

ROBERTO CURTO FOR MAYOR

CAMPUS HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

More Homes For Students. More Room For Everyone



**A proposal to build student and affordable
housing on underused campus land.**

curto.ca

Toronto Campus Housing Partnership

Build Homes Where Students Study

Toronto's universities and colleges attract students, researchers and investment from around the world. They are an important part of Toronto's economy and future. But when institutions grow without adding enough housing, students are pushed into an already strained rental market, increasing competition for apartments, rooms and family-sized homes.

Toronto needs more housing everywhere, and our major institutions must be part of the solution.

20,000 New Homes & Student Beds

Our ten-year target for new housing on and around Toronto's post-secondary campuses.

Toronto Has a Strategy - Let's Strengthen it and Get Moving!

City Council adopted its first Academic Housing Strategy in 2025 and directed staff to identify a pilot affordable student-housing project on public land. It's a solid start. But why are we stopping at a pilot? We don't need a pilot project to tell us that affordable student housing is worth building. A council led by Curto will build on the work already underway and move from pilots to production.

The Plan: 20,000 Homes and Student Beds

The City of Toronto will establish a *Toronto Campus Housing Partnership* connecting universities and colleges with the City, nonprofit and cooperative housing providers, development partners and other levels of government.

Our goal will be to secure commitments for at least 20,000 new homes and student beds on or near institutional lands over ten years.

Why 20,000? Toronto's nine publicly funded post-secondary institutions serve roughly 350,000 students but collectively provide only about 15,000 on campus beds. U of T alone has announced plans for up to 5,500 additional residence spaces, while major institutional land opportunities exist at campuses including York Keele. A target of 20,000 homes and student beds over ten years is ambitious, but achievable if Toronto moves from isolated projects to citywide delivery.

No funny math here. We won't take credit for housing that was already coming. The City will establish a public baseline separating projects already approved or under construction, projects institutions had previously planned, and additional housing initiated, expanded or accelerated through the Campus Housing Partnership.

Participating institutions will publish a ten-year Campus Housing Plan that includes:

- Current enrollment and institution-controlled housing.

- Projected enrollment growth.
- Land available or potentially suitable for housing.
- Existing housing projects and commitments.
- Targets for new student, affordable, graduate, family, faculty and staff housing.
- Timelines for delivering those homes.
- Infrastructure and servicing requirements.

The City will publish an annual *Toronto Campus Housing Report* so residents can see whether institutional growth is being matched by housing growth, and whether both the institutions and City Hall are delivering on their commitments.

Unlock Institutional Land

Instead of searching for individual pilot sites one at a time, Toronto will undertake a *Campus Housing Opportunity Map* across our major post-secondary institutions.

Toronto will work with institutions to turn appropriate underused land including surface parking and low-density sites near rapid transit into complete, mixed-use communities.

Depending on the campus and location, projects could include:

- Purpose-built student residences.
- Affordable and below-market rental housing.
- Regular purpose-built rental housing.
- Graduate, family, faculty and staff housing.
- Grocery stores, cafés, childcare and everyday services.
- Parks, public spaces and cultural facilities.

Large surface parking lots should not automatically remain parking lots for another generation while Toronto faces a housing shortage. Where parking remains necessary, the City and institutions can explore structured or underground parking, shared parking, improved transit connections and other alternatives that use valuable urban land more efficiently.

Start Where We Can Build Big

Not every campus has the same opportunities. Downtown institutions face different physical constraints than larger campuses with significant amounts of land. That's why we'll start where we can make the biggest impact.

York University (Keele Campus)

Our flagship Campus Housing District. York is already planning the long-term transformation of more than 190 acres of its Keele lands and is served by two subway stations. Toronto will work with York to put housing at the centre of that transformation. The goal is creating a transit-connected university district with thousands of new homes and student beds, alongside shops, services, parks and community amenities.

Seneca Newnham, Humber North and Centennial Progress will join York as the first campuses studied for major housing opportunities, including the redevelopment of appropriate surface parking and underused institutional land.

At more constrained campuses such as the University of Toronto, Toronto Metropolitan University and George Brown, the City will pursue high-density infill, redevelopment, nonprofit partnerships, nearby City-owned land and other opportunities appropriate to their urban context.

The goal isn't to impose the same solution everywhere. It's to stop overlooking some of Toronto's largest institutional landowners when we're searching for places to build housing.

Incentives With Public Benefits

Universities and colleges don't have to become giant residential developers themselves.

Housing could be delivered directly by institutions or through partnerships with nonprofit and cooperative housing providers, experienced private developers, student-housing operators and other levels of government.

For projects that deliver substantial new housing, Toronto can be an active partner by providing:

- Coordinated and expedited municipal reviews.
- Infrastructure and servicing coordination.
- Access to suitable City-owned land.
- Reduced municipal fees or development-charge relief where legally available and justified.
- Support securing provincial and federal financing.
- Partnerships with nonprofit housing providers.
- A dedicated municipal team to coordinate major campus projects.

But public support must come with public benefits.

Institutions seeking significant discretionary City assistance will enter into Campus Housing Agreements setting out housing and affordability targets, accessibility requirements, construction timelines, long-term housing protections and public reporting.

The City should not subsidize institutional real-estate expansion without securing meaningful housing benefits.

The deal is straightforward:

You bring the land and a serious commitment to housing. Toronto helps get it built.

How We're Strengthening Toronto's Existing Plan

Our approach strengthens the City's existing work in five important ways:

1. From pilots to scale.

- a. We won't wait for one demonstration project to finish before pursuing the next. We'll identify opportunities across major campuses simultaneously and move viable projects forward in parallel.
2. From broad objectives to 20,000 homes and beds.
 - a. We'll establish a measurable ten-year target and publicly distinguish new housing from projects already underway.
3. Connect enrollment to housing.
 - a. Participating institutions will publish projected enrolment alongside housing capacity and housing targets. If an institution is planning significant growth, we should know how it intends to contribute to housing that growth.
4. Build neighbourhoods, not just student residences.
 - a. Institutional land can deliver student housing alongside affordable and regular rental housing, family housing, shops, services and public spaces.
5. Make everyone accountable.
 - a. Campus Housing Agreements and annual reporting will show which institutions are delivering, which are falling behind and what's holding projects up. And if City Hall is causing the delay, we'll report that too.

Toronto has already identified the opportunity. We don't need another decade of pilots. Let's put the plan into a higher gear.

Why This Matters

Purpose built campus housing can take pressure off surrounding neighbourhoods by giving more students somewhere to live close to where they study. It can help protect family-sized homes from conversion into informal student rentals, reduce long commutes and support a more sustainable pattern of growth.

But the opportunity is bigger than student housing.

Mixed-use campus development can create shops, childcare, services, parks and public spaces while adding affordable and regular rental housing for people who aren't students at all. Instead of commuter campuses surrounded by parking, Toronto can help create real neighbourhoods connected to transit.

We should stop overlooking some of the largest institutional landowners in the city while hundreds of thousands of students compete in the same rental market as everyone else.

Universities should be able to grow. But growth must come with a housing plan. We know what we need to do. Let's get a move on.