

Quantifying the costs of delays in new developments



BRYAN TUCKEY
BILD

Last week, the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) released a report outlining the financial impact of the delays in site plan review on new home buyers, jobs and the local economy.

This was the first report to quantify the cost of delays in the site plan approval process in Ontario. BILD was consulted in the early stages of the preparation of this document and our Toronto Chapter Chair Gary Switzer and Active BILD representative Darryl Keleher of Altus Group both acting as panelists in a recent symposium for the launch of this report.

The report revealed that the site plan approval process in this province is often delayed anywhere between six and 12 months. In fact, more than 35 per cent of applications are awaiting approval for at least nine months, which is significantly longer than the 30-day appeal period provided for in the Planning Act.

The overall research shows that the majority of applications take at least two resubmissions before approval, with certain types of larger developments taking three or more resubmissions.

The report found that each additional month ends up costing a new

home purchaser approximately \$2,375 as a result of costs passed on through higher prices, lost equity by not starting a mortgage sooner and additional rent costs.

That's a considerable cost for new home buyers who are already burdened by record-high prices across the GTA. Affordability continues to be a challenge for anyone looking to buy a home in our region, which is a direct result of constrained land supply, stricter mortgage lending rules and rising government fees and charges.

According to RealNet Canada Inc., BILD's official source for new home market intelligence, the index price for a new low-rise home in the GTA has grown to 658,938. High-rise pricing has stayed relatively unchanged and as a result, the price gap between the two sectors has also grown to a record-breaking \$222,149.

BILD has been speaking on these issues for several years and has pointed out that the existing site plan approval process is working against overarching public policy goals, such as the intensification targets of the Growth Plan.

As OAA President Bill Birdsell pointed out, this report clearly shows that the site plan approval process is inefficient and costly, with the costs passed along to all Ontarians.

— *Bryan Tuckey is President and CEO of the Building Industry & Land Development Association (BILD).*

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Food bank receives \$10,630 from Geranium Homes

For the fifth year in a row the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank has been the recipient of a major September food drive led by Geranium Homes.

Homeowners, staff, suppliers, consultants and trades people of the company's The Neighbourhoods of Cardinal Point in Stouffville have all contributed much needed food items.

Company president Boaz Feiner presented a cheque in the amount of \$10,630 — representing the combined total of funds from Geranium's donation of \$50 per home sold at Cardinal Point in the past year as well as contributions including \$2,000 from James Hardie Building Products.

Every year SCS Consulting Group organizes the collection of food from the trades and suppliers.

"From the bottom of our hearts, we thank everyone who contributes along with Geranium to give us such a huge boost each year," said Marion Wells, executive director of the Food Bank.

At its annual Barbecue-in-the-Park

event held last month, Geranium kicked off its Food Drive. Throughout the month, homeowners dropped off food donations to the Cardinal Point sales centre and tradespeople brought items to the construction site office.

On Friday, September 27 Marion Wells and Mayor Wayne Emmerson arrived at Cardinal Point for the final tally and cheque presentation.

Emmerson said that every dollar donated is actually the equivalent of three-dollars in the hands of the organizers of the food bank.

The money will be used to purchase fresh meat, eggs, bread, cheese and other items to supplement the non-perishable goods.

"Geranium's leadership means so much to this volunteer organization. I am very appreciative of their contribution," he added.

Geranium Homes recently unveiled Uptownes at Cardinal Point, a new release of urban-style condominium townhomes to be built in Stouffville's master-planned ravine community.

In an enclave neighbourhood of 134 condo towns configured as the Chicago Series of back-to-back and The Gooderham Series of stacked units, Uptownes designs have all the living areas that buyers most value in a home.

Homes start at 1,401 to 1,639 square feet and include a ground floor bonus recreation room.

Every home has a large rooftop terrace which range in size from approximately 279 square feet up to 380 square feet. Prices start from \$394,900.

Cardinal Point is a thriving community that offers great value in an unbeatable location just steps from Main Street's shops, dining, recreation, cultural venues, services and the Stouffville GO station.

The neighbourhood is just minutes to golf courses, Highways 404 and 407, and Markham Stouffville Hospital.

The Neighbourhoods of Cardinal Point Sales Centre is located on Millard Street, just east of Highway 48 and north of Stouffville Road (Main Street).



On Friday, Sept. 27, the Food Bank's Marion Wells and Mayor Wayne Emmerson arrived at Cardinal Point for the final tally and cheque presentation.