robert Walter-Joseph

# Non-Market Housing: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle

- **Non-profit housing has been an essential missing piece of the affordability puzzle**
  - NGOs
  - Black Community Developers, Small-scale, multiplex housing - leverage these developments to grow opportunities for ownership stake in community
  - Community land trusts, supporting local community decision making
- **Private Developers seek joint ventures with non-profits**
  - Unlock new opportunities (Development Charge exemption, Bill 23)
  - Waitlists operated by non-profits supporting local and Black residents



# Capacity Building for Non-Market Developers

- **Leverage anchor institutions**
  - York University
  - Humber River Hospital (Reactivation Care Centre)
- **Support land acquisition for NGOs to grow the pipeline of affordable development**
- **Review CMHC Hamilton Solutions Lab Initiative**
  - A solution to front-end community conversation through a clear framework of engagement to coordinate action. Bring community actors to the table. *(Q2-2024 Release & Dissemination)*
- **Expand Role of Philanthropy & Cultural Charities**
  - United Way functions as a trustee for non-profits
  - Philanthropy can support deeply affordable housing by top-ups in non-profit development, can assist in providing wrap around services

Photo by Errol Young "Be Inspire, Love Yourself, Educate Others (25 San Romanoway)"

# Land and Financing

## Agnieszka Wloch



# Enable Purpose-driven Development



## LAND

- **Inventory and use publicly-owned land** to deliver affordable housing; consider leasing land to NGOs or NGO + Developer Partnerships
- **Use the Ontario's Realty Directive** and capitalize on the land acquisition/disposition opportunities to drive provincial and municipal community and environmental interests
- **Expand land transaction strategies** to include bridge financing to fund development and pre-construction cost

## FINANCING

- **Consider tiered incentives** to reward affordable housing, multi-solving and integrated to achieve multiple city objectives. Use available tools, such as *multi-year tax abatement, DC and CBC deferral models & rebates*
- **Expand incentive programs and allow combinations** for more holistic approach (*i.e. TGS + Open Door*) and align them with funding structures (*CMHC's MLI Select*) to drive decarbonization and affordable housing
- **Support access to Patient Capital**, *ie. Canada Infrastructure Bank, ESG Impact Investors or Philanthropy* for equitable development that meets City priorities with other levels of government
- **Promote development of new financing instruments** such as *market traded federal investment tax credits (ITCs)* to affordable housing providers that also decarbonize

# Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Recommendations

# Monday Morning - Short Term

## ENVIRONMENTAL

- Establish an **Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) building & energy performance data-set** and baseline for Equitable Decarbonization Pathways

## SOCIAL

- **Validate TAP Recommendations**
  - Matching resourcing to **ETOD** needs
- **Identify social program funding** via NGO & Government to implement 2025-2030 **Jane Finch Initiative Community Economic Plan** strategies
- **Deploy communication strategies** that mirror the community's technology & social networks to drive deeper engagement in decision making, not just communicating
- **Map areas of TOD vulnerability** within/near the Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs) for targeted preservation/renewal strategies

## GOVERNANCE

- **Review ETOD Land data** - Inventory of land ownership; focus on publicly owned land
- **Increase Evictions Transparency** - (1) Helps mitigate predatory speculation within the housing stock, (2) Benchmarks & tracks the number of deeply affordable units by decade to improve stock preservation

# Mid-Term Actions (3 to 6 months)

- **Develop/Enhance standing public land procurement policy** around the purchase & retention of nearby public lands for Affordable *Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD)* uses
- Set ETOD Targets Pt.1:
  - At least **60% of TOD apartment units are *renewed or built as affordable***, based on the number of deep affordable multi-family units that existed in 2005
- Explore recommended **ETOD sustainability, affordability, and preservation incentives/financing tools** for Jane-Finch and all existing/future TOD projects
  - [Sustainability Recommendations](#)
  - [Affordability Recommendations](#)
  - [Jane & Finch Community Recommendations](#)

# Mid-Term Actions (3 to 6 months)

- Jane & Finch Community Recommendations
  - Engage JF tenants and recently displaced tenants for ETOD communication, outreach, collaboration and transparency; special focus on vulnerable/Black populations
  - Establish a Taskforce that addresses speculative displacement and loss of affordability for Black Renters & Communities
  - Dramatically scale Municipal & NGO community assets, programming, presence and engagement with the community
    - Identify opportunities for civic/catalyst investments in public spaces, sporting facilities, art, cultural festivals
    - Lease, establish or fund a no or low-cost, interim co-working & gathering space
  - Explore anchor institution conversations and appetite with key actors like York University
- City-Wide Actions
  - Develop a comprehensive Strategy for Housing Preservation
  - Make the needed adjustments and improvements to Fast Track permits for affordable housing projects
  - Investigate reducing Development charges on affordable housing projects
  - Align the carbon reduction and maintenance of affordable housing policies and programs
  - Break down municipal agency silos to align land use, housing transportation, and climate policies, programs and fundings to create a common vision and strategies in lock step with other levels for government
- Pivot from managing [Competing Tensions](#) to creating [Collaborative Synergies](#)

# Long Term (Six months +)

- ETOD Targets Pt.2:
  - Set at least  $\frac{2}{3}$  of all affordable housing targets to prioritize preservation of existing units
- Pilot a voluntary **ETOD program** with TCHC Firgrove and a JF Area Private Rental Apartment
- Prioritize & Fund **JF Community Centre development**
- Establish **city-wide ETOD development incentives & affordable project allowances**
  - Adapt recommended ETOD [Capacity Building Programs](#), [Policy Tools](#), and [Land/Finance instruments](#) for Jane Finch and all TOD developments
- Undertake **ETOD upfront value capture, protections, and requirements** in future projects
  - Leverage **Community Improvement Plans, Tax Increment Financing, Land Use Controls**,
  - Optimize **Equitable Decarbonization** supports from current/future 2024-2030 provincial & federal decarbonisation/electrification/affordability programs
- **Evolve CABR vision into a holistic DEI strategy**
  - Embed CABR objectives & KPI across city departments
  - Support experiential learning for Black planners within the Planning Division
  - Hire qualified Black planners/engineers/managers/specialists

# Q&A

**Thank you!**

Email: [toronto@uli.org](mailto:toronto@uli.org); [housing@uli.org](mailto:housing@uli.org)

Website: <https://toronto.uli.org/>;  
[www.Uli.org/Terwilliger](http://www.Uli.org/Terwilliger)

# TAP Chair



**Kirk Johnson**  
President, Eco-Efficiency

For more than 15 years, Kirk Johnson has led the design and delivery of over \$300M in market transformation, decarbonization, and workforce development programs across Canada for funders such as Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC), City of Toronto (CoT), Ontario Power Authority (Now IESO), Province of Ontario (MOE/GreenON), Environment & Climate Change Canada (ECCC), Innovation Science & Economic Development Canada (ISED), Humber College, University of Waterloo, and Toronto Hydro.

Select market transformation work includes adapting the US EPA's *ENERGY STAR Multi-Family High-Rise* building standard for Canada with NRCan and leading the energy performance criteria development for the *Toronto Green Standard (TGS) V1*. As a Community Energy Planner, he chaired the *Mayor's District Energy* working group and managed the *Lawrence Allen/Westwood/Mimico Community Energy Plans* and city-wide *Tower Renewal Archetype Design* initiative in the City of Toronto's Better Buildings Partnership (BBP) unit. Portfolio Management includes concurrent design/delivery of \$100M+ decarbonization programs such as Ontario's *High Performance New Construction (HPNC)*, *Toronto Multi-Family*, and *BOMA CRE* incentive programs. Kirk has created & delivered capacity-building programs in 25 municipalities. His two co-designed workforce development programs with University of Waterloo recently secured \$3.1M from ISED Canada for 2024-2025 delivery. Kirk is the former Chair of Earth Day Canada and a 2024 Efficiency Canada Trailblazer.

Kirk's projects portfolio covers all commercial/residential typologies and building systems upgrades, creation of the 1000+ building *GREEN UP* Carbon, Energy & OpEx Business Intelligence platform for CaGBC, and re-design of a CoT \$40M revolving fund to finance institutional/community renewable/decarbonization projects.



# TAP Panelists



**Mitzie Hunter**  
President and CEO,  
The Canadian Women's  
Foundation

Mitzie Hunter is an accomplished, dynamic leader driven by strong values with a moral compass of giving back to the community. Her proven track record of building and championing the city of Toronto has positively impacted the lives of the city's residents. As a relentless champion for Toronto, Mitzie Hunter served as the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Scarborough-Guildwood, securing an impressive four consecutive election victories over the course of a decade.

Her 30 years of leadership extends to several high-level positions, including roles in the provincial cabinet where she served as Minister of Education, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, and Associate Minister of Finance, entrusted with overseeing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

Mitzie's diverse background encompasses both the public and private sectors, including prominent roles in one of Canada's largest information and communications technology companies, as well as involvement in the dynamic start-up and small business landscape. Her public service extends to her role as Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Toronto Community Housing Corporation, and head of CivicAction a convener of business, government and community which aims to improve cities.

Mitzie earned an MBA from the University of Toronto, Rotman School of Management. Her life's work and accomplishments are testimony to Mitzie's ability to develop strategies and build highly motivated teams to achieve results.

# TAP Panelists



**Scott Kratz**  
Director, 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge  
Park, Washington, DC

For the last ten years, Scott Kratz has been working with the East of the River based non-profit Building Bridges Across the River and the Washington DC city government to transform an old freeway bridge into a park above the Anacostia River. The old 11th Street Bridges that connect Capitol Hill with communities east of the river reached the end of their lifespan, Scott is working with the community to use the base of one of the bridges to create a one of a kind civic space supporting active recreation, environmental education and the arts. Scott leads the team that is designing, building and one day operating the park. Beyond the park's physical construction, he has led the effort to ensure long term residents can stay and thrive in place through a nationally recognized equitable development plan that includes affordable housing, workforce training, preservation of Black owned small businesses and arts / culture strategies.

Scott lives a few blocks away from the Bridge Park site in Capitol Hill and has called Washington DC his home for the last 17+ years. He graduated with a history degree from Pomona College in Southern California and has worked in the education field for twenty+ years. He began his career teaching at Kidspace, a children's museum in Pasadena, California and later as the Associate Director of the Institute for the Study of the American West at the Autry National Center in Los Angeles. While at the Autry, he supervised a staff that planned and implemented programs including film, music, festivals, family programs, lecture series, academic symposia and Native theater. He moved to Washington DC to become the Vice President for Education at the National Building Museum. Scott is honored to serve on the board of the Anacostia Coordinating Council and the Anacostia Business Improvement District.

Emmy-nominated [video](#) from the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Project.

# TAP Panelists



**Dr. Nemoy Lewis**  
Assistant Professor, School  
of Urban and Regional  
Planning, TMU

Dr. Nemoy Lewis is an assistant professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at Toronto Metropolitan University. Dr. Lewis holds a PhD in human geography from Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. He earned both his undergraduate and master’s degrees in geography at the University of Toronto. His research explores how space is racialized by examining the co-production of racialization and financialization in North American urban housing markets, and the growing affordability problems impacting Black renters. Dr. Lewis’s current research investigates a relatively new type of financialized landlord – primarily private equity and asset management firms– and their impacts on the physical infrastructures and urban social geography of disenfranchised communities. Lewis recently commenced two major research projects that explore access to housing for Black Canadians. The first examines the housing affordability and eviction crises, with a specific emphasis on the role of financialized landlords and the broader consequences for Black renters during the COVID-19 pandemic in Toronto. The second project seeks to understand the unique challenges faced by Black Canadians in their pursuit of homeownership.

Dr. Lewis has a forthcoming co-authored piece titled Financialized Violence in Toronto’s Rental Market: Acquisitions, Evictions, and Banishment of Black Renters. The article meticulously probes the deleterious consequences stemming from the investments of financialized landlords within Toronto’s Black communities. By untangling the threads of financialization of rental housing and its impact on Toronto’s Black communities, Lewis and his co-authors offer a valuable contribution to our understanding of the challenges faced by Black renters in Toronto.

# TAP Panelists



**Robert Walter-Joseph**  
Principal, Gladki  
Planning Associates

Robert Walter-Joseph is an urban planner focused on delivering affordable, non-profit, and mixed-use housing projects, reflecting GPA's commitment to inclusive community building across the GTHA. A Registered Professional Planner, his expertise in land use planning extends to inclusive planning practices, zoning, housing, and planning for mixed-use, commercial, and employment areas.

# TAP Panelists



**Barika X Williams**  
Executive Director,  
Association for  
Neighborhood & Housing  
Development, NYC

**Barika X Williams** is the Executive Director of the Association for Neighborhood & Housing Development Inc. (ANHD), a leading nonprofit dedicated to housing and economic justice in New York. She is a leader and a national voice on how community development in marginalized neighborhoods can advance racial justice.

Previously, Barika served as Assistant Secretary for Housing in New York State, overseeing pivotal housing initiatives, including a \$20 billion housing plan and tenant protections expansion.

Her career includes work in real estate development and research, notably at the Urban Institute and NYU's Metropolitan Center, where she pioneered novel projects and published on topics including affordable housing practices, foreclosure prevention, disaster recovery, and the links between health, education, and housing.

Barika is a member of the US Treasury Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, advisory committees for financial institutions like Capital One, and sits on the Board of Urban Design Forum.

# TAP Panelists



**Agnieszka Wloch**  
VP Development, Minto

Agnieszka Wloch is a seasoned Real Estate Development executive with focus on leading and successfully executing complex development initiatives that contribute to Minto's objective of expanding strategically in select North American markets to create future growth. She has a strong foundation in business administration, engineering, architectural and urban design paired with 25+ years of global experience in Canada, the US, Europe and the Caribbean.

Agnieszka's specialties include management of business strategy, process and project management within complex mixed-use real estate development realm via engagement of stakeholders and large, multidisciplinary teams. She is at her best when involved in intricate and challenging business situations that require cross-functional leadership to achieve success.

Regarded by Colleagues and Partners as an insightful, inquisitive and versatile leader who quickly establishes relationships with stakeholders at all levels, introduces possibilities that challenge convention and focuses on action.