

An aerial night view of a city skyline, featuring numerous illuminated skyscrapers and the prominent CN Tower. The city lights are reflected on the water in the background.

The Case for Abolishing Ontario's *Planning Act*

More Homes, Better Homes, Better Neighbours

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Roadmap

- Context
- What is the Planning Act?
- Why Abolish the Planning Act?
 - Centralized Planning
 - Bad Outcomes
- Consequences of the Abolition:
 - More Homes
 - Better Homes
 - Better Neighbours
- Will More Democracy Help?
 - Politics Without Romance



Context

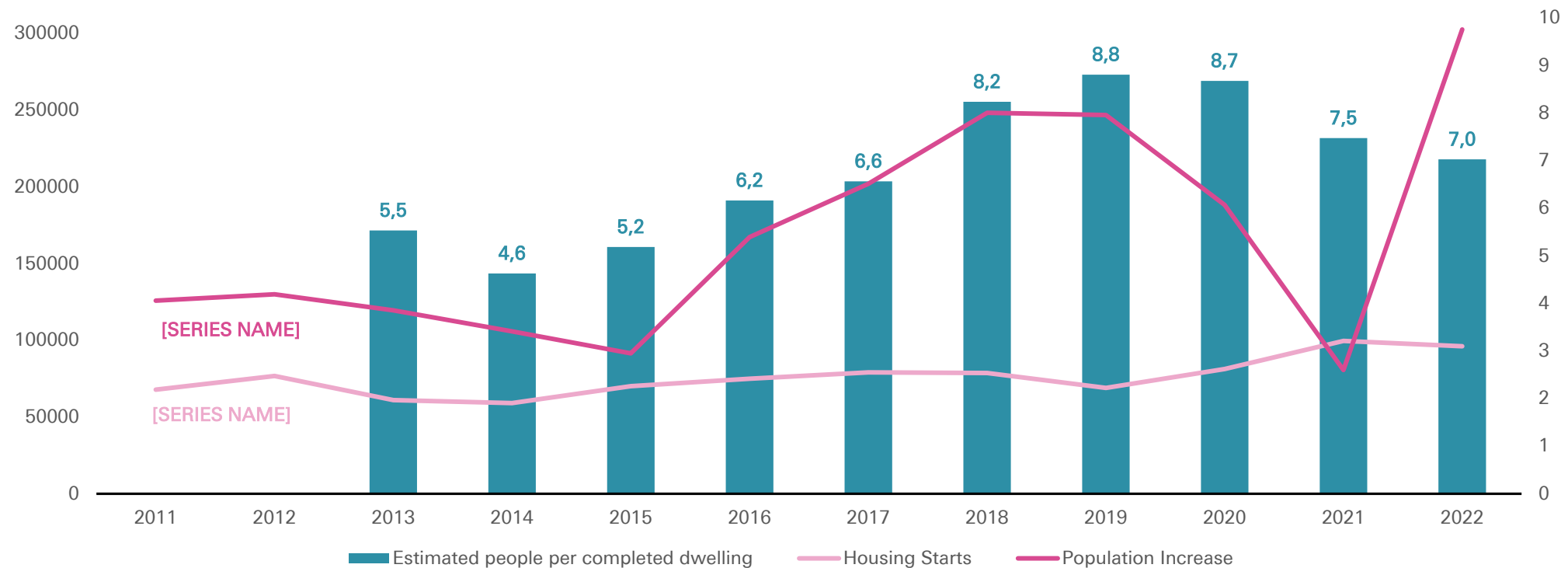
Housing in the GTA is...

- Unavailable,**
- Unaffordable**
- Getting Worse**

Fewer homes are available per person, requiring more people to shack up together

Housing construction has not been catching up to population growth

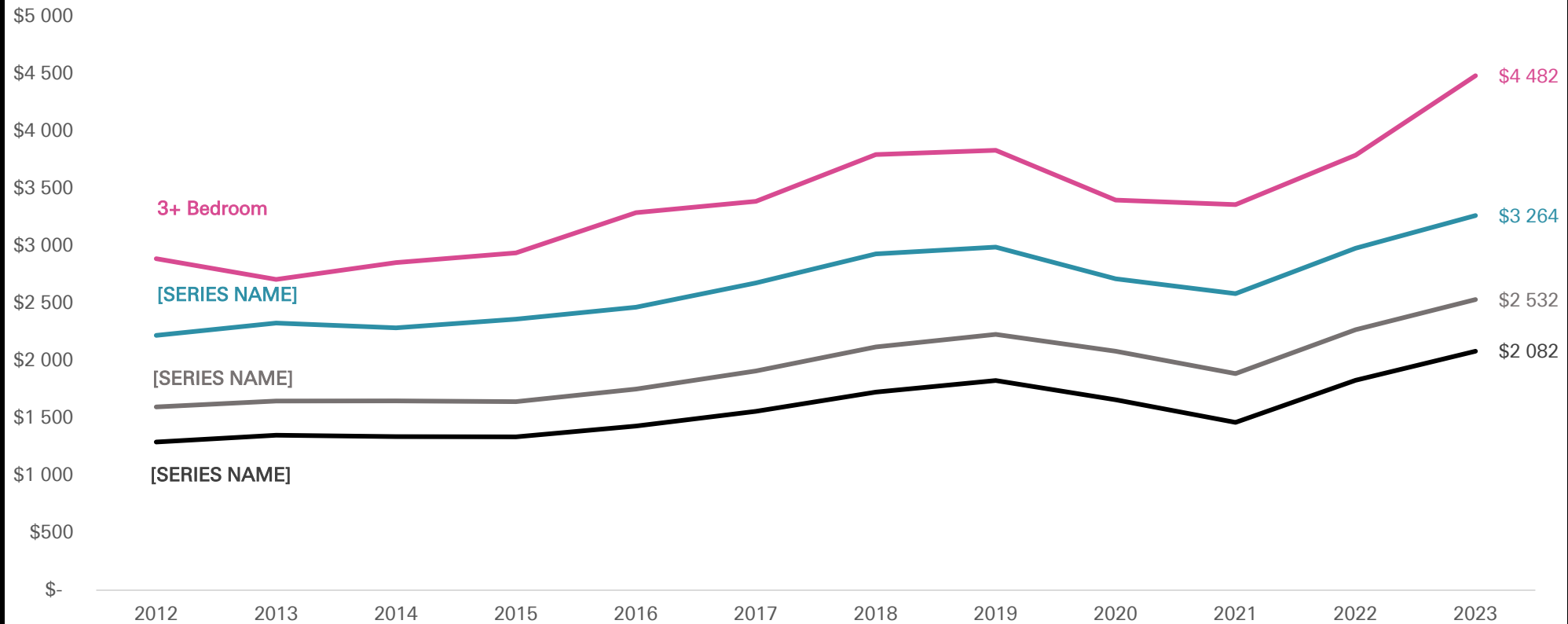
Ontario population increase per year, new housing construction starts per year, and estimated people per completed dwelling 3 years after start



Rental affordability is getting worse

GTA rental prices increasing at fastest ever rate

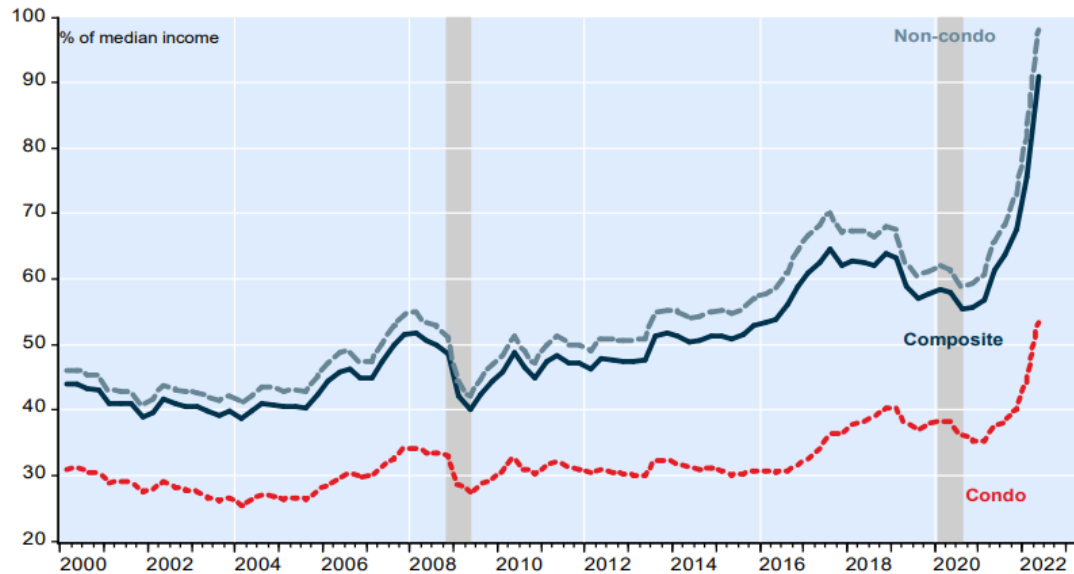
Rental prices in Q2 in the Greater Toronto Area according to TRREB Rental Market Report, 2012-2023



Mortgage payments are skyrocketing

Toronto : Perspective on housing affordability

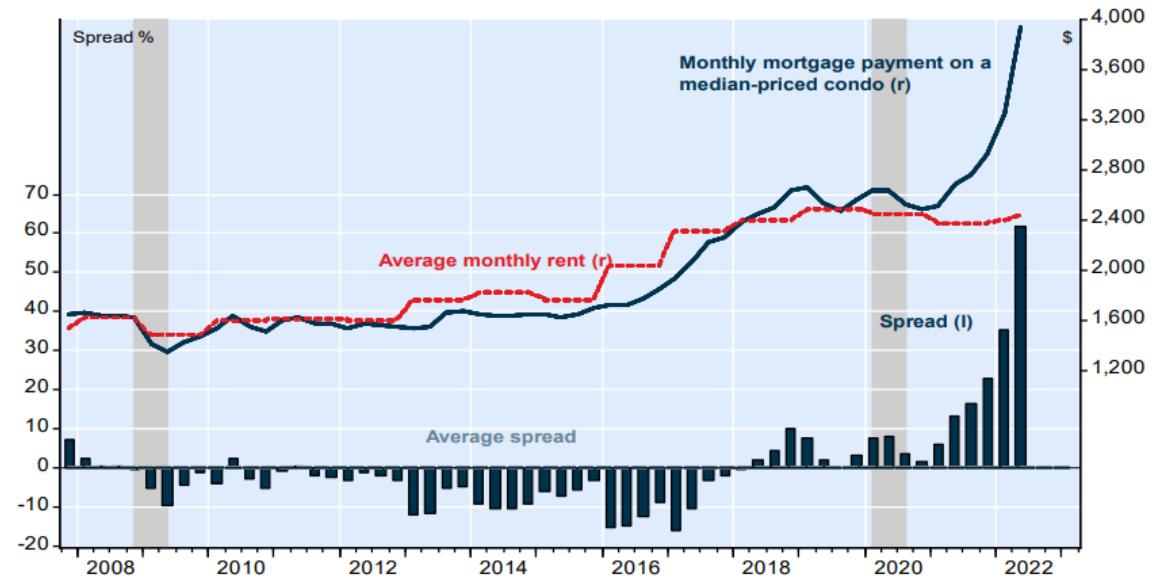
Monthly mortgage payment on median home price (25 year amortization, 5-year term)



NBF Economics and Strategy (data via Statistics Canada, Teranet-National Bank)

Toronto: Buying compared to renting

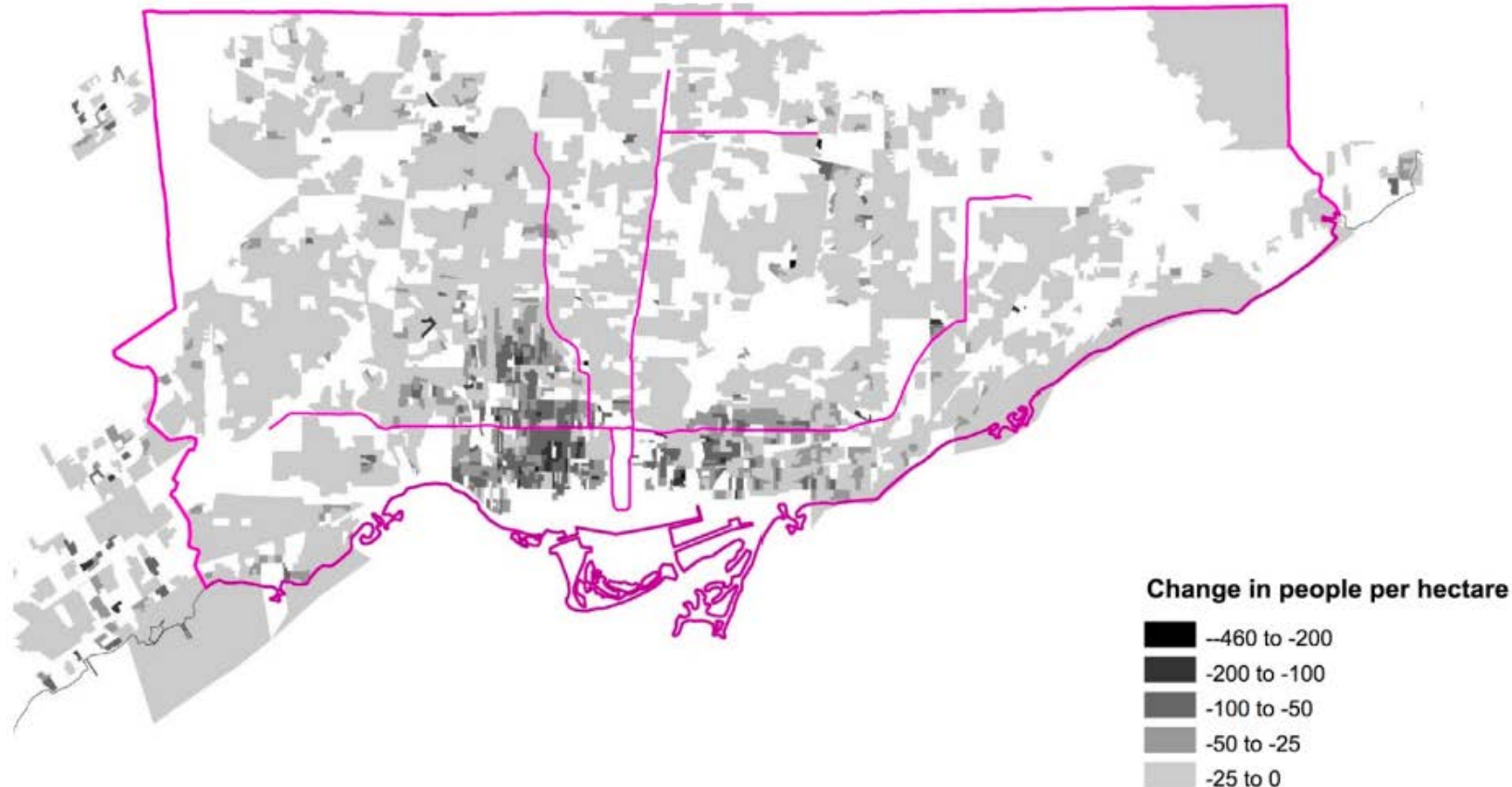
Premium/discount for buying compared to renting a two-bedroom condo



NBF Economics and Strategy (data via Statistics Canada, Teranet-National Bank)

Despite increase in population and skyscrapers, many parts of Toronto have actually *lost* population over fifty years

Population density lost between 1971 and 2016



Getting Worse

Over 80 per cent of basement fires in Brampton over past 2 years in unregistered units



By **Isaac Callan** • Global News

Posted April 13, 2022 7:30 am · Updated April 13, 2022 5:32 pm

Man accused of turning luxury rental homes into illegal rooming houses faces more charges

Ford's attack on the Greenbelt must stop. But who has a better idea?

An aerial night view of a city skyline, featuring numerous illuminated skyscrapers and the prominent CN Tower. The city lights are reflected on the water in the background. The text "What is the Planning Act?" is overlaid in large white font.

What is the Planning Act?

The Planning Act is...

- Provincial legislation**
- Allows municipalities to centrally plan development**

The Planning Act Explained

- The Planning Act enables municipalities to restrict development
 - Zoning Bylaws
 - Site Plan Approvals
 - Official Plans
 - Provincial plans
 - “Community Benefits”

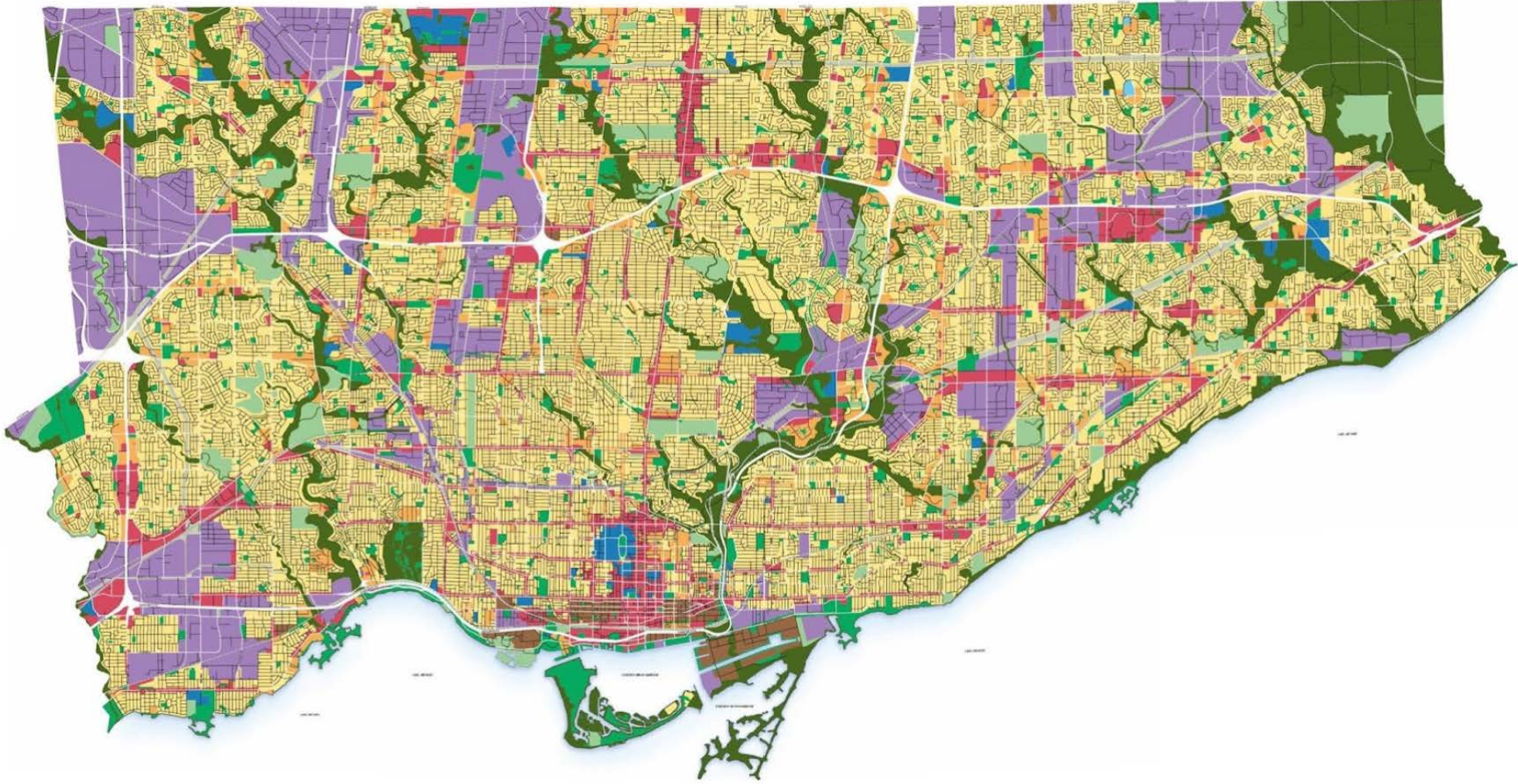
Official Plans Explained

- Describe in general the “objectives” that the ZBL is supposed to achieve
- Talks about “character”, “preservation”, and other weasel words

Zoning Explained

- Specific application of the Official Plan
- Different areas (“zones”) of the city have different permitted uses
- “Uses” include
 - “Type” of building (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.)
 - Quantity of units
 - “Setbacks”
 - Parking minimums
 - Height maximums
 - Frontage minimums
 - Door maximums
 - Etc.

Toronto's Zoning Map



Zoning demonstrated...





Why Abolish the Planning Act?

Planning Act Promotes Intentionally Bad Planning

- It intentionally restricts the number of new houses that can be built
- It is inherently a slow process to get through
- It increases the costs of construction
- It reduces the variety of construction

Planning Act is Central Planning

- Central planning suffers from a lack of economic calculation
- Economic calculation is the ability to use money prices and costs to calculate a profit
- Profits are objective measures of efficiency: if you make a profit, you have created more value than it cost you to produce
- Planning is done with zero regard to profits: it done to completely arbitrary standards

We don't need the planning act

- Toronto (and the rest of the world) grew just fine for centuries without any central planning of heights, uses, and density limits
- Safety can be assured through broad Building Code regulations
- Nuisances can be dealt with through civil courts
- “Neighbourhoods” develop and grow more organically

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Implications of Abolishing the Planning Act

Faster Development

- Without asking for permission to building, development can be built faster
 - Faster build times means cheaper “carrying costs”
 - Faster build times means more responsive supply
 - Faster build times means lower housing prices

Higher Quality Development

- More development means more competition among developers
- More competition means more options
- More options means market will deliver what consumers want, rather than whatever they can get

What “more options” look like



An aerial night view of a city skyline, likely Toronto, featuring the CN Tower and numerous illuminated skyscrapers. The text "Will More Democracy Help?" is overlaid in large white font.

**Will More
Democracy
Help?**

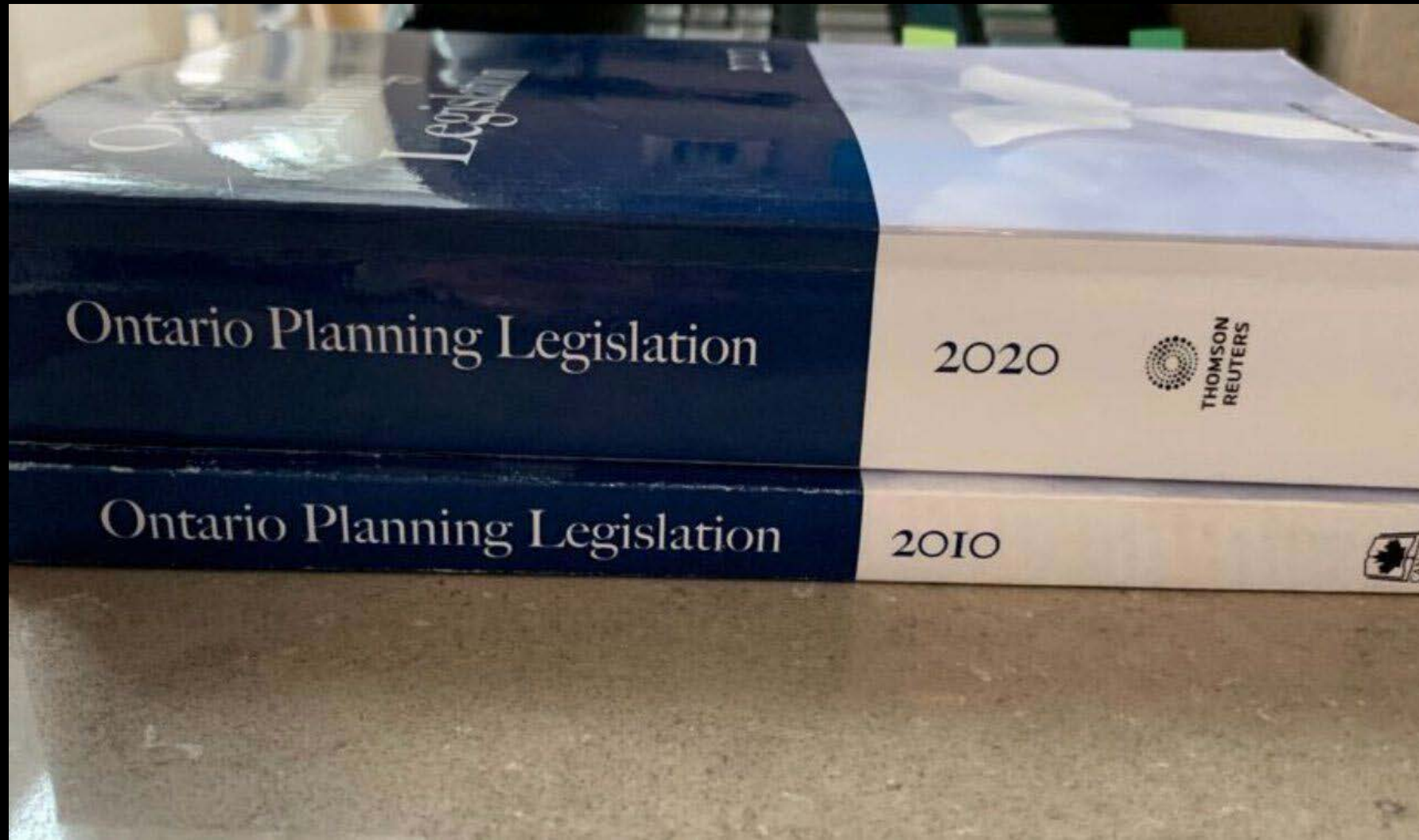
Politics Without Romance

- “Politics” is exchange without prices, especially under compulsion
- Incentives are completely different under politics:
 - Decisions are made to maximize re-election, not satisfy consumers
 - Voters do not have incentive to be informed, unlike consumers
 - Bureaucrats look to maximize budgets, instead of minimizing costs

This is What “Democracy” Looks Like



This is What “Democracy” Looks Like



Federal ability to support is limited

- Housing is a municipal affair, which is Provincial jurisdiction
- Recently, federal politicians have been trying to

 **TDot Resident**
@TDotResident

#ONpoli

Doug Ford says that he “hopes the Feds will put and end to” the municipal funding deals???

Ford’s government just called affordable housing projects something from “communist Russia” and said they have no interest in building any of it!



'Jurisdictional creep': Doug Ford slams feds for directly giving municipalities funding for housing



Reaction to Ford's Greenbelt apology



Kim Wright, principal at Wright Strategies, shares her thoughts on Premier Doug Ford's Greenbelt apology.

Ford: Greenbelt houses needed for future growth



Doug Ford is justifying his proposal to remove land from the environmentally protected Greenbelt in order to build homes.

An aerial, black and white photograph of a city skyline at night. The city is densely packed with skyscrapers, many of which are illuminated from within, creating a bright contrast against the dark sky. The word "Conclusion" is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font across the center of the image. In the background, a body of water is visible, and a prominent tower with a spherical observation deck (the CN Tower) stands out among the buildings. The overall scene conveys a sense of a bustling, modern urban environment.

Conclusion

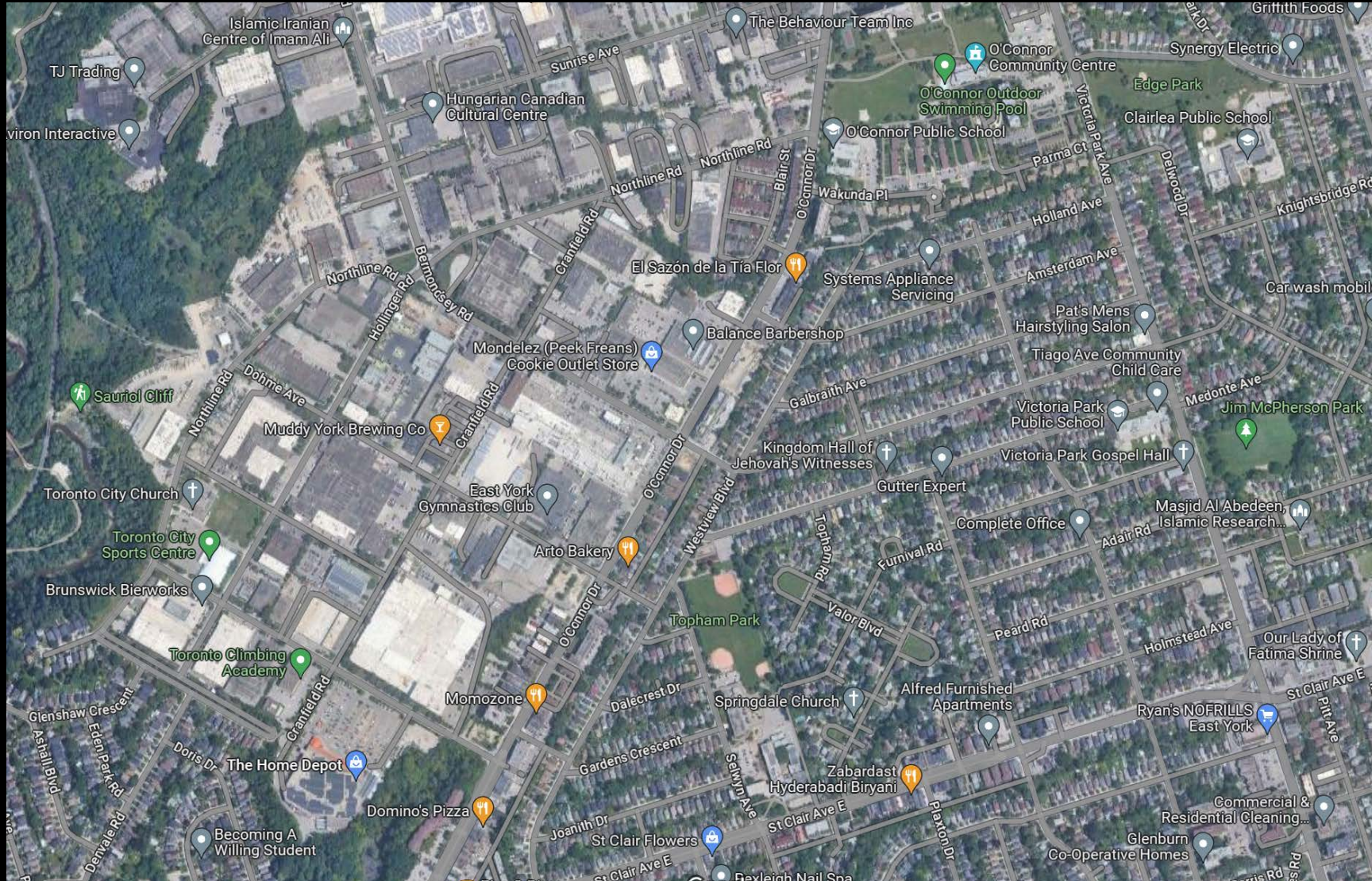
Market planning vs. Government Planning

- Housing is a municipal affair, which is Provincial jurisdiction
- Negotiation happens between property owners, not bureaucrats
- Profits guide better outcomes than votes

What “planning” looks like in reality



What “planning” looks like in reality



An aerial night view of a city skyline, likely Toronto, featuring numerous illuminated skyscrapers and the CN Tower. The word "Questions" is overlaid in large, bold, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Questions

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