

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Green Roofs appear as an innovative solution for city-wide environmental issues and concerns in the City of Toronto. Recognizing benefits of green roofs based on empirical researches, the City established its green roof policy. As part of the policy, the Toronto Green Roof Bylaw is the first mandatory bylaw for green roof installation in North America. In addition, the Eco-Roof Incentive Program was launched as a direct financial incentive being integrated into the policy.

Despite the seven years of policy implementation, there is a lack of understanding around the influence and effectiveness of the policy. Relatively few policy reviews and evaluation reports, including the *2016 Eco-Roof Incentive Program Review Report* by Lura Consulting & Cardinal Group Inc. (2016), are publicly available, however, there is a need for further investigation of the policy implementation.

Therefore, the study's key objective is to identify strengths and weaknesses of the policy as well as provide a deeper insight into how the policy promotes green roof implementation. The following research questions below were designed to achieve the objectives of the study:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the City's green roof policy? and
- How can the policy encourage more developers and property owners to install green roofs on their buildings?

A combined qualitative research method approach was used in response to these questions. One of the two methods used was a policy analysis by conducting the review of policy documents, staff reports, and other academic and industry documents pertaining to the Toronto green roof policy. Additionally, domestic and international cities were used as cases to allow for comparative analysis of different policy tools for green roofs. The other method was face-to-face interviews with eight key informants. The interviews strongly influenced and guided the study by allowing in-depth perspectives of the key informants on realistic impacts of the policy.

On the basis of the overall findings and results, the study concludes with a series of recommendations for policy improvement as follows:

1. Perform inspection and research in partnership with green roof experts and institutions;
2. Enforce certain maintenance practices for long-term performance of green roofs;
3. Consider the provision of various incentives; and
4. Improve public awareness through better education.