AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN TORONTO
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

SEAN GADON, DIRECTOR
AFFORDABLE HOUSING OFFICE, CITY OF TORONTO
MARCH 9, 2016 PRESENTATION TO RYERSON UNIVERSITY
PLANNING STUDENTS
Outline

Past (1793-2000)

Present (2001-2015)

Future (2016 onward)
Policy statement

It is the policy of the City of Toronto that fair access to a full range of housing is fundamental to strengthening Toronto’s economy, its environmental efforts, and the health and social well-being of its residents and communities.
Power of Affordable Housing
Diversity of Housing in Toronto

- Single Detached
- Semi detached
- Duplexes

- Low rise
- High rise
- Row and Town houses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Households</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Renters</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>943,075</td>
<td>478,545</td>
<td>464,535</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,047,880</td>
<td>571,790</td>
<td>476,090</td>
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PAST
(1793-2000)
Toronto’s Oldest House

Scadding House; Built in 1794
Unsanitary Housing

“The Slums should be attacked and abolished because they are the great enemy to the home, which is the foundation stone of the State.”

*Report on Public Housing in ON, 1911*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Toronto</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Area (acres)</th>
<th># of houses</th>
<th>Pop. per House</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>208,040</td>
<td>39,104</td>
<td>10,777</td>
<td>39,104</td>
<td>5.3</td>
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1940s Housing Crisis

PUBLIC NOTICE
ON
HOUSING SHORTAGE

Due to the Lack of Housing Accommodation in This City

Notification is hereby given to families residing outside this City, that THIS MUNICIPALITY WILL NOT ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY OR PROVIDE ANY ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING LIVING QUARTERS for those families contemplating moving to Toronto.

The City has exhausted every available means of finding accommodation for those families already in the City and is unable to cope with an additional number.

For your own comfort and convenience DO NOT COME TO TORONTO FOR HOUSING ACCOMMODATION.

ROBERT H. SAUNDERS
Acting Mayor

J. W. SOMERS
City Clerk

Telegram - July 29, 1944
Federal Role in Housing

- The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation was created in 1946:
  - to house returning war veterans
  - to lead the nation's housing programs
- By 1990 supported some 650,000 social housing homes in Canada
- CMHC financing contributed to suburbanization of Toronto.
Politics of Housing

Role of Activists, Politicians and Mayors in raising the issue of housing

Borough of East York, 1940s
Canada’s First Redevelopment Project in 1947

A slum dies in Regent Park South to make way for new housing, July 17, 1956. (Harold Robinson/The Globe and Mail)

Regent Park Towers November 3, 1961 (John Boyd/The Globe and Mail)
Ontario’s Role in Housing

Ontario Housing Corporation (an agency of the Government of Ontario):

- To provide and manage adequate and affordable housing.
- To give policy direction, managed the budget and funded Local Housing Authorities in ON
- Funded through rental income and subsidies from the provincial and federal government.
- Rights of residential tenants recognized in 1960s
- Rent control established on 1975
- Significant investment in new non-profit and co-operative in 1985
Municipal Role in Housing

Municipal role is broad and inclusive:

- Planning
- Financing new affordable housing developments
- Public Health
- Land Development
- Social housing administration and funding

St. Lawrence Neighbourhood 1978
Role of Non-Profit, Co-operative and NGOs

- Start of the community-based non-profit and co-operative housing program in 1973
- Over 100,000 social housing homes in Toronto managed and operated by some 300 non-profit organizations

M. Arnold and Co-operative Housing Study Group
First co-operative Housing Project – Nova Scotia
Federal Liberal Party in 1990
Calls for New Investments in Housing

Includes 25 recommendations calling for:

- Development of a National Housing Policy
- An adequate supply of affordable housing
- Funding for a co-operative housing and rent supplement program
- Steps for private sector resources to provide affordable housing and public-private partnerships
Abandonment of Housing Programs (1990s)

- Downloading the funding of social housing from the Federal and Provincial governments to municipalities
- Federal gov. commercializes the role of CMHC
- Ontario gov. abruptly cancelled the Provincial housing programs in 1995
- Poverty and homelessness on the rise
- More divided city, growth of income polarization
- Homelessness declared a national disaster by Toronto City Council
Downloading and Amalgamations in the 1990s
MK3 YOUR CALENDAR....

Homefront Ontario Annual Meeting
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12
6:30 pm - Registration
Meeting: 7:00 - 9:30 pm
Metro Hall, 55 John Street
Committee Room: Look for Posting

Federal devolution
Provincial downloading
Sale of social housing
Cancellation of social housing construction
Welfare cuts
Evictions
Families in motel rooms
Rent control changes
Homelessness
Deaths

AGENDA
1. Panel presentation (to be announced)
2. Annual Report on activities
3. Election
4. Coalition updates

“Putting housing back on the public agenda” created
Toronto Disaster Relief Committee established
Broad housing coalitions began to emerge
Community Responses to the Crisis

- Out of the Cold program
- Cold and heat weather alerts
- New shelters opened (# of shelters doubled in 10 years)
- Furniture, food, and clothing banks emerged
- Anti-poverty organizations continue to mobilise
Report of the Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task Force

- Established by Mayor Lastman in 1998
- Delivered 106 recommendations for action
- Homelessness can be prevented and reduced
- Calls for Investments in affordable housing and income supports
- Sets out responsibilities for each order of government

“The responsibility for this problem lies at all levels – the individual, the organization, the municipality, the province and the nation.”
Federal and Provincial Responses to the Crisis

- **1999**: Federal government announces Homeless Minister and the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative
- **2001**: Federal government partners with Provinces and territories on The Affordable Housing Initiative
- **2008-2011**: Federal-Provincial Economic Stimulus Housing Funding
- **2011-2019**: Investment in Affordable Housing and community homelessness prevention renewed
City’s Response to the Crisis

- Established Toronto Community Housing
- Let’s Build and Affordable Housing Office
- Approved revitalization of Regent Park
- Approved new affordable housing
- Legalized basement apartments
- Increased the number of shelters
- Established the Streets to Homes program
PRESENT
(2000-2015)
City of Toronto’s Accomplishments

- +5,000 affordable housing homes constructed
- Revitalization projects and new communities begun
- Housing allowance programs launched
- City lands activated
- Adopted new Official Plan
Housing Opportunities Toronto (HOT) is the city’s 10 year plan on affordable housing approved in 2009.

HOT guides the city’s investments and priorities in housing from homelessness, rental housing and affordable home ownership.
2015 Public Consultations
5-year HOT Review
Toronto’s Anticipated Shortfall in Affordable Housing Production (2010-2020)

Affordable rental homes completed as a result of Federal, Provincial and City funding and incentives.

The increase in homes completed 2010-2012 reflects additional federal-provincial economic stimulus funding.

Source: Affordable Housing Office, City of Toronto, February 19, 2016
Data Source Date: 4th Quarter 2015
Toronto’s Projected Social Housing Federal Funding Shortfall (2003-2023)
Some Current Challenges

Housing Crisis in Toronto

- Backlog of repair in social housing
- Continuing growth of homelessness
- Limited funding from property taxes
- Challenges to meet diverse needs/provide support services
- Limited planning tools
- High real estate prices and rents
- Aging private rental stock
- Limited new affordable housing developments
- Limited new affordable housing developments
“Affordable housing is an urgent matter for Toronto and other Canadian cities – with an unmistakable economic as well as social imperative...”

Mayor John Tory
Mayor’s Task Force on TCH

- Led by Senator Art Eggleton
- Includes 29 recommendations to tackle social and economic unsustainability of TCH
- Calls for major restructuring
- Increased income integration
- Building new affordable housing
FUTURE
(2016 and onwards)
“The source of Canada’s weak low income housing policy over the last two decades has been the lack of political leadership.”

Programs in search of Policy
M. Dennis & S. Fish
What can the Federal Government do?

Implement a National Housing policy/strategy that:

- Asserts the human right to adequate housing
- Aspires to eliminate homelessness
- Provides a framework for funding to repair existing stock and build new affordable housing
- Provides sufficient income assistance to address affordability issues
- Developed in partnership with the governments and communities
Delivery of Promises; Funding for Affordable Housing

- 10 year investment of approximately $20 billion in social infrastructure / $6 billion annually
- Prioritize investments for affordable housing and seniors facilities
- March 22 Federal budget
What can the Provincial Government do?

- Resume their responsibility for funding adequate income supports, and homeless and housing programs
- Provide additional planning tools to municipalities to create affordable housing
- Pursue additional partnerships on provincially owned lands
- Speed up the $187 million in investments committed in 2016 provincial budget
- Ontario gov. to release update to the 2010 strategy in March 2016
What can the City Do?

- Update, implement and fund the recommendations of the HOT action plan
- Implement the Open Door program which will fast track planning approvals, funding and surplus land
- Tackle Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) through public education
- Aggressively respond to the Mayor’s Task Force report on TCH

Mayor Tory declares the City’s urgent need to act to create more affordable housing.
Need for Political and Community Action

#Power2People
Contact Information

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