Timeline: A History of Social Housing in Ontario
1945 - 2001

1945 - Veterans Housing (now sold off)

1950 - Public Housing developed predominantly by the Ontario Housing Corporation (OHC) and managed by Local Housing Authorities; 84,145 units created.

1964 - First full federal Social Housing Program began.

1975 - Federal Government took the lead in funding and administering social housing in Ontario; 52,189 units created.

1978 - Federal government stopped its federal program when recession set in and interest rates shot up to about 20%, making its funding to lower mortgage costs very expensive.


1986 - CMHC offset a percentage of the costs of the F/P Program.

1989 - Federal government announced that it would no longer fund any new social housing.

1992 - First extended period without government funding for new affordable housing for fifty years. Virtually no non-profit housing was developed in Ontario between 1996 and 2000.

1993 - Province started housing programs that it funded exclusively. 37,844 units were created between 1986 and 1995.

1995 - The Provincial Government took over the lead role in funding and administering social housing in Ontario under the Federal/Provincial program (1986-1992). During this period, 30,998 units were created.

1996 - The newly-elected Provincial Government abruptly cancelled the provincial housing program, but continued to make limited housing funding available for supportive housing.

1999 - Federal government off-loaded administration and funding of social housing to Ontario through the signing of the federal/provincial agreement.

2000 - Federal Government's new National Homelessness Initiative started to provide funding for the Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative (SCPI), which was targeted at transitional housing for the homeless. This funding was being administered by select municipalities.

2001 - Federal Government returned to the funding of housing development programs and announced $680 million for an Affordable Housing Program (AHP) to be administered by provinces which provide matching funding.

Province devolves funding and administration of existing social housing to 47 Municipal Service Managers but keeps responsibility for supportive housing (now with Ministry of Health/LTC and MCSS).

Province started housing programs that it funded exclusively. 37,844 units were created between 1986 and 1995.

The Province of Ontario and Municipalities provided partial assistance for rent supplements (some to private landlords) and also some grant money to lower operating costs for 10-15 years.

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In its agreement with the Federal Government, the Provincial Government pledged only $2,000/unit, passing on responsibility for the other $23,000/unit of matching funds to municipalities, non-profits and charities.

Announcement of Ontario Pilot Program of 2,000 units under Canada/Ontario (Municipal) Affordable Housing Program.

Strong Start program: approximately 1,500 units are released to fast-track new housing proposals. The next “Wave 1” allocation of 5,230 is allocated among all 47 SMs. For the Strong Start and “Wave 1” projects, Ontario matched the federal contribution.

The Province allocated $392 million in funding to SMs for affordable housing including $127 million for DOOR (construction and rehabilitation), $185 million for ROOF (27,350 housing allowances) and $80 million for Urban Aboriginal Housing.

Social housing providers became eligible for Infrastructure Ontario loans for capital investments (federally funded housing co-operatives excluded).

Province renewed $5 million Rent Bank and made it permanent.

The Province’s Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy confirmed the devolution of social housing to municipalities, and required community-based local planning of housing and homelessness services including social housing in Ontario.

The Housing Services Act, 2011 sets basic Provincial policy directions while giving service managers greater flexibility and control in the planning and delivery of housing and homelessness services including social housing administration.

Federal Government signed an agreement with Ontario under the Canada/Ontario Affordable Housing Program pledging $245 million or $25,000/unit over 5 years to build 10,500 units of “affordable housing.”

Federal government announced another $115 million for the Canada/Ontario Affordable Housing Program for Ontario.

Federal government replaced National Homelessness Initiative with Homelessness Partnership Strategy, which aimed to build and improve upon the Initiative by focussing on a “Housing-First” approach to homelessness, and funding is renewed every 2 years (current program expires in March 2014).

Federal and Provincial Governments committed a combined investment of over $1.25 billion for social and affordable housing in Ontario over the next two years: $704 million was allocated for Social Housing and Retrofit Program (SHRRP); $545 million to extend Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (AHP), including funding for seniors and persons with disabilities. Economic stimulus was the priority for this funding.

Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) for Ontario: Federal and Provincial Governments will provide $480.6 million over 4 years for affordable housing creation and repair, rent supplements and housing allowances. Social housing market rent units eligible for rent supplements/housing allowances. All social housing ineligible for repair dollars.

Timeline: A History of Social Housing in Ontario
2002 - 2011

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