

# **Sustaining Ontario's Subsidized Housing by Supporting Non-Profit Organizations**

**Sally Turner, York University  
CPRN Internship Program**

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## **Abstract**

This research project analyzes the contribution of private non-profit (PNP) organizations to Toronto's subsidized housing system, and identifies some of the most significant barriers they face. Through a literature review and surveying PNP housing providers themselves, recommendations regarding the role which different levels of government should play in supporting these groups are put forward. It is found that PNP organizations make a large contribution to Toronto's subsidized housing system, particularly through their dedication to holistic care. As primarily small-scale organizations however, they face significant barriers which could potentially be reduced through increased, more flexible funding at all levels of government, and greater communication to ensure that programs adequately and appropriately address the needs of PNP housing providers.



## Executive Summary

As responsibility for social housing provision was passed down to the municipal governments across Ontario, private non-profit (PNP) organizations have increasingly stepped in to fill the growing gap between supply and demand. It is therefore vital that barriers hindering the ability of these PNP organizations to provide subsidized housing and expand their services are recognized and addressed. The role of PNP organizations in subsidized housing provision, and that which governments should play in supporting them, was looked at in the context of Toronto.

The majority of PNP housing providers in Toronto are small-scale organizations, owning and operating a single development. However collectively they have great scope, offering support services and specialized housing options for populations not provided for by traditional social housing programs. Persons with mental and physical disabilities, as well as seniors requiring in-home care are some of the largest recipients of PNP subsidized housing.

Despite these successes however, many PNP housing providers felt they still faced significant barriers hindering their operations and ability to expand. Most significantly, PNP organizations felt they lacked fundraising capacity – hindering their ability to generate independent funds - and access to both public and private funding.

The majority of research subjects were relatively happy with the support they received from the municipal government, acknowledging that higher levels of governance impede its ability to provide the level of funding desired by PNP housing providers. In contrast, many were displeased with the level of support that the provincial government provided to them. While it remains the responsibility of municipalities to fund social housing programs, they felt that the province had a greater ability to provide financial assistance.

While acknowledging that as the lowest level of governance, municipalities are best suited to communicating with PNP organizations and administering funds, this project has a number of recommendations as to how different levels of government should better support PNP housing providers.

Both the municipal and provincial governments need to provide more funding. However, most significantly, this funding needs to be aimed not only at encouraging new development, but also at supporting existing developments. In addition this funding needs to be more flexible, covering some of the rising operational costs that PNP housing providers incur. At present funding for existing developments comes only in the form of Rent Geared to Income (RGI) service agreements. Greater communication between the municipal and provincial government, and PNP housing providers, is needed to ensure that funds are given in adequate proportions, and appropriately addresses their most pressing needs.

The federal government is too high a level of governance to effectively communicate with small-scale PNP organizations, or administer tailored funds to each municipality. However it can increase the capacity of both the municipal and provincial governments to support PNP housing providers by increasing the level of funding it currently supplies. Greater financial assistance to the municipal and provincial governments would help them to give greater, more flexible funding to PNP housing providers, which would in turn start to address many of the most significant barriers they currently face in supplying subsidized housing.

# Sustaining Ontario's Subsidized Housing by Supporting Non-Profit Organizations

## 1. Introduction

In order for Toronto to adequately meet the needs of its expanding population, it is imperative that it considers the long-term sustainability of its social housing system. The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'sustainability' as:

- 'capable of being maintained at a certain rate or level'; and
- 'supplied with necessities or nourishment' (Oxford English Dictionary Online, 2007).

Using this definition social housing programs can be described as 'sustainable' if their housing stock can be maintained, and if they receive sufficient funding to make this possible. This definition does not take into account that demand may rise, making it necessary to expand supply to keep Toronto's social housing system sustainable. Current government funding programs focus on the latter; expanding supply to match rising demand. However this project argues that it is equally important that existing developments are given the financial ability to maintain their level of service to ensure that Toronto's social housing stock is maintained and expanded. Otherwise we run the risk of simply maintaining our social housing stock at current levels, with newly constructed units taking the place of failing existing developments.

Toronto must ensure that its social housing system is capable of expanding as its population continues to grow. Given that investment in new affordable rental housing is unprofitable, it is unlikely that the private market will fill this gap. Therefore the non-profit sector, with its dedication to providing housing and services in spite of their low return on investment, is a viable option for increasing the supply of subsidized housing units in Toronto. Since Ontario passed responsibility for its social housing programs to municipalities in 2000, private non-profit (PNP) organizations have increasingly stepped up to help provide subsidized housing.

PNP organizations are not the only solution to Toronto's housing crisis (p.3); the city's municipal social housing program could also be expanded. However this paper focuses on PNP housing providers due to their status as non-governmental organizations. In an era when upper levels of the Canadian government are transferring responsibility for social service provision onto cash-strapped municipalities, we must look outside of the traditional government framework for solutions. As a small-scale method of housing provision PNP organizations have the unique ability to more closely provide for the needs of tenants not covered by traditional large-scale housing programs. In addition, they are able to tap into private funding sources and receive charitable donations not usually utilized by governments. Change occurs relatively slowly in a government setting while PNP organizations are more flexible, having significantly less 'red-tape' to contend with. Perhaps funding for PNP housing providers would be a quicker and more effective method through which the Canadian government could support social housing rather than building it themselves. This project emphasizes that while PNP organizations are vital to the construction and expansion of Toronto's social housing system, they cannot do it alone: They require significant funding from all levels of government to make this possible.

Through three research questions this project looks at the role of PNP organizations in providing subsidized housing in Toronto, their size and scope, target populations, and biggest challenges:

***What is the collaborative size and scope of private non-profit organizations providing subsidized housing in Toronto?***

To understand the importance of PNP organizations to Toronto's social housing system, their contribution in terms of the number of subsidized units they supply was calculated. The greater their contribution to providing subsidized housing in Toronto, the more important it is to the municipal and provincial governments to reduce the barriers PNP organizations face to allow them to continue supporting people who need assistance in gaining access to affordable accommodation.

***Which groups are serviced by private non-profit affordable housing providers in Toronto?***

The large-scale federal housing programs of the past typically focused on providing basic accommodation for all members of the population without paying special attention to the needs of specific groups. However, as traditional accommodation and health services provided by other ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Health) continue to shrink in their size and scope, the number of people requiring specialized housing is rising. For example as Ontario's Ministry of Health cuts costs by shifting its long-term residents into out-patient care programs, growing numbers of people with mental health issues are left to find affordable housing. Traditional government housing programs dealt solely with accommodation, leaving support services the responsibility of other ministries. However the role of affordable housing providers is becoming more comprehensive, with special attention required to who they are accommodating. This builds on the previous research question, outlining the importance of PNP housing by looking at which population groups these organizations serve.

***What are the most prominent barriers that prevent private non-profit organizations from supplying affordable housing in Toronto?***

A lack of subsidized housing negatively affects all of Toronto's residents, detracting low-wage workers, increasing levels of homelessness, and raising rental rates. The city's shortage of subsidized housing can be reduced by ensuring that PNP housing providers do not face significant barriers in operating and expanding their developments. This research question identifies these barriers through both a literature review and consultation with PNP organizations themselves, and puts forward recommendations to help reduce the challenges they face.

It is argued that PNP housing providers are essential to the long-run sustainability of Toronto's social housing system. To ensure that these organizations retain and improve their ability to provide subsidized housing it is necessary that any barriers they face are addressed. Through a literature review and questionnaire survey, these barriers are identified, and recommendations are put forward to help the municipal and provincial government reduce the difficulties that PNP housing providers face.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of Toronto's social housing system, both the municipal and provincial governments need to change the way they currently support PNP housing providers. Rather than concentrating on one-time grants for new developments, both levels of government need to provide flexible, on-going financial support that increases the capacity of PNP organizations to provide subsidized housing units. Moreover, greater communication between the municipal and provincial governments, and PNP housing providers, is needed to ensure that funding programs are tailored to their unique needs.

## **2. Toronto: A Crisis in Housing**

In 2006 Toronto's population reached 2,503,281; a little over one and a half-times bigger than Canada's second largest city, Montréal. As Canada's favourite destination for immigrants and most populated city, Toronto's supply of subsidized housing is an issue close to the heart of many of its citizens. According to Toronto's municipal government, around six per cent of its population currently resides in social housing (City of Toronto, 2007). A study carried out by the Toronto Board of Trade reported that up to a third of Toronto's residents still pay over 30% of their income towards rent, indicating serious affordability issues. Subsidized housing can create affordable accommodation options for city residents living on low incomes, relieving some of these affordability problems. Toronto requires more subsidized housing to be constructed for four interrelated reasons:

### ***a) To Relieve Pressure on the City's Tight Rental Market***

The Toronto Board of Trade reported that cities require vacancy rates above two per cent to be able to supply sufficient affordable housing to its residents (The Toronto Board of Trade, 2003). Without this, the rental market becomes 'tight', inflating rents above what low-wage workers can reasonably afford. Toronto's rental market has had a vacancy rate of under two per cent in the recent past, pushing rents higher than many can afford. A tight rental market creates a 'squeeze' at the bottom of the wage ladder, pushing those who would usually be able to afford to live in private rental accommodation towards subsidized housing operated by either the government or PNP organizations. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) reports that in 2006 the average monthly rent for a one-bedroom Toronto apartment was \$896 (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2006). Using CMHC's indicator of affordability requiring tenants to pay no more than 30% of their income towards housing costs, a single person living in Toronto would have to earn \$35,088 annually after tax to afford a one-bedroom apartment. People living on minimum wage and working full-time earn almost half of this amount in Toronto.

A number of factors have contributed to Toronto's tight rental market. Across the province, Ontarians have seen a long-term decline in the construction of new rental accommodation. In the 1970s approximately 37,000 rental units (both private and government-assisted) were constructed in Ontario annually (The Toronto Board of Trade, 2003). However since the late 1990s this number has dropped to under 2000 units built across Ontario each year (The Toronto Board of Trade, 2003). Construction is not keeping pace with demand for rental housing, particularly in Toronto, a city where population is expected to grow by 2.19 million residents by 2021 (City of Toronto Urban Development Services, 2000). According to the Ministry of

Municipal Affairs and Housing (2002), it is now deemed unprofitable for developers to invest in housing with rents below \$1000 per month. To construct apartments with monthly rents of \$900 developers would require subsidies of \$75,000 per unit (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2002). However this rent is still far above what many low-wage earners in Toronto can afford.

Over the past decade the declining availability of new rental buildings has been compounded by the destruction of existing rental properties for conversion into condominiums, particularly in Toronto. Between 1991 and 2001, 8,300 rental units were demolished across Ontario, and a further 13,000 were converted into condominiums (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2002). Toronto is seeing fewer rental units constructed than ever before at a time when its population is set to rapidly increase. Moreover, the city is actually experiencing a reduction in the number of rental units on the market as a result of both their destruction, and conversion, into more profitable forms of investment. This culminates in a tight rental market that pushes low income-earners towards both publicly- and privately- subsidized housing.

### ***b) To Continue to Attract Low-Wage Workers Essential to the City's Economy***

A lack of affordable housing due to a tight rental market inhibits low-wage workers from living in the city. Service sector jobs such as those in the hospitality, retail, food or beverage industries are essential to maintaining a healthy economy able to provide residents with a wide variety of amenities. These jobs are relatively ubiquitous, found in most towns and cities in large numbers. High rents in Toronto may prevent these workers from being able to live close to their place of work, leading to their migration to other cities where rents are more affordable on their low wages. For example, the CMHC Market Rental Report (2007) shows monthly rents for one-bedroom apartments in Windsor and Ottawa to be between \$200 and \$300 cheaper than those in Toronto. Both of these cities offer similar service-sector jobs to Toronto with identical minimum wages. Toronto needs to provide affordable housing options or risk losing these needed low-wage service-sector workers to cities with lower rents.

### ***c) Supporting Residents Who are Inappropriately Housed Has Been Proven to be More Costly Than Investment in Subsidized Housing***

A study sponsored by the BC Non-Profit Housing Association demonstrated that appropriate subsidized housing saved the province between \$2000 and \$18,000 over the course of a person's life when compared to their living in a state of perpetual homelessness (Hurford, 2006). As higher levels of government pass responsibility for a variety of social services onto municipalities, Toronto needs to do all it can to be frugal with the funds it receives. Unnecessary spending on homeless persons and those who lack suitable housing simply because the cheaper, more stable option is in short supply is economically unsound. Removing barriers to the further development of subsidized housing is clearly in the financial interest of Toronto's municipal government.

#### ***d) Long Waiting-Lists Plague the City's Social Housing System, With Wait-Times Up to Sixteen Years***

In contrast to the federal social housing programs of the 1960s and 70s, it is now the responsibility of municipalities across Ontario to provide affordable housing to their citizens. While municipalities receive limited funding from the upper-tier governments to assist in this task, for the most part they must generate their own revenue. Municipalities are limited in their fundraising capacity, able only to generate revenue through property taxes (DeJong, 2000), which they are mostly unwilling to raise for fear of deterring new and existing residents. The result has been considerable dis-investment in new publicly subsidized housing. As Toronto's rental market continues to tighten, leaving rents far out of the reach of low-wage workers, the demand for subsidized housing has continued to rise while supplies have remained stagnant. Today, over 63,000 Torontonians are on the city's waiting list for social housing (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006), a number that continues to grow annually, with few additions to the municipal portfolio to relieve this demand. The result is an ever-expanding waiting list for subsidized housing in Toronto.

In attempts to increase the supply of subsidized housing, Toronto's municipal housing program, (owned and operated by the municipal service manager Toronto Community Housing Commission (TCHC)) has opted towards providing rent vouchers in selected buildings in the private rental market. This has the effect of quickly increasing the supply of affordable housing while releasing the municipal government from long-term investment in new buildings and units. Due to a serious lack of vacant rental units limiting the number of vouchers that can be distributed however, this approach does not tend to work well in tight rental markets (Christensen, Sadik, Lim, and Weiner, 2001).

It is clear that in the face of a tightening rental market producing high rents, long waiting lists, and a municipal government with limited ability to invest in new subsidized housing, it is imperative to look to other organizations to provide affordable shelter. Given that investment in new affordable rental housing is unprofitable it is unlikely that the private market will fill this gap. Therefore the non-profit sector, with its dedication to providing housing and services in spite of their low return on investment, is a viable option for increasing the supply of subsidized housing units in Toronto.

Subsidized housing in Toronto is currently provided through three methods:

- Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC): units owned and operated by the municipal government
- PNP organizations
- Co-operative housing associations

TCHC provides the vast majority of subsidized housing units in Toronto. To supplement its supply in the face of shrinking funding, TCHC has turned to both PNP organizations and co-operative housing association to contract further units. This is achieved through Rent Geared-to-Income (RGI) service agreements with these groups. In addition, many PNP organizations and co-operative housing associations offer subsidized rents paid for by private (non-governmental) funds. This project focuses on PNP organizations rather than co-operative housing associations

because the method through which they provide private subsidies differ: Co-operative housing relies primarily on rents and membership fees from existing market-rent residents to subsidize small numbers of units inside a development. PNP organizations are more dependent on external funding sources and therefore face different challenges in providing subsidized housing.

As proceeding statistics will show, PNP organizations contribute over 10,000 units to TCHC's social housing program through service agreements, and a further 2000 independently. Reducing the barriers these PNP housing providers face would allow them to expand their operations, helping to increase the supply of subsidized housing in Toronto. This would ultimately help to address the four issues that have been explored in this section.

### **3. Contextual Literature**

This brief literature review is divided into three sections, each focusing on consecutive steps of the thought-process behind this study: Recent changes to social housing in Ontario, the importance and value of PNP organizations to subsidized housing, and the challenges they face. The aim of this literature review is not to provide a complete overview of all literature on the topic of privately developed social housing, but to give context to many of the ideas used in this project.

#### **3.1 Recent Changes to Social Housing in Ontario**

Hackworth and Moriah (2006) describe the process through which responsibility for social housing has been transferred from Ontario's provincial government to individual municipalities. The 2000 Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA), formalized the long-discussed transfer of Ontario's social housing stock from the province to 47 local housing service managers, most affiliated with an individual municipality (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). The ultimate goal of this transfer was to better tailor social services programs to communities, moving away from a 'top-down' approach to management that was often ill equipped to accommodate the unique needs of different communities. An additional goal was to open up social housing provision to private groups outside of traditional government provision (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). This would allow a greater variety of housing options, and effectively increase Ontario's social housing stock without significant government investment.

While still in their early stages in Toronto, the results of these changes have so-far been well-documented abroad where similar processes are more established. Bockmeyer (2003) describes the results of similar changes in the New York area, finding that a transfer of responsibility to lower levels of government did result in increased private involvement in social housing provision. However she observed two negative side effects:

- a.) Greater competition for funding between growing numbers of PNP organizations took their focus away from housing provision. More of their resources were used to compete for funding.
- b.) This increased competition meant that smaller PNP organizations were unable to compete against larger groups, leading to their elimination.

With sparse government funds for PNP subsidized housing, the onus was to diversify their portfolio and provide an array of services in the attempt to secure different avenues of funding. While these services are beneficial to communities, it also serves to steer some of the PNP organizations resources away from subsidized housing (Bockmeyer, 2003). This finding is also emphasized by the California Policy Research Center which found that non-profit developers adapt to the difficulties of finding funding through expanding their service areas, increasing their range of housing types, targeting different populations, and even changing their mission (Christensen, Sadik, Lim, and Weiner, 2001).

Whether these changes have elicited similar responses from PNP housing providers in Ontario is still unclear, as the transfer from provincial to municipal program management is relatively recent. However it is clear that the conditions under which PNP housing providers operate in Ontario's municipalities have changed dramatically over the past decade. The challenges these changes create for PNP housing providers are central to this study.

### **3.2 The Importance and Value of PNP Organizations to Subsidized Housing**

While Bockmeyer focused on the negative aspects of increased PNP participation in providing subsidized housing, the Ontario Non-Profit Association (ONPHA) instead sees the positive assets that these organizations can bring to communities:

- Truly affordable housing: Tenants pay rent based on their incomes, not what the market dictates as low-rent.
- Healthy citizens: People with more secure housing are less stressed and are able to afford more healthy food, are more productive, and less likely to end up in institutions. This saves governments, communities and individuals money.
- Permanent assets: As mortgages are paid-off and real estate values rise, the asset can be used to secure mortgages for new affordable housing developments.
- A competitive economy: To attract and keep employees, businesses need a supply of affordable housing.
- Thriving towns and rural areas: In many small towns, non-profit housing is the only way that seniors and young families can afford to stay (Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, 2006).

In addition, Hurford (2006) for the BC Non-Profit Housing Association, stresses the cost-savings in properly housing people. Homeless persons often spend long periods of time in medical facilities for illnesses that could be more efficiently treated on an out-patient basis. However since they have no place of residence they must be treated in high-cost facilities. Hurford also mentions the importance of services that PNP organizations provide in addition to subsidized housing. While social housing was traditionally separated from many of the additional support services required by residents, today PNP organizations work to create a more holistic approach to housing, offering tenants access to medical services, as well as counselling and employment assistance among many others (Hurford, 2006). The value of PNP organizations to a city is not restricted to their contribution to subsidized housing units, but also to the wide range of services they offer.

### 3.3 Challenges Facing PNP Subsidized Housing Providers

As PNP organizations are increasingly relied upon to provide subsidized housing and additional services, they face a number of challenges. This matter is at the centre of this research project. The challenges faced by PNP organizations have been explored in a number of studies, in both Canadian and American contexts. In the United States, a study conducted by the National Center for Non-Profit Boards (1998) identified four main areas of difficulty for PNP organizations:

- Lack of management and infrastructure capabilities,
- Limited access to ‘best practices’ due to their small-scale and isolation from other organizations with information,
- Operating in an organizational structure that reflect their founders’ interests which may no longer be relevant,
- High and unrealistic expectations from communities as to what services can be effectively managed.

In the context of Ontario, Hackworth and Moriah’s (2006) study of municipal housing providers, acknowledged additional challenges:

- A lack of expertise and experience in dealing with the new regulatory framework of Ontario’s social housing system (*this refers to the SHRA in 2000 transferring responsibility for social housing programs from provincial to municipal governments*),
- A lack of autonomy as a result of strict provincial funding guidelines,
- Reductions in funding available to private and public housing programs.

Finally, a study carried out by the BC Non-Profit Housing Association found that the most pressing concern of PNP organizations providing subsidized housing was a difficulty finding suitable staff, and the necessary resources to train and manage them (BC Non-Profit Housing Association, 2004). In addition, financial challenges such as decreasing subsidies, rising operating costs, and a lack of stable funding, severely hindered many PNP organizations from further investment in subsidized housing.

This project used the challenges listed above to create a survey asking PNP organizations whether these concerns were relevant to their operations. It also left a space inviting the organizations to list any challenges that had not been mentioned, to better understand changes that could help improve the sustainability of the PNP housing sector in Toronto.

## **4. Methodology**

This project took a multi-faceted methodological approach, using a variety of techniques to determine the importance of PNP organizations to Toronto's subsidized housing sector, the barriers they faced, and create recommendations to address these. This section outlines the methodology used for each section of the project.

### **4.1 Determining the Size and Scope of PNP Organizations Providing Subsidized Housing in Toronto**

To understand the contribution PNP organizations make to Toronto's subsidized housing sector, the size of the city's municipal housing program (owned and operated by TCHC) was calculated. All TCHC properties are listed by the municipal waiting list facilitator Housing Connections, whose website contains comprehensive details of each building including its location, the number of units it contains (organized by unit size), the date of application from which the building is now supplying units to, and its operator (whether it be TCHC itself, or a PNP organization or co-operative housing association through an RGI agreement) (Housing Connections, 2007). The number of subsidized owned and operated by TCHC was calculated by creating a spreadsheet of each municipal building recording the total number of units it contained, their respective sizes, and their target population (mandate).

A similar spreadsheet was then created containing the same information with respect to PNP organizations. Information on organizations contracted by TCHC to provide subsidized units was obtained from the Housing Connections website. Information on PNP organizations which were not contracted by TCHC was more difficult to obtain, however an online source '211 Community Connection' was able to supply a considerably comprehensive contact list (211 Community Connection, 2007). Most PNP organizations listed the number of subsidized units they supplied in Toronto and their target populations on their websites, however in cases where this information was not available online, representatives were contacted and asked for information.

A small number of PNP organizations listed by 211 Community Connection as providing subsidized housing in Toronto could not be contacted and therefore their contribution is not included in this study. This is a small enough number to report accurate figures for PNP contribution to subsidized housing, however it should be noted that because of this, statistics in this study may slightly undervalue this involvement (p.12).

### **4.2 Determining Which Groups are Serviced by Private Non-Profit Affordable Housing Providers in Toronto**

With the exception of units for seniors, subsidized housing owned and operated by TCHC does not have specific target populations. PNP organizations however tend to focus on providing housing for a limited group of people, for example Aboriginal populations, persons living with HIV, or single mothers. This specific focus makes PNP organizations particularly valuable to Toronto's social housing system, providing tailored accommodation to populations whose needs may not be adequately met by traditional social housing.

To determine the supply of PNP subsidized housing in Toronto for different population groups, information regarding target population of each development was mostly found on each organization's website. The number of units dedicated to each group was recorded. If an organization did not have a website, or information about target populations was not available online, it was obtained through contacting the provider through email or telephone.

This project then extended its investigation of PNP housing recipients, looking not only at the quantity of units non-profits supplied to certain populations, but also potential demand. The intent was to better understand the demographics of people requiring social housing in Toronto, and to see if there was any population group who remained on the outskirts of PNP housing. Demand is a difficult concept to quantify. This project did not aim to create a statistical analysis of supply and demand for subsidized housing in Toronto, instead giving an overview of demographics potentially requiring social housing. Poverty indicators from Statistics Canada's 2001 Community Profiles were used including average income, government assistance and homeownership rates. In addition, statistics from several studies on specific population groups in Toronto carried out by private authors and the municipal government were also utilized.

### **4.3 Determining the Most Prominent Barriers to PNP Housing Providers in Toronto**

A survey questionnaire was created asking PNP housing providers which of the barriers found in the literature review (p.8) they faced. The survey left space for providers to list anything else they saw as a hindrance to their ability to provide subsidized housing. This was then circulated to all PNP organizations providing subsidized housing in Toronto, whose contact details had been obtained earlier through both the Housing Connections and 211 Community Connection websites. For a copy of the questionnaire survey, please see Appendix one.

A total of 140 invitations were distributed, with a return rate of 20%, 25 online and 2 through the mail (from organizations who had requested a hard copy) giving a final sample size of 27. This is an average response rate for an online survey (Sheehan, 2001). The responses regarding all barriers listed by PNP organizations were coded to understand which were most frequently mentioned. Questions regarding the extent to which PNP organizations felt both the municipal and provincial governments support PNP housing providers were asked to determine whether they created any barriers and challenges themselves. Finally, PNP organizations were given the opportunity to write freely about any challenges they felt they faced in providing subsidized housing. From these, recommendations and strategies to reduce the barriers experienced by PNP organizations, and increase the long-term sustainability of the PNP subsidized housing sector in Toronto, were collected.

## 5. Research Findings

### 5.1 Collaborative Size and Scope of Toronto's PNP Housing Providers

#### ***What is the collaborative size and scope of private non-profit organizations providing subsidized housing in Toronto?***

*Note: Information regarding the number of subsidized housing units provided by PNP organizations could not be obtained for six developments listed by 211 Community Connection. As a percentage of all PNP owned and operated developments, this works out as an underestimation of four per cent. In addition, there may be PNP organizations providing subsidized housing in Toronto that were not listed by either Housing Connections or 211 Community Connection. This means that the contribution of PNP organizations to providing subsidized housing in Toronto may be underestimated by this project. The aim of this research question is to emphasise the importance of PNP organizations to subsidized housing provision in Toronto, and therefore any underestimation does not take away from this goal.*

The subject of this project is all private non-profit organizations providing subsidized housing in Toronto. PNP organizations that provide long-term residential health facilities have not been included in this study as their funding falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, rather than the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In addition, co-operative housing associations have not been included in this study (p.6). Homeless shelters have not been included as this project is concerned with more permanent forms of shelter. While homeless shelters provide accommodation for a single night or more, residents do not live there on a permanent basis. Instead they are intended as a stepping stone to more stable housing, or as a last resort.

#### Size of Toronto's PNP Subsidized Housing Sector

Toronto's PNP subsidized housing sector consists of 140 organizations providing 12,671 units in total. As table 1 shows, the vast majority of these organizations are very small in size and limited in scope, owning and operating a single development. This is typical, with a similar study undertaken by the BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2004) finding that 63% of all PNP organizations providing subsidized housing in the Greater Vancouver area had a portfolio of a single development.

**Table 1. Organizational size of PNP housing providers (Toronto)**

<b>Size of Organization (Buildings)</b>	<b># Organizations</b>	<b>% of Sector</b>
Single Development	122	87%
2-5 Developments	15	10%
6-10 Developments	2	2%
More than 10 Developments	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sources: 211 Community Connection, Organizations websites

The majority of subsidized housing in Toronto is owned and operated by TCHC, with a portfolio of 50,847 units across the city. These range in size from bachelor- to five-bedroom apartments. When the total number of subsidized units provided by TCHC and PNP organizations is combined, Toronto has a total supply of 63,518 units. In addition, co-operative housing associations, which are not looked at in this study, are contracted by TCHC to provide 6339 subsidized housing units, funding for which comes from the municipal government. PNP organizations then provide 19% of all subsidized housing units in Toronto. It is important to note that of the 12,671 units that these PNP housing providers supply, 9959 (78%) are RGI service agreements whereby PNP organizations are contracted by TCHC to accept applicants from the municipal subsidized housing waiting list in return for subsidies. This demonstrates considerable support for PNP housing, with Toronto's municipal government providing funding for almost four-fifths of all units. Looking at this relationship conversely, 15% of all subsidized housing units provided by TCHC are contracted through PNP organizations. This close relationship between the municipal government and PNP housing providers was found by survey respondents to be relatively supportive (p.39).

### Scope of Toronto's PNP Subsidized Housing Sector

Units owned and operated by TCHC do not have specific target populations (with the exception of seniors). This is a housing policy that does not favour any one group of people. However, housing that is more tailored to the specific needs, whether cultural, medical, social, or physical, can better help residents to gain the skills needed to improve their life so that they no longer require subsidized housing and can move towards finding and keeping private accommodation. It is in this regard that PNP subsidized housing has considerably greater scope than units owned and operated by TCHC. PNP organizations in Toronto provide subsidized housing tailored to a wide range of target populations:

- Seniors,
- Singles,
- Persons with physical disabilities,
- Persons with mental disabilities,
- Families,
- Women only (some facilities accepting women with children),
- Teenage parents,
- Persons living with HIV/AIDS,
- Homeless persons,
- Refugees,
- Abuse victims,
- Specific religions: Jewish, Catholic, Muslim,
- Specific ethnicities: Italian, Aboriginal, Ukrainian, Finnish, Spanish-language, Lithuanian, Greek, French-language, Polish, Russian, Macedonian, Estonian and Chinese.

The specific needs of these groups, and the number of subsidized units PNP organizations dedicate to them, are outlined in greater detail in this project's following research question. However, simply looking at the list of populations that PNP organizations provide units to gives an idea of the importance of this sector to many disadvantaged groups whose specific needs may not be incorporated into traditional government-operated social housing.

Another way in which PNP subsidized housing has greater scope than municipally-run units is the wide range of additional services they provide. Traditionally social housing offered accommodation only, with residents travelling to programs operated by other ministries for additional support services such as counselling. However, many PNP organizations began as service providers before venturing into providing subsidized housing, and are therefore able to offer residents access to additional services either in-house, or close-by. PNP organizations attempt to offer a more holistic approach to subsidized housing, with their ultimate goal to improve the quality of life and welfare of their residents, meaning that they will often help residents build skills, and connect them with services provided by other agencies (public or private) to allow them to live independently. In contrast, while those using municipal subsidized housing have a case-worker who can link tenants to support services, this help is rarely as personal and individually tailored as PNP organizations that are smaller and more focused on each tenant.

Information from 211 Community Connection and organizations websites shows the wide variety of additional services offered by Toronto's PNP housing providers. These services are intended not only for residents, but usually also for the general public in need.

(I = 'in house access' in certain PNP housing developments)

- Community centre
- Addiction information and education (I)
- Legal advice clinic
- Counselling (I)
- Training in income generation
- Translation services (I)
- Employment training
- Basic computer training
- Lending library (I)
- Daycare (I)
- First Nations healing circles (I)
- Meal program (I)
- Medical clinic (I)
- Mental illness support services (I)
- Assistance obtaining government documents
- Physiotherapy (I)

As a strategy to remain competitive for funding many PNP organizations diversify and offer these additional services not only to assist their residents to transition into market accommodation, but also to qualify for additional funding outside of subsidized housing provision.

While information regarding the number of residents that PNP organizations house annually outside of TCHC is not available, using data from the past three years, organizations that provide contracted units accept an average of 454 new tenants (singles, families and seniors) each year (Housing Connections, 2004, 2005, 2006). TCHC provides housing for an average of 3872 new tenants every year, meaning that the municipal program PNP organizations are accounting for 12% of all annual housing activity.

Looking at the number of subsidized housing units PNP organizations provide and how many people they house annually, it is clear that their contribution to Toronto's social housing system is considerable. However it is their ability to target specific population groups, and offer specialized support services that is their greatest contribution. While their aggregate size may be small in comparison to the municipal program, their flexibility and dedication to holistic care suggests that the scope of PNP organizations providing subsidized housing is perhaps greater than that of TCHC.

## **5.2 Groups Served by Toronto's PNP Housing Providers**

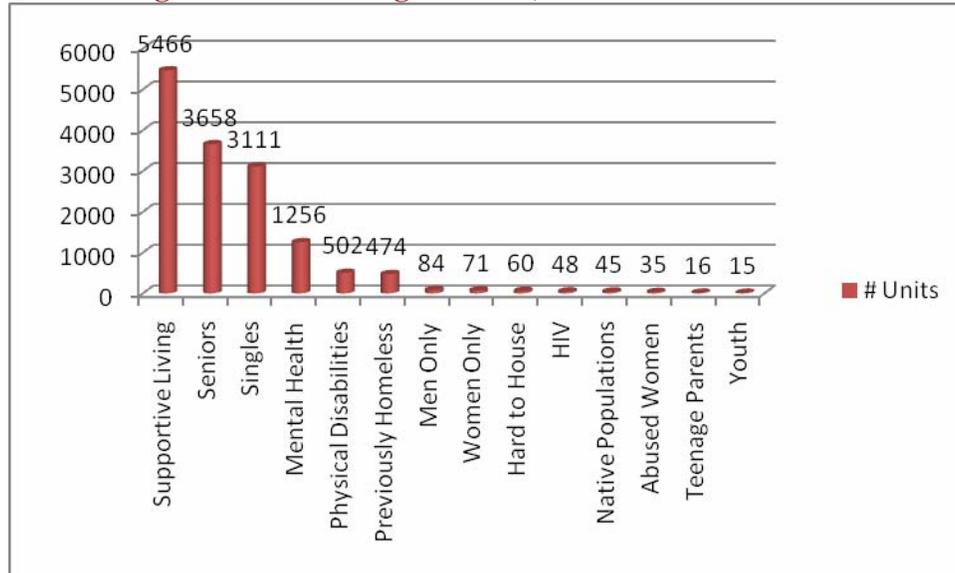
### **Which groups are serviced by non-profit affordable housing providers in Toronto?**

As the previous research question demonstrated, perhaps the greatest asset of PNP subsidized housing is its dedication to housing a wide variety of target populations and offering them specialized services. This research question aims to investigate in greater detail which population groups are serviced by PNP housing providers.

PNP housing providers operating outside of the TCHC can accept applications from very specific groups of the population. For example, a PNP organization, through their mandate, may wish to house only First Nation persons, or a combination of populations such as Catholic seniors. RGI service agreements specify the target population for which PNP organizations must supply units to people from TCHC's centralized waiting list. While a PNP housing provider's original organizational vision may specify that all of its units should be dedicated to a specific target population group, TCHC may only want a proportion of the units it contracts from the organization to be used for this group. This means that at times PNP organizations must house persons who do not fall under their original mandate (see p.37). This issue is further explored under the barrier '*Program Management*'.

Figure 1 summarizes the number of subsidized housing units (both through RGI service agreements and private funds) provided by PNP organizations in Toronto. The results are then expanded on individually.

**Figure 1. Subsidized Units Provided by PNP Organizations in Toronto (Both Privately and Through RGI Service Agreements)**



Sources: Organizations websites, telephone and email correspondence.

**Note:** The total of all categories exceeds the total number of subsidized units provided by PNP organizations in Toronto as there is a certain degree of overlapping between categories. For example ‘supportive living’ refers to many of the units provided under the categories of ‘mental health’, ‘physical disabilities’ and ‘seniors’.

### 5.2.1 Seniors

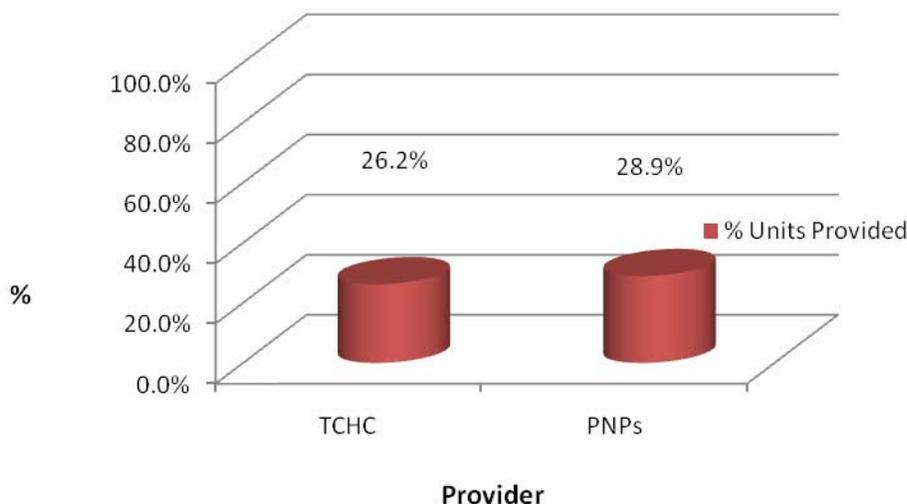
Social housing owned and operated by TCHC is not aimed at specific target populations with the exception of seniors, who make up a relatively large proportion of its stock at 26.2%. Canada’s population as a whole has been aging over the past twenty years; however as the recipient of the majority of the country’s incoming immigrants who are younger on average than the general population, Toronto’s median age has not climbed as rapidly as other large cities (City of Toronto Urban Development Services Policy and Research, 2003). This does not take away from the importance of providing affordable housing for our city’s seniors who often live on fixed incomes from government transfers and private pension plans. What the preceding statistic tells us however is that as one of the largest recipients of TCHC housing, seniors may not be as reliant on PNP organizations for subsidized units as other populations.

PNP organizations do continue to provide subsidized housing for seniors however. As previously mentioned, PNP organizations have the scope to provide a more holistic approach to housing, offering supportive living options to seniors such as meal plans, on-site medical advice and care. Therefore, while seniors receive many of TCHC units, PNP units offer additional resources that can increase their quality of life.

As a whole, the PNP sector in Toronto provides 3658 units for seniors, accounting for 28.9% of their total contribution to affordable housing units in the city. This is similar to the proportion of units dedicated to seniors by TCHC. Many PNP organizations providing affordable housing units for seniors are contracted by the TCHC, and this has allowed TCHC to expand its stock of

units of seniors relatively quickly with little or no investment in infrastructure: It is important to note that of the 3658 seniors units provided by PNP organizations in Toronto, 95.6% of these are contracted by TCHC. This further increases the proportion of seniors units offered by TCHC from 26.2% to 33.5%.

**Figure 2. Seniors Units as a Percentage of All Subsidized Housing Units Provided by TCHC and PNPs**



Sources: Housing Connections (2007), correspondence with PNP organizations and their websites.

As a population group then, Toronto seniors receive around a third of all subsidized housing units whether municipal or non-profit. They have a definite need for this housing however: While in 2001 seniors made up 14% of the city’s population (City of Toronto, 2002) 40% of these are single seniors with annual incomes under \$17,000 (City of Toronto, 2002). Using the CMHC measure of housing affordability, paying no more than 30% of a person’s income on shelter, these seniors could afford to pay only \$467.50 per month. Under current market conditions in Toronto this is not a sufficient amount of income to afford even a bachelor apartment. With the proportion of seniors in Toronto expected to rise by 50% by 2031 (City of Toronto, 2002), it is imperative that TCHC continues to expand the units reserved for seniors.

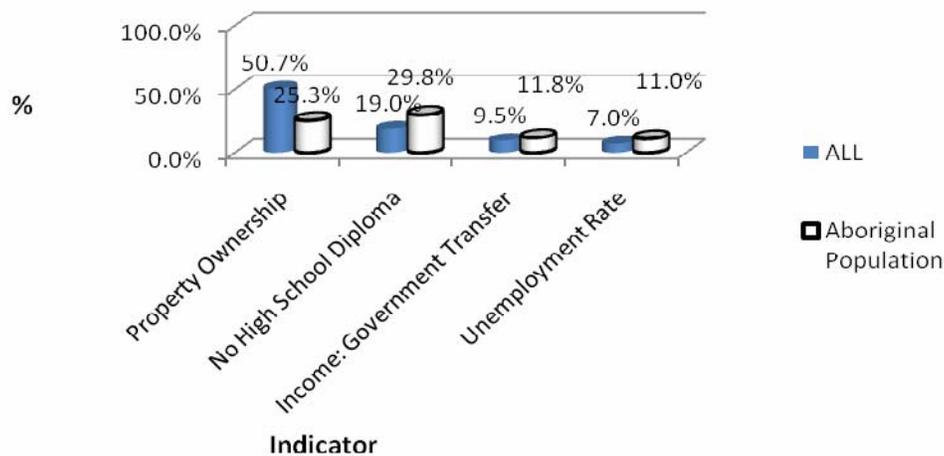
PNP organizations provide not only places of residence for seniors, but also varying levels of supportive living in addition to subsidized units. With low incomes, many seniors are unable to afford residence in traditional for-profit nursing and retirement homes where they can enjoy in-home medical attention to improve their quality of life. With seniors enjoying longer life spans than ever before, 22% in 2001 reported difficulty in carrying out everyday tasks due to one or more long-term physical, mental or health conditions (City of Toronto, 2002). It is therefore vital that PNP organizations are given sufficient support to expand their operations and continue to provide valuable affordable units and on-site support to seniors.

## 5.2.2 Aboriginal Populations

### - Group characteristics and potential need

Aboriginal persons make up a very small proportion of Toronto's population at 0.4%. However as a group, their average income, education levels, and homeownership and employment rates, are lower than the general population, increasing their usage of social services and need for subsidized housing. Moreover, Toronto's Street Needs Assessment showed that Aboriginal persons made up 26% of Toronto's homeless population (City of Toronto, 2006). Aboriginal persons also tended to be homeless for longer than the general population at an average of 5.3 years in comparison to 3.1 years for non-Aboriginal people (City of Toronto, 2006).

**Figure 3. Aboriginal Population Characteristics (Toronto)**



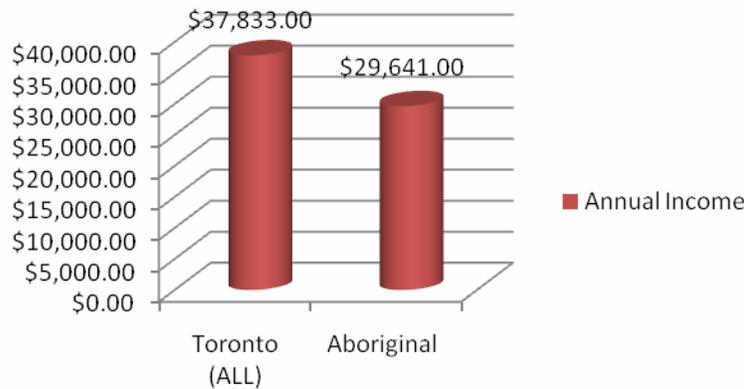
Source: 2001 Census Aboriginal Population Profiles (Toronto)

As shown in figure 3, Aboriginal communities living in Toronto have significantly lower property ownership levels with just 25.3% owning their own dwelling. This is in stark comparison to Toronto's population as a whole where property ownership levels are twice this figure at 50.7%. This demonstrates that many in Toronto's Aboriginal communities are missing out on some of the benefits homeownership can afford, most importantly financial equity. Homeownership also helps to create a stable environment for its residents, and in a report from Habitat for Humanity, was shown to decrease crime rates, and increase civic participation and educational achievement (Habitat for Humanity New York City, 2007). More importantly however, homeownership gives residents the ability to live into old age with few shelter costs once their mortgage is paid off, and to hand down the asset to future generations.

Homeownership also protects residents from the fluctuations in rental markets. As Toronto's rental market becomes increasingly tight and rents increase faster than wages, non homeowners will see a growing proportion of their real income swallowed up by shelter costs. The latest rental market report from CMHC shows that Toronto's rental vacancy rate has continued to decline since its peak of 4.3% in 2004, to 3.2% in 2006 and an expected drop to 2.5% by the end of 2007 (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2006). This means that rents continue to increase while minimum wage and welfare support payments have failed to keep pace.

Toronto's Aboriginal communities then, with a high incidence of renters, are at particular risk of losing the ability to afford adequate shelter in the city, especially since as a group they earn significantly lower annual incomes than the general population: Statistics Canada's 2001 Census showed that Aboriginal communities in Toronto had an average income of \$29,641, a figure over \$8000 lower than the city's population as a whole (see figure 4).

**Figure 4. Annual Income: Toronto's Aboriginal Populations**



**Source: 2001 Census Aboriginal Population Profiles (Toronto)**

Additional indicators that put Aboriginal communities in Toronto at greater risk of requiring subsidized housing are their education levels and unemployment rates. As figure 3 shows, the proportion of Aboriginal persons without a high school graduation certificate is over 10% higher than the city's population as a whole, at 29.8%. This means that as a group, Toronto's Aboriginal persons are less likely to reach higher levels of employment, and are often compelled to work in low paying jobs lacking security and benefits for example in the service industry. Low wages further reduce this group's ability to afford adequate accommodation.

At 11%, the unemployment rate of Toronto's Aboriginal communities is three per cent higher than that of the city's population as a whole. This makes the group more reliant on government transfers as a source of income, something that has failed to keep pace with increasing rental rates in the city. It is clear through these indicators that Toronto's Aboriginal communities have a demonstrated greater need for subsidized housing when compared to the city's population.

- *Available affordable housing*

TCHC does not dedicate any units specifically to Aboriginal populations, instead placing them on the municipal waiting list with the rest of the city's residents. Several PNP organizations in Toronto provide subsidized housing units dedicated solely to Aboriginal communities, all of which are contracted by TCHC. This means that while TCHC does not own or operate any units for Aboriginal communities itself, those on the municipal waiting list do have access to units provided by these PNP organizations. On the whole, these PNP organizations are not forced to accept large numbers of non-Aboriginal residents, meaning that they can retain their original mandate while working in tandem with the municipal government. These developments help to support Aboriginal culture by offering healing circles and Northern education programs.

Subsidized units for Aboriginal communities make up 3.1% of all units provided by PNP organizations, a figure significantly higher than their 0.4% proportion of Toronto's population. When calculated as a proportion of all units offered through TCHC, this drops to 0.7%. While this is still higher than their contribution to Toronto's population, the statistics and indicators above have shown that this is a group that is at greater risk of requiring housing assistance than the city's population as a whole. While Aboriginal communities can be housed in traditional municipally owned and operated housing, there is demand for buildings dedicated solely to this segment of the population to allow the continuation and growth of traditional culture and practices. PNP organizations are alone in providing tailored housing to Aboriginal communities, contributing a significant resource for a group that municipal housing programs have failed to provide for. It is vital that barriers facing PNP providers are addressed to allow this vulnerable group to receive the housing and support services they need to close the gap between them and the rest of Toronto's population in terms of education, income, and housing.

### 5.2.3 Singles

#### *- Group characteristics and potential need*

'Singles' is a broad category of the population, referring to anyone who can be housed alone (i.e. without children, a spouse or significant other, or any other family members). People in this category vary in age, sex, and social situation. For example some may be homeless, others widowed, victims of abuse, or simply unattached. By looking at the wide variations across this category, further classification is necessary to better define whether any one group is under-served. However this category looks at their most basic accommodation requirements.

The definition of 'singles' accommodation in this part of the project is any accommodation suitable for single occupancy. This ranges from bachelor and one-bedroom apartments, to beds in shared accommodation such as shared two-bedroom apartments. Homeless and emergency shelters have not been included as they are classified as 'transitional' housing whereas this project is interested in more permanent housing arrangements. In addition, seniors have not been included in this section of the study as they generally have their own specifically assigned units provided by both the TCHC and PNP organizations (p.16).

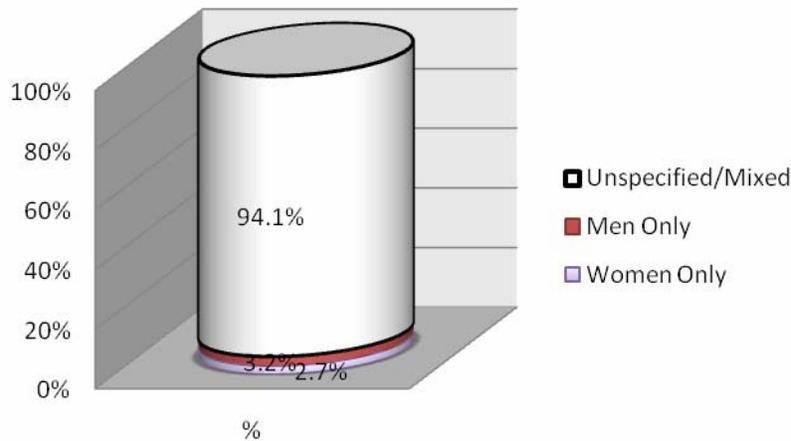
Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) reported that in 1996 the majority of persons receiving income support were single males and females with no dependents, accounting for between 50-70% across all provinces (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 1996). Shelter allowance in Ontario for singles in 2002 was \$325 per month, when the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Toronto was over \$700 (Reeveley, 2002). Since then, social assistance has failed to keep pace with rising accommodation costs increasing the financial squeeze that low-income earners and social assistance recipients face. This group then makes up a considerable proportion of people requiring housing assistance.

- Available affordable housing

As a group, singles receive approximately a third of TCHC units, with 32.6% of all municipally owned and operated units classified as ‘bachelor’ or ‘one bedroom’ in size. Since these sizes are unsuitable for people with dependents, with the exception of spouses and common-law couples sharing a bedroom, the majority of these units can be utilized by singles. TCHC also contracts various PNP organizations to provide housing of a suitable size for singles, accounting for 21.7% of all contracted units. When combined to reflect the aggregate number of municipally and privately subsidized units suitable for Toronto singles (not including seniors) provided by TCHC, this figure rises to 38%.

Toronto’s PNP housing sector dedicates 35% of its subsidized units to singles. Some of these are contracted by TCHC, while others are operated independently. Housing provided by PNP organizations is typically aimed at a more specific segment of the population than TCHC units, combining accommodation with additional support services and specialized care options at subsidized rates. This ensures a more holistic approach to housing that attempts to either rehabilitate people back into mainstream society (such as substance abusers, victims of abuse, and the homeless), or improve their quality of life (such as people living with HIV, mental illness or physical handicaps). The vast majority of PNP single units then are dedicated to supportive living (for more detail on this category please refer to p.25).

**Figure 5. PNP Subsidized Units for Specific Genders**



Sources: Housing Connections (2007), correspondence with PNP organizations and their websites.

A subsection of ‘singles’ is single-sex accommodation. These are units that are assigned to specific genders. Within the TCHC there are no buildings that cater solely to a single sex, however this project uncovered six buildings provided by PNP organizations that have assigned genders, four for women, and two for men. This translates into 71 units for women and 84 for men. This means that less than 6% of all units provided by PNP organizations are reserved for specific genders. When seen in the larger picture of all subsidized housing units in Toronto, provided by both TCHC and PNP organizations, this figure drops to 0.2%. While the majority of the population are happy to reside in mixed gender buildings, certain sections of the population including victims of sexual, physical and mental abuse from the opposite sex and those escaping abusive and/or oppressive relationships would benefit from permanent affordable housing in a single-sex setting. It would appear then that this target population is relatively under-served by affordable housing in Toronto, particularly by municipal programs, but also by PNP organizations. The **general** singles population is a large recipient of both publicly- and privately- subsidized housing in Toronto. However with the majority of applicants being single, it is vital that PNP housing providers are helped to continue and increase the number of units they supply to this broad segment of the population.

#### 5.2.4 Persons Living With Physical Disabilities

##### *- Group characteristics and potential need*

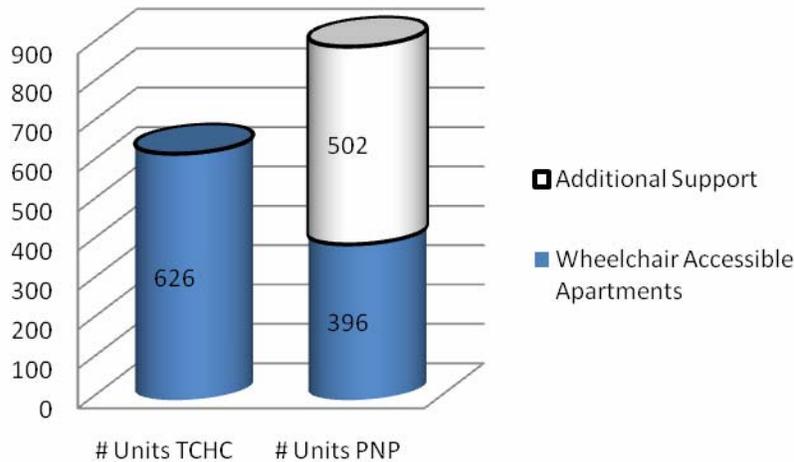
In the past, people with physical disabilities would usually be left to live with family members who were responsible for their care, or sent to institutions that provided varying levels of support. Societal attitudes today are much more accepting, and acknowledge that many people with physical disabilities are fully capable of leading long and productive lives independently. Some physical disabilities result in difficulty gaining employment, leaving the citizen reliant on governmental support for their income. Under the Ontario Disability Support Program shelter allowances remain below market rent for accommodations in Toronto (Ontario Disability Support Program, 2007). Moreover while the province is willing to pay for modifications to allow those with physical disabilities to live independently, Statistics Canada’s 2001 Census reported that 37% of all people requiring such changes in their dwellings had not received them (Statistics Canada, 2007). The majority of market rental accommodation is not specifically designed to be wheelchair accessible. While there are numerous PNP organizations that provide subsidized services to support people living with physical disabilities in private apartments and other accommodations, it is clear that both municipal and PNP housing initiatives need to better accommodate this section of the population.

##### *- Available affordable housing*

Toronto’s affordable housing system provides two levels of service for persons with physical disabilities, the most basic level being that of wheelchair accessible, subsidized apartments. These are supplied by TCHC in buildings across the city. PNP organizations however focus more on palliative care in addition to providing accommodation. As figure 6, shows TCHC itself owns and operates 626 wheelchair accessible units, and gains an additional 396 through contracts with PNP organizations. The more advanced level of care however is provided solely by PNP organizations who supply 502 units of subsidized accommodation in buildings which have

access to on-site assistance. These units are all contracted by TCHC and therefore are accessed through the municipal waiting list.

**Figure 6. Subsidized Units Provided for Persons Living with Physical Disabilities**



Sources: Housing Connections (2007), correspondence with PNP organizations and their websites.

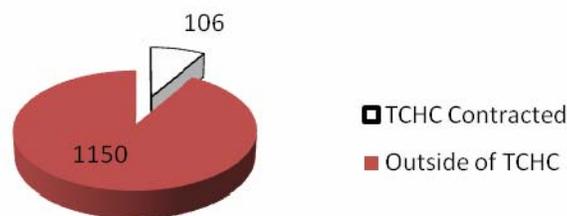
Looking at the size and scale of TCHC in comparison to the PNP sector (p.12) it is clear that PNP organizations are more dedicated to this section of the population than municipal housing programs. TCHC dedicates two per cent of its units to persons living with physical disabilities, while PNP organizations provide seven per cent of their units. Considering that this target population has the option of living in market rent apartments and accommodations through both shelter allowances and modifications on their accommodations, efforts on the part of PNP organizations to accommodate persons with physical disabilities appear considerable, particularly as they are not mandated by any governmental body to cater to this specific clientele. However with just two per cent of its units wheelchair accessible, the municipal government seems to somewhat under-serve this target population.

### 5.2.5 Persons Living With Mental Disabilities

Ontario's mental health care system has been undergoing a process of reform since the early 1980s. A central facet of this reform has been a shift from in-patient residence to a more community-based model that encourages out-patient care (Lin, 2000). While this is a more flexible method of health care provision, it has left many patients who once resided inside the system with the necessity to find their own shelter and accommodation. Some mental health patients have difficulty finding a place to live because of the stigma against their illnesses, and moreover, with some unable to work and relying on government income, it is important that safe and affordable housing is provided for those with limited options. TCHC does not dedicate any of its own units to mental health patients, instead they are placed on the municipal waiting list without priority. It does, however, contract 106 units from PNP organizations that provide a safe environment for persons living with mental illnesses.

As figure 7 shows, PNP organizations outside of TCHC are particularly dedicated to providing independent living environments for mental health patients, providing 1150 units to this target population. While some of these units are in buildings that provide on-site care and support, many are simply safe environments for mental health patients requiring a unit that have been unable to find one elsewhere due to stigma. These units often provide regular visits from health workers who can assist in putting residents into contact with provincial health programs, rather than providing on-site care. This ensures that residents gain all the benefits from independent living (as opposed to a more supportive-living environment), while ensuring these people do not fall through the cracks of the health care system.

**Figure 7. Subsidized PNP Housing Units Dedicated to Persons with Mental Health Issues**



**Sources: Housing Connections (2007), correspondence with PNP organizations and their websites.**

When taken in aggregate, whether independently or through RGI service agreements, and whether offering independent or supportive living, subsidized housing units provided by PNP organizations for persons living with mental health issues account for 9.9% of all PNP subsidized housing. This is a considerable proportion of PNP subsidized housing units that can be justified when it is noted that the Pathways Project found that 66% of all homeless persons in Toronto had a lifelong mental illness diagnosis, a rate almost three times higher than that of the general population (Canadian Mental Health Association, 1998). It is clear that persons living with mental illness are at greater risk than the general population of homelessness, and require specifically targeted assistance with housing. PNP organizations are alone in providing this service, with the provincial government continuing to cut back on owned and operated accommodation for persons with mental illness. While PNP organizations appear to be very dedicated to this section of the population the high proportion Toronto’s homeless living with mental illness it is clear more assistance is needed.

### 5.2.6 Supportive Living

#### *- Group characteristics and potential need*

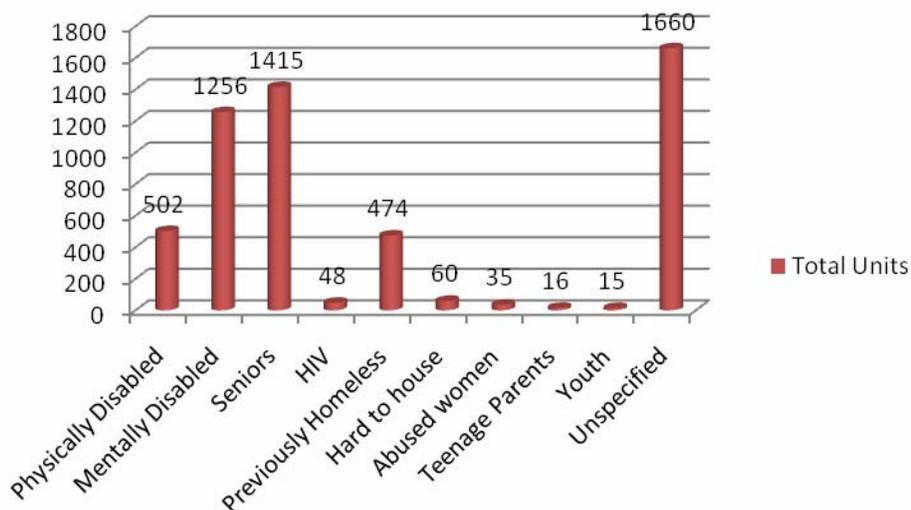
Perhaps the greatest benefit of subsidized and affordable housing units provided by PNP organizations is their ability to provide additional support services alongside traditional accommodation. Many people requiring assistance finding and affording housing could benefit from additional support services such as links to the health care system, access to on-site medical attention and counselling services. While some PNP organizations provide independent-living

accommodations, or simply facilitate links with programs suitable for their residents, others provide more comprehensive levels of support services to their affordable housing units. The benefits of these arrangements to residents are immeasurable, giving many people the opportunity to live independently from long-term health care facilities or family members, while still receiving support services.

- *Available affordable housing*

TCHC does not provide supportive living itself, but does contract nearly 3000 units from PNP organizations to allow those on its waiting list to receive the assistance they require to enable long-term independent living. In total, PNP organizations provide 5466 supportive living units across Toronto to a wide range of target populations. This accounts for 43.1% of all affordable housing units provided by PNP organizations, reflecting their considerable dedication to a holistic approach to housing rather than simply providing accommodation.

**Figure 8. Subsidized Supportive Living Units Provided by Toronto’s PNP Organizations**



**Sources: 211 Community Connection, correspondence with PNP organizations and their websites.**

There are three main target populations for supportive living; seniors, and people living with physical and mental disabilities. As figure 8 shows, this study was unable to ascertain the target population of roughly a third of all supportive living units provided by PNP organizations. However, the information gathered shows that with 1415 units, the largest target population group for supportive living is seniors. It is also interesting to note that of these 1415 units, 88.7% of these are contracted by TCHC. This may be explained by the concern at all levels of the Canadian government for our aging population. In order for the municipal government to quickly and cheaply increase their supply of affordable housing units for seniors, it is easy to contract these from PNP organizations.

The second largest target population for supportive living by PNP organizations are persons living with mental illness, with 1256 units. As described in the previous target population ‘persons living with mental disabilities’ (see p.24), persons living with mental illness benefit enormously not only from safe accommodations away from any stigmas in society, but also from supportive living such as counselling services, on-site medical attention, and linkages to provincial health care programs and representatives to ensure that their transition into independent living away from long-term health facilities and family accommodations is a successful one. The third largest target group is persons living with physical disabilities. Supportive living for this group can mean on-site assistance, should need be, with tasks that are made challenging by their physical disabilities. These services allow people living with physical disabilities to live independent lives outside of nursing homes and family accommodations, and without full-time care staff. Instead, assistance is provided as frequently or infrequently as is necessary.

PNP organizations have greater versatility than the municipal housing program, whose mandate is to simply provide affordable accommodation rather than holistic care. As graph 6.8 shows that PNP organizations across Toronto provide a wide variety of supportive living options, with target populations including HIV survivors, homeless persons, abused women, teenage parents, youth, and hard to house persons. They ensure that these people receive the treatment and support they need, while learning how to live independently. Without this service many recipients of affordable housing from the municipal government would fail to live independently on a long-term basis and slip back through the cracks. It is clear that in this role PNP organizations play a vital role in providing affordable housing to Toronto’s population. Both the municipal and provincial governments benefit enormously from the supportive living programs provided by PNP housing providers who have stepped in and filled a gap in social service provision. It is important for both the government and recipients that challenges to PNP housing providers are removed so that their services can be maintained and expanded.

### 5.2.7 Families

According to a municipal study on child poverty, 37% of Toronto’s children live below the Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO) (Campaign 2000, 2001). This is a clear indication of the great need for affordable housing units of a suitable size for families. The municipal government dedicates a large proportion of its units (40%) to family apartments of varying sizes. In this regard, PNP organizations provide a supplement to these units. TCHC provides a little over 20,000 units of a two-bedroom size and larger for Toronto families, and contracts a further 2561 from PNP organizations. Information on the breakdown of unit sizes for PNP organizations outside of TCHC contracts was particularly sparse, and hence statistics for the number of units provided for this target population is not available. However it is clear that families are TCHC’s largest target population. The role of PNP organizations in providing affordable housing then, does not lie in family housing as this is already well-provided for by the municipal government. Instead, PNP organizations choose to focus on populations that remain outside of the scope of TCHC programs (particularly people requiring more supportive living conditions) and providing a holistic approach to housing and healthcare.

### **5.3 Barriers Facing Toronto's PNP Housing Providers**

#### ***What are the most prominent barriers that PNP housing providers face in Toronto?***

As this project has demonstrated, PNP organizations play an important role in providing subsidized housing to low-income individuals across Toronto. It is vital then that a supportive environment is created in which they can function to the best of their ability, continue to provide valuable housing and resources, and even expand their operations.

To understand the barriers that PNP organizations felt that they faced, a survey was distributed to all PNP organizations providing subsidized housing in Toronto. From 140 invitations, 27 replied, giving an overall response rate of around 20%. Since the data collected in this question was qualitative in nature, it was not imperative that all PNP organizations replied. The responding organizations ranged greatly in their size, target populations, and services offered. And while they may not offer a completely representative sample, they do allow perspectives from a largely varied group of respondents. For a copy of the distributed survey, please see appendix one. Appendix two provides an explanation of the rationale behind each question.

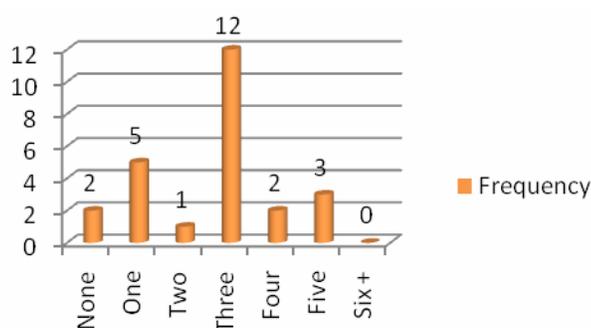
The analysis of this research question has two parts: First the barriers facing PNP housing providers in Toronto were explored in greater detail by looking at results from the survey questions 9 and 10. The perceived barriers 'municipal program management', and 'obligations to house persons other than your target population', are covered in the following section on p.37. This then leads into a more reflective discussion on the role of both the municipal and provincial governments in creating a supportive and sustainable environment that helps eliminate some of the aforementioned barriers. This latter section used information gathered from questions 11-13, and suggestions gathered from the project's literature review.

#### **5.3.1 Barriers**

Respondents were asked to list all perceived barriers to their provision of subsidized housing and their related services. The results of these questions (9 and 10) are explored below, looking at potential solutions to the barriers mentioned.

Respondents were given a list of eleven potential barriers and a category of 'other' category in which organizations could provide their own input on challenges they face. As figure 9 shows, the vast majority (45%) of respondents listed three perceived barriers to their organization. No organizations listed more than five barriers to their operations, and two listed no perceived challenges at all.

**Figure 9. Question 9: Number of Barriers Listed by Respondents**



Source: Survey results.

Table 2 shows the frequency of each potential barrier. The problems that these barriers pose to PNP housing providers, and their potential solutions, are explored in greater detail later in this section. The most frequently cited barrier was ‘lack of fundraising opportunities and/or capacity’ with fifteen responses (approximately a quarter of total responses), followed closely by ‘financial Burdens’ with twelve. Access to both private and public funding were significant barriers with a total of eight and nine responses, respectively. Eight organizations listed their own barriers under ‘other’, and all other categories had between one and three responses each.

**Table 2. Question 9: All Perceived Barriers**

Barrier	Frequency
Limited fundraising opportunities and/or capacity	15
Financial burdens	12
Access to public funding	9
Access to private funding	8
Municipal program management	3
Managerial capacity	3
Lack of community support	3
Lack of experienced staff	2
Community opposition	1
Isolation from related organizations	1
Obligations to house persons other than target population	1
Other	8

Source: Survey results.

### *Lack of Fundraising Opportunities and/or Capacity*

Fundraising refers to activities organized to solicit money or pledges. Examples among many include charity dinners, garden parties, lotteries and barbeque afternoons. Charities are particularly dependent on fundraisers as a method to generate their own income as they are unable to do this through their regular activities: By their nature, non-profit organizations are exactly that, 'not for profit'. Regular and efficient fundraising is perhaps the most significant step towards long-term financial sustainability for PNP organizations, as public and private funds are often unstable. In addition, fundraisers allow PNP organizations to concentrate their resources on a few annual events, rather than endless grant applications for which they must compete with other charities.

As this project's survey shows however, many PNP organizations feel that they lack the resources and training to effectively fundraise, leading to a lack of capacity to generate independent funds. A report by CPRN entitled '*A Portrait of Canadian Fundraising Professionals – Results of the AFP/CPRN Survey of Fundraisers 2002*', found that a key support mechanism that could help raise the fundraising capacity of non-profit organizations was widespread education. Information that teaches PNP organizations to better utilize their existing resources could allow them to vastly increase their fundraising capacity without having to hire additional staff members that put a further drain on their finances. In the long-run this would enable PNP organizations greater independence from public funding and consequently save the municipal government money. Allowing PNP organizations to be financially stable without leaning heavily on government grants and other private funding would be the most important step in promoting the long-term sustainability of the PNP subsidized housing sector. This may be why a lack of fundraising capacity was the most frequently cited barrier to non-profit housing provision in Toronto, since without financial autonomy PNP organizations are left at the whim of fluctuating external funds. Assistance in increasing the fundraising capacity of PNP organizations could be initiated by either the public or the private sector, or both. However as it would perhaps be of greater benefit to the municipal government to facilitate PNP organizations to raise their own money, creating and subsidizing this new initiative should fall on their shoulders.

### *Financial Burdens*

Subsidized housing programs of the past provided a mortgage loan covering 100% of the approved cost of the project. A federally-run program then provided ongoing subsidies, matched to the term of the mortgage (Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, 2006) to help repay the loan. Programs of today however usually provide a one-time up front grant that helps with construction and development costs. It does not help to cover mortgage repayments or operating costs. For example, the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program initiative started in 2005 pledges \$734 million to affordable housing development across Ontario over five years. Its main focus is new development, and it is expected to create over 20,000 new units (Government of Canada, 2006). Competition for funding is highly competitive however, with many non-profit organizations lacking the resources to create competitive applications. Most PNP organizations are left to cover loan repayments with shrinking governmental financial support. Moreover, this funding does not assist existing developments who are struggling with rising operating costs.

As PNP organizations attempt to continue subsidizing rents outside of RGI service agreements with the municipal government, tenant's incomes do not rise as quickly as operating costs. This means that the difference between the money they can raise from rents and the amount they must spend on operating costs is shrinking. On top of this PNP organizations must continue to make mortgage payments for their developments. In particular the cost of electricity has risen significantly across Ontario over the past year. Whereas in the past non-profits may have benefited from the electricity price freeze supported by taxes as many of their activities are tax-free, without a cap prices have made a big dent in their operating budgets. Other operating costs include maintenance fees, cleaning services, staff wages, office expenses, and fundraising costs.

An example of a funding program that seems to work well for non-profit housing is British Columbia's provincial government's pledge to provide financial, administrative, and technical support, along with administering long-term operating agreements and subsidies up to 30% of a tenant's income (Societe d'habitation du Quebec, 2007). In addition, the provincial government in Manitoba supports the operation of select PNP organizations which have developed housing for low to moderate-income households. While restrictions regarding tenant eligibility, rent levels and available subsidies differ depending on the project, the program still offers greater support than that received in Ontario where funding is restricted to RGI service agreements (Societe d'habitation du Quebec, 2007). The role of the provincial government is further discussed in a following section (p.37), however Manitoba and BC's successes in supporting the long-term operations of PNP housing providers, shows that financial support does not need to be left up to the municipal government, and that long-term support outside of RGI service agreements are financially feasible.

### *Access to Public Funding*

Under the SHRA it is now the responsibility of the municipal government to distribute funds for subsidized housing programs in Ontario. Some municipalities have taken the lead and developed a number of programs to encourage the development of social housing, however others have simply waited to see what both the federal and provincial governments will offer next in the way of funding (Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, 2006). As a municipality, Toronto has created several initiatives to encourage the construction of new affordable housing developments which will be explored in greater detail under the barrier 'shortage of housing' (p.36). When it comes to funding however, long-term support for existing projects has been neglected. The municipal government provides funding covering the difference between 30% of a tenant's income, and market rent (known as an RGI subsidy) in PNP housing developments that use the city's centralized waiting list and enter into service agreements or contracts with TCHC. This means that the PNP organization must conform to the requirements set out in the SHRA (City of Toronto, 2005):

- Carry out day to day property management,
- Create an internal transfer list, and a market waiting list,
- Fill vacancies using the centralized waiting list,
- Carry out RGI administration under RGI Service Agreements,
- Report to the municipal Service Manager.

This funding simply covers the difference between what a tenant can afford to pay (30% of their income) and market rent, and does not contribute to other financial burdens a PNP organization may have (see earlier barrier *'financial burdens'*). In addition, this funding is not available to PNP organizations that remain independent from TCHC. Access to public funding remains severely limited for these organizations. Developments experiencing acute financial difficulties are eligible to apply for assistance from the municipal government, however this comes in the form of a loan from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing program, that must be repaid (Government of Canada, 2006). No other municipal programs currently provide funding to existing PNP housing providers that do not have RGI service agreements with TCHC. While this encourages a more centralized housing system that provides a single waiting list for applicants, it leaves PNP organizations little choice but to follow SHRA guidelines and enter into service agreements with TCHC.

Improved access to public funds could allow PNP organizations the financial freedom to expand their operations. While funding for new developments can be obtained through a number of government programs, additional funding for existing buildings would allow PNP organizations to provide a greater number of subsidized units. Currently, only 53% of all housing units inside of buildings that PNP organizations operate are subsidized, either through TCHC or independently (City of Toronto, 2005). This number would increase if PNP organizations outside of TCHC contracts received assistance for some of their financial burdens such as mortgage and interest repayments, energy costs and staff wages.

Toronto's municipal government remains focused on the development of new affordable and subsidized housing units rather than providing financial support to existing projects. This can be seen as short-term, variable funding rather than long-term stable commitments that would encourage a financially sustainable environment in which to develop **and operate** subsidized housing. Short term funding allows development to be initiated however does not support the long-term sustainability of these projects. Even PNP organizations that enter into service agreements with TCHC face financial problems as operating costs not covered by funding increase at a higher rate than rent and incomes. The City of Toronto (2005) reports that on average incomes increase by 1% annually while market rent increases by 2.5%. This means that PNP organizations under contract to the TCHC will receive a growing subsidy as the gap between income and market rent increases, however for those operating independently from the municipal government, this widening gap will have to be covered by non-public funding. The topic of private funding was looked at in the preceding barrier of *'limited fundraising opportunities and/or capacity'*, and is explored further in *'access to private funding'*.

### *Access to Private Funding*

The private sector is not typically considered a major player in the development and funding of social housing. Given that the explicit goal of these businesses is to make a profit, it is arguably impossible to do so when social housing sets rents far below market rent. There are many other more profitable endeavours to invest in. A number of tax incentives have been offered by the municipal government to encourage the private sector to include small numbers of affordable homes and rental units in larger developments. However there has been no real commitment by

the private sector to offer long-term financial support to existing PNP organizations providing affordable housing in Toronto. Potential ways in which they could assist are:

- Utility companies offering reduced prices,
- Banks offering low interest loans and/or limited loan forgiveness (e.g. 5% annually),
- Pro bono assistance with development from urban planning businesses,
- Annual sponsorship of fundraising events by any business, and/or matching donations,
- Pro bono landscaping from landscaping businesses,
- Reduced prices for telephone and internet charges from communications companies.

These are just a few of the potential ways in which the private sector could provide funding that would help PNP organizations with some of their financial burdens. Private sector involvement should not replace the vital role that governments play in providing long-term, stable funding (see previous barrier '*access to public funding*'), but it has the potential to significantly ease the burden of operating costs to many PNP housing providers (Mawby, 2004). Such philanthropy has long been used as an efficient marketing strategy to both increase community awareness of the business and win their support. Subsidized housing units help to create healthy communities with lower levels of homelessness. It is the responsibility of all individuals, private businesses, and the public sector to support charitable work that improves our communities. The private sector has great potential to help support PNP housing providers, and offer them long-term funding whether through grants or alternate forms of assistance.

#### *Lack of Community Support and Community Opposition*

As discussed in the previous section on '*access to private funding*' it is to the advantage of everyone in the community to support charitable work that improves the neighbourhood. Listed on page 8 are benefits that subsidized housing brings to a neighbourhood, including lower crime rates, higher school enrolment, healthier citizens, and a more competitive economy. The benefits of PNP housing are clear then, however these organizations do not always receive the community support they deserve. This section deals with two related barriers faced by PNP organizations. A 'lack of community support' refers to community members failing to provide support in terms of volunteer hours, finances and appearance at fundraising events for example. 'Community opposition' is more serious in nature, referring to members of the community actively protesting against the location or activities of a PNP organization in their neighbourhood. Such opposition is most frequently vented against developments that house people which society often shuns, such as drug addicts and the homeless. Community members worry that these residents will bring more 'problems' to the area, rather than seeing the positive transformations and spin-off effects that stable housing brings. The most frequently cited reason for opposing affordable housing development is its potentially negative impact on property prices. However, it has been suggested that this belief is unfounded (Connelly, 2005). This phenomenon is often known as 'NIMBY-ism' (Not-In-My-Back-Yard). Community opposition often costs PNP organizations thousands of dollars that go towards appeasing neighbourhood protests that block the development of new subsidized units (Connelly, 2005). While the majority of these protests are overruled by the Ontario Municipal Board, it often scares PNP organizations to abandon it altogether or to make changes and compromises that are not in the best interests of their potential tenants (Connelly, 2005).

Municipalities have often played a role in perhaps unwittingly supporting this NIMBY-ism by creating zoning laws for certain types of buildings such as homeless shelters and mental health clinics, and insisting on a long and expensive development process requiring several stages of public consultation (Connelly, 2005). Not only does this drive up the cost of development and often dictate where PNP housing providers can locate their units, but it also delays the construction of desperately needed units. Zoning by-laws also significantly reduce the number of potential sites for new housing developments.

While a lack of community support is less serious than community opposition, it still hinders the ability of PNP organizations to raise the funds they need. Community members should support these charities by donating their time and money. PNP organizations can attempt to increase community participation through neighbourhood fundraising and awareness events providing educational information. This is a problem that differs between organizations therefore the municipal government cannot realistically contribute. It is the responsibility of PNP organizations to realize the financial potential of its surrounding community, make their neighbours aware of some of the benefits the development brings to the area, and how they can help. While this would require some investment of time and resources, it has the potential to bring in much needed volunteers and financial donations.

### *Managerial Capacity*

PNP organizations are required to be increasingly accountable and transparent to both the public and different levels of government. They are expected to follow sound business practices on tight budgets, while simultaneously marketing themselves to prospective donors, and create competitive applications for government grants and programs. Managers need to be highly capable of managing volunteers, arranging staff training sessions, maintaining positive public relations, co-ordinating applications for grants and funding, and dealing with the day-to-day issues of running a low-income housing development, while always following good business practices.

A quick internet search reveals the proliferation of management strategies for PNP organizations, with over three hundred books dedicated to the subject found in one search alone. In addition, a number of journals are dedicated to the subject, including *'Non-profit Management and Leadership'*. ONPHA provides a variety of management strategies to its members, along with additional support from representatives answering any questions that managers may have. Strong management typically starts at the Board of Directors: It is crucial that a PNP organization has a Board of Directors that effectively markets itself to attract donors. If they are able to bring in sufficient funding, the PNP organization can afford to hire a highly capable manager of operations who can oversee the growing responsibilities its staff must complete (see the next barrier *'lack of experienced staff'* for a detailed look at what this entails). The manager of operations must be well versed in business practices as the PNP organizations needs to remain accountable for all donations and grants it accepts, as well as their distribution. PNP organizations require professionally trained managers to ensure their long-term sustainability by retaining their ability to attract funding, continue applying for new government grants, and to utilize their limited resources in the most effective ways possible.

### *Lack of Experienced Staff*

Similar to their managerial counterparts, staff members of PNP housing providers are expected to carry out more complex tasks than ever before. Municipal funding puts strict directions on which records need to be kept, and how. PNP organizations receiving municipal funding are expected to do the following (City of Toronto, 2005):

A.) Administer RGI subsidy

- Make sure a household is eligible for RGI housing,
- Decide on the size of unit each household qualifies for,
- Determine a household's income and assets,
- Calculate how much rent the RGI household will pay.

B.) Review RGI eligibility:

- On an annual basis,
- When the provider is notified of a change in income, assets, household size or make-up,
- If the service manager requires a review,
- Before offering an RGI unit to an applicant.

C.) Adhere to the Targeting Plan assigned to the organization with regards to:

- The minimum number of market and RGI units,
- Target population (called 'special mandates').

D.) Keep records of personal information for each client

Staff must be trained as to these municipal guidelines, and how to report each of the above findings to the municipal service manager. The City of Toronto offers a number of free courses to housing providers operating under RGI service agreements including (City of Toronto, 2007):

- RGI for new staff,
- RGI update,
- RGI case studies,
- Budgeting,
- Energy efficiency,
- Garbage levy information session,
- Risk management,
- Waiting list management.

In addition, the municipal government also provides a budgeting tool, rent increase guideline, and a guide to annual information return (see part 'D' above) (City of Toronto, 2007).

With complex tasks to perform staff need to be highly motivated and well-trained to effectively carry out everything that is required of PNP housing providers today. Without capable staff PNP housing providers cannot expect to successfully manage their day-to-day operations. However training staff takes time and money which small-scale PNP organizations lack (as this project's first research question showed, most PNP housing providers in Toronto are small-scale). Moreover, many PNP housing providers are unable to pay their staff a competitive wage compared to sectors with similar requirements of their workers, due to financial burdens (see

earlier barrier '*financial burdens*'). As a result they may have difficulties in retaining good workers who can earn more money in similar administrative jobs in other sectors. High staff turnovers mean that more resources must be spent on training new staff members, and thereby hindering the innovation of ideas.

While the transfer to municipal management of subsidized housing appears to have increased the pressure on staff members of PNP organizations, the long list of free training and additional support services show that the municipal government is working hard to help. It is perhaps the financial burdens that are the real barrier to a lack of experienced staff, as without these, PNP organizations could afford to pay higher wages and retain motivated, well-trained workers. At the end of the day, well-trained staff members who remain with organizations for the long-term are essential for the long-term sustainability of the PNP housing sector. Without them, PNP housing providers will have a hard time making any substantial movement forward as they pour valuable resources into attracting and training a revolving door of workers.

### *Isolation from Related Organizations*

The ability to share information and pool resources is perhaps the easiest way for small-scale PNP organizations (like the majority of those found in Toronto) to cut costs. For example, an organization allowing clients of another organization direct access to its services, both can save money by sharing the cost of operations. Moreover, sharing information and ideas about staff training, and energy-saving measures among many other things, can easily help organizations cut costs further.

While Toronto is one of the most densely populated cities in Canada, it would appear from the survey results that some organizations still feel isolated from their counterparts. Organizations like ONPHA help to bring PNP housing providers together and facilitate the sharing of information via its website, newsletters, online forums, and member meetings. In addition, training sessions offered by the municipal government (see previous section on the barrier '*lack of experienced staff*') are an opportunity for staff and managers from different organizations to make contacts and share ideas.

With such a high proportion of PNP organizations operating closely to the municipal government through RGI subsidy agreements, Toronto's social housing system seems to have a growing network of charitable housing providers linked together through their connection with TCHC. While a small number of survey respondents indicated that they worked in association with related organizations, the vast majority had little or no contact with other PNP housing providers. The main connections between PNP housing providers seem to be funding relationships and service agreements. However as seen in earlier barriers such as '*limited fundraising opportunities and/or capacity*', it is clear that there is great potential amongst Toronto's PNP organizations to work together to also share resources and ideas.

## *Other Barriers*

This project brought together the results of a literature review to find the most critical challenges PNP organizations might face. However perhaps the best way to find out which problems PNP housing providers experience is to simply ask them directly, so to this end an ‘other’ category was listed when asking which barriers they faced. The eight answers provided in this category have been grouped together into three problems. One response related to funding for staff has already been mentioned in the previous category ‘*lack of experienced staff*’.

### (a) Organizational Vision

Typically when a PNP organization is created a vision is set out dictating details such as its target population, the services it wishes to provide and which social problems it will address. This allows staff, no matter how new to the organization to make directed decisions that will work together to achieve the goals set out in the original vision. It is a problem however when situations arise in which it would be in an organization’s best interests to make a decision that goes against the original vision. There may be staff higher up in the organization that still cling to the founding vision while those on the front lines realize that change is necessary.

There are many instances when it may be in the best interest of the PNP organization to change its organizational vision, or stray from it for the purposes of gaining the necessary resources to better fulfil its focus. For example, if a PNP organization wishes to receive municipal funding for their subsidized units, they must be willing to house people who do not fall in their specific target population (this is also mentioned under the following issue ‘*program management*’). This is a move away from many organizational visions that have strict opinions on who should receive their subsidized units. However many PNP organizations are realizing that dedicating a number of their units to the municipal program gives them funding that can allow them to better fund subsidized units or expand operations for their original target population.

Another instance in which an organizational vision may become limiting is explored in a paper by La Piana Associates for the National Center for Non-profit Boards entitled ‘*Beyond Collaboration: Strategic Restructuring of Non-profit Organizations*’ (National Center for Non-Profit Boards, 1998); the issue of collaboration and mergers. Merging is a more permanent method to increase the size of an operation, while collaboration can provide a temporary solution, allowing providers to share information, resources and services. As exposed in this project’s first research question, the vast majority of PNP organizations providing subsidized housing in Toronto are very small in scale, operating only a single development. Merging and collaboration are in the best interests of many PNP housing providers to help them increase their economies of scale, and to share resources that would otherwise be beyond reach. The issue when collaboration or merging takes place however is the clashing of two organizational visions. While both will want to provide affordable housing and/or services, their desired method of provision, target populations, and service areas may differ. In this case, making a decision to overrule the organizational vision to allow the collaboration or merger to take place would be in the best interest of the PNP housing provider.

## (b) Program Management

Two respondents indicated that they were unhappy about the regulations placed on them by the municipal social housing program in terms of who they must accept. Under the SHRA, any PNP housing provider wishing to obtain public funding for their subsidized units must accept tenants from the centralized waiting list. This means that they may be sent a tenant who does not fall in their target population. On the surface this appears to be a rather superficial complaint, as PNP organizations can then use the funding they receive to free-up their own financial resources to better subsidize their target populations in units not dedicated to the municipal program. However, many PNP housing providers who also give their tenants access to support services (such as medical care for those with HIV/AIDS, or in-building access to assistance for deaf persons) feel that these are wasted on residents who do not require them.

Toronto's municipal housing officers mandate that PNP housing providers receiving public funding must accept the next tenant on the centralized waiting list to fill their units for two reasons:

- To ensure that municipal money is spent on people on the municipal housing waiting list
- To ensure that nobody 'jumps the line' for municipally sponsored housing units

While this process is based on fairness, on occasion PNP units that provide additional services are given to tenants who do not require these services. Toronto's municipal government is trying to ensure that no priority is given to any one group of applicants (with the exception of those clearly stated by Housing Connections – the terminally ill and abuse victims) when it comes to the units they subsidize whether it be in TCHC's own buildings, or PNP developments.

## (c) Shortage of Housing

One of the issues explored in the earlier section '*Toronto: Crisis in housing*' (p.3) was that of shortage of housing in Toronto. This pushes rents up, and low income earners into a precarious financial position, often requiring them to seek out subsidized housing. Toronto lacks both rental and subsidized units. A lack of rental units means that rent prices can be set higher than in other cities where markets are not so tight, pushing out the low-income earners. In addition, it means that people who are already living in subsidized housing must significantly raise their income to afford to move out into market rent accommodation. Not only does Toronto's municipal housing program have a waiting list that can span up to fifteen years (Housing Connections, 2007), it is clear that a large contributory factor to this is the lack of opportunity to move out of subsidized housing.

Toronto's municipal government is working hard to help alleviate the shortage of rental and subsidized housing in an attempt to loosen up the market. This would help lower Toronto's rental prices and ultimately assist both people in social housing and those on the waiting list, to move away from their dependence on social housing. Since the SHRA took effect in 2000 Toronto has begun a number of initiatives to encourage investment in new rental and affordable housing (City of Toronto, 2007). The city has:

- adopted a 'housing first' policy for surplus municipal lands,
- created the "Let's Build" program,
- established a Capital Revolving Fund for affordable housing (CRF), and
- adopted a bylaw permitting second suites.

The city's 'housing first' policy means that any surplus municipal land is prioritized for development into affordable housing (rental or privately subsidized). While this is an admirable initiative its impact is likely to be limited due to the small amounts of surplus land owned by the municipal government. The city's 'Let's Build' program appears to be having greater success. Since its launch in 2000 the program has helped develop 650 affordable housing units through a combination of incentives including access to a team of professionals to help in the planning and development process, access to city-owned land, waiver of development fees, tax incentives (equalizing the property tax rate for rental properties with condominiums for eight years), and one-time financial assistance from Toronto's \$11-million Capital Revolving Fund (CRF) (City of Toronto, 2007). The CRF is a large fund set up by the municipal government to help PNP organizations develop either affordable or transitional units (affordable can mean ownership, rental, or privately subsidized), and can provide a forgivable grant or loan to cover 25% of development costs (City of Toronto, 2007). Additionally, the municipal government has adopted a bylaw permitting second suites (apartments within private residences such as basement apartments). While this does not directly help PNP organizations, it does provide a wide range of housing options that can help low-income earners to enter the private rental market, freeing up some subsidized units for those in greatest financial need.

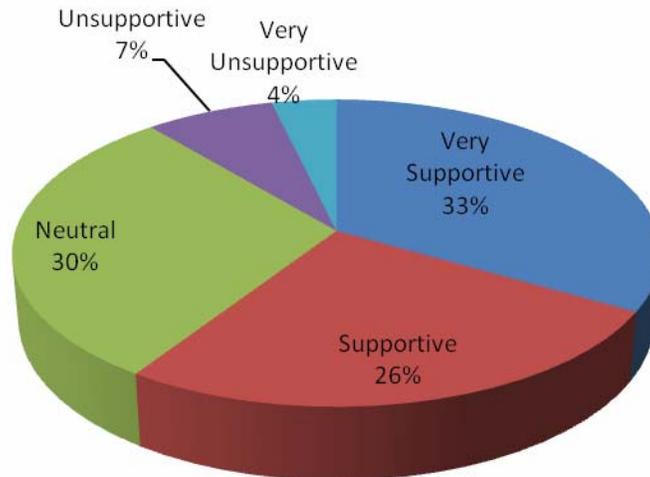
### 5.3.2 The Role of Government in Supporting PNP Housing Providers

This section looks at the level of support that PNP housing providers feel they receive from both the municipal and provincial governments using survey results. In addition, any comments they had regarding the roles of the municipal and provincial governments in the provision of social housing and supporting PNP housing providers, are examined.

#### *Municipal government*

The majority of this study's discussion about barriers faced by PNP housing providers has focused on the additional support these organizations need from the municipal government. Along with better understanding these barriers and potential solutions PNP organizations suggested might alleviate them, this project's survey also investigated the level of support they feel that they receive from the municipal government, and asked them to elaborate on the subject. As figure 10 shows, the overwhelming majority of respondents felt that Toronto's municipal government was either 'very supportive' (33% of respondents) or 'supportive' (26% of respondents) of PNP housing providers.

**Figure 10. Question 11: Level of Perceived Support from the Municipal Government**



Source: Survey results.

These results were supported by comments from PNP housing providers responding to the survey. One was particularly impressed with the municipal government's recent initiatives to help facilitate the process of developing affordable housing such as the waiving of permit fees, introduction of a property tax exemption, and the reduction of parking standards required of affordable housing structures (p.36). Another respondent acknowledged these new initiatives, writing that '*... the municipality has a clear policy direction towards supporting the development of affordable housing where the government doesn't become the landlord.*' One response, while communicating that they felt the municipal government was very supportive of PNP housing providers, also mentioned that they saw the city's housing department as being severely restricted as to what they could achieve due to the limited funding from the provincial government. This is a sentiment echoed later in many responses about the level of support provided by the provincial government.

Respondents who felt that the municipal government was less than supportive elaborated further on a wide range of issues. One response reiterated that as a part of their responsibilities for receiving municipal RGI funding, PNP housing providers are often required to accept tenants who fall outside of their target population, saying '*...some applicants are not suitable due to health restrictions but are blended anyway*'. Whereas earlier this paper explored the issue of PNP housing providers accepting tenants who did not need their specialty support services (such as on-site assistance for persons with mental illness), this respondent refers to the TCHC's lack of distinction between people needing supportive living and those who don't on its central waiting list. This means that occasionally residents will be placed into buildings without the appropriate support services they need. This problem could be avoided if TCHC ensured that applicants requiring supportive living, or additional services not provided by traditional social housing, were (if possible) placed in appropriate developments, or the municipal government made efforts to link tenants with, and subsidize, external support services if placed in a development that does not offer them.

Two respondents indicated that the municipal government needs to be more supportive financially, saying '*...they [the municipal government] do allow for some subsidies, but need to offer more*', and that PNP organizations saw a need for '*capacity building grants*'. However

others felt that the support that the municipal government currently gives is not easily accessible or appropriate, with one respondent saying that help was hard to come by unless *'they know you or you use one of their non-officially "approved" consultants'*. This stresses the need for greater communication between PNP housing providers and the municipal government to let them know which initiatives are successful, and which are not, in the way of supporting non-profit housing.

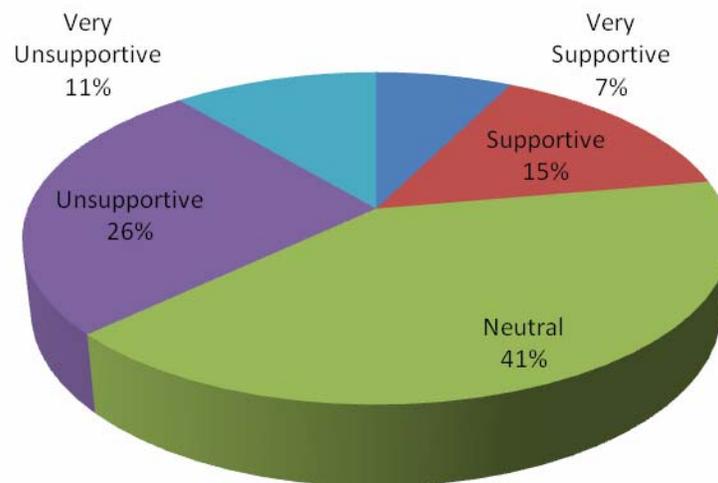
Another complaint mentioned by PNP organizations was that the municipal government failed to adequately address the needs of their specific target populations (e.g. the deaf, recovering drug addicts and the homeless). The shift from a large-scale federal and provincial social housing provision, to administration and funding by municipal governments was intended to allow greater flexibility, and tailor programs to small-scale organizations and the needs of increasingly diverse populations. From the comments received in this project however, it would seem that in the case of Toronto, the municipal government is having difficulty in catering to all of these diverse needs. This is where the provincial government needs to step in and relieve the municipal government of some of its duties to allow it to better respond to the needs of its growing network of PNP housing providers. Alternatively, the provincial government could provide more funding to the municipal government with the strict stipulation that it be applied towards hiring staff to liaise between PNP housing providers and the city. It is clear that more attention needs to be paid to the specific needs of PNP organizations who work hard to provide tailored services and housing options to members of the population not catered for by traditional social housing.

A final complaint about Toronto's municipal government was that they remain too invested in keeping the shelter system intact, draining funds that could be used in other areas of housing provision more effectively. As was shown earlier in this project (p.5), it is much more expensive to house the homeless in shelters than to get them into subsidized housing. These funds, if invested in the affordable housing system, could be used to house many more individuals than are currently helped by the shelter system. It is important to provide shelters to help the homeless move up the housing ladder into subsidized and transitional housing, however this investment should be limited, with the bulk of funding going into creating more permanent and stable housing solutions. An additional comment supporting the transfer of funding from the shelter to the affordable housing system was given by one respondent, claiming that they found that long stays in homeless shelters had ultimately made the move to more permanent housing more difficult for their tenants. While this has not been quantified by evidence, it is a problem that has been experienced by this particular PNP housing provider and quite possibly others. The shift of funding from the shelter to the affordable housing system is vital to increase the efficiency of subsidized housing in Toronto, and to expand the permanent housing options available to those living on the streets.

### *Provincial government*

In contrast to the high level of support felt by PNP respondents from Toronto's municipal government, most felt less positively about the provincial government. As shown in figure 11, 41% were 'neutral' about the support that the Ontario government offers Toronto's municipal housing program and providers, with 26% indicating they thought it was 'unsupportive' and 11% 'very unsupportive'. Since transferring the responsibility for both funding and administration of subsidized housing to Toronto in 2000, the provincial government has somewhat played the role of middle-man between the federal and municipal governments. While it is not expected that the provincial government takes sole responsibility, the barriers explored earlier in this study indicate that Toronto's municipal government needs more funding to properly support the diverse array of PNP housing providers contributing to its social housing system.

**Figure 11. Question 12: Level of Perceived Support from the Provincial Government**



**Source: Survey results.**

The transfer of responsibility of social housing management to municipalities was in part intended to allow programs to cope with the unique challenges of small-scale providers. It was hoped that as a lower level of governance municipalities could better respond to the needs of local PNP organizations. Many respondents felt that the provincial government was unsupportive of their activities and did not provide sufficient funding. However, it would perhaps be more effective if the provincial government provided more funding to municipalities with strict guidelines as to a proportion going towards supporting the activities of existing PNP housing providers in addition to RGI service agreements. To this end the provincial government could work more closely with ONPHA to ensure that the funding it provides is used most effectively by PNP housing providers and to bridge the communication gap between themselves and small scale organizations.

It is clear that PNP housing providers are a vital part of Toronto's social housing program. They help to address the huge deficits in Toronto's social housing supply, and provide housing and support services for populations not catered for by traditional government programs. The relatively recent transfer of responsibility for social housing to the municipal government has left PNP organizations struggling to find the financial support they need to continue their valuable contributions to Toronto's social housing program. To better support them, the provincial government needs to provide more funding to the municipal government who, as a lower level of governance, is better suited to meet the individual needs of small-scale PNP organizations.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of Toronto's social housing system, the contribution of PNP housing providers must be recognized not only by the municipal government but also by the provincial government. Many of the barriers faced by PNP housing providers can be addressed by increasing the level of funding they receive, and in turn that which the municipal government receives from the province. In this way the municipal government can increase the resources it offers to existing PNP housing providers, further reducing the challenges they face.

## **6. Recommendations**

### **6.1 Recommendations for PNP Housing Providers**

Although it is clear that all levels of government have an important role to play in supporting PNP housing providers, there are a number of initiatives that they can do themselves to improve their operating conditions:

#### **1.) Reduce potential NIMBY-ism by voluntarily providing educational resources for communities.**

While visible government support is also required, communicating with residents and neighbours early on in the development process to calm fears of community disruption and/or decay. This can be done formally through community meetings, and more informally through fliers.

#### **2.) Work more closely with other PNP housing providers.**

Sharing resources and ideas can help cut costs and brainstorm new ideas. In addition, PNP organizations can offer support to each other, providing resources to tackle problems they may have encountered themselves.

#### **3.) Be more flexible when following an organizational vision.**

While organizational visions provide direction to PNP operations, they also have the potential to hinder mergers and collaborative projects that could help groups procure valuable resources. In these instances PNP organizations must remain flexible and on occasion change their original values and focus to ultimately allow them to fulfill long-term goals.

#### **4.) Be more flexible as to whom they accept from TCHC's centralized waiting list.**

While the majority of PNP housing providers who responded to the survey were generally happy with the management of TCHC's RGI housing program, some complained that they were required to accept a small number of tenants who did not need the specialized services they provide. This is a problem in that potential services are effectively 'wasted' on someone who doesn't need them. However it is important for PNP organizations under RGI service agreements to recognize the rationale behind the municipal government's decision to insist on using a centralized waiting list, and use the money they would have spent subsidizing the units contracted to TCHC, to expand their services to their original target population.

Overall, PNP organizations need to work more closely with each other to increase their size of operations and share resources and ideas. Some also need to be more flexible when it comes to accepting RGI funding, looking at it as a way to put the resources they save towards their original target populations.

## **6.2 Recommendations for the Municipal Government**

### **1.) Help to cover the costs of professional fundraising training to increase the capacity of PNP organizations to raise their own income.**

In return for sponsorship, organizations such as the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) based in Toronto, could donate their services or provide them at a subsidized rate to allow PNP organizations greater independence from outside funding sources. Theoretically this could be carried out once every couple of years, particularly if PNP organizations work together to share ideas, information and innovations rather than competing with one another. Since this would give PNP organizations greater capacity to raise their own income, lowering their dependence on government funds, municipalities could help to cover some of the costs of this training.

### **2.) Increase funding programs for existing developments *in addition to* focusing on new developments.**

It is unrealistic to suggest that the municipal government could take on the financial responsibility of providing on-going subsidies that would offset all expenses for PNP organizations, enabling them to focus on the development of new affordable housing. However it is clear that PNP organizations desperately need help with rising operating costs and increased access to public funds to help subsidize their mortgage payments. Current government funding programs seem to support the development of non-profit housing, but withdraw support once construction has been completed. To ensure their long-term viability, the government must become more involved in supporting projects financially in the long-run. This does not necessarily imply a regression back to the highly subsidized federal programs of the past, but calls for a re-thinking of how the government funds housing initiatives.

**3.) Expand funding programs to incorporate PNP housing developments operating outside of the municipal RGI system.**

Subsidizing units outside of the RGI system would encourage existing PNP housing providers to expand their operations by guaranteeing that they will receive financial assistance, whether or not they enter into a service agreement with the municipal government. In addition, it may encourage new PNP organizations to enter into the subsidized housing sector by creating a more stable and secure funding atmosphere in which groups feel safe investing their resources. Moreover, expanding funding to cover operational expenses, rather than solely the difference between 30% of a tenant's income and market rent, would help existing PNP developments become more financially stable. It would also help them to expand by making some of the resources they currently use for operational costs available to invest in new developments. Lastly, it would assist PNP housing providers in attracting and retaining capable staff and managers, by giving them the financial freedom to pay competitive wages.

**4.) Encourage financial assistance from the private sector (e.g. low bank interest rates, pro-bono planning assistance).**

By donating their time and resources, businesses in the private sector could assist PNP organizations cover many operational costs such as landscaping, communication bills and utilities. In addition, they could assist by sponsoring fundraising events and/or matching charitable donations. Many small-scale organizations lack the resources necessary to attract these businesses: Since private funding will reduce PNP reliance on municipal funds, the municipal government could play a role in attracting such private investment.

**5.) Help conquer NIMBY-ism by:**

**a.) Visibly supporting new developments (particularly for stigmatized populations such as persons living with HIV/AIDS, the homeless and recovering addicts),**

There are several solutions to the problem of community opposition. A lack of community support can be addressed directly through education of the surrounding community as to the risks and benefits of any new development and the prospective tenants. This is an endeavour that can be carried out by the PNP organizations themselves, however it is not always successful as prospective neighbours can be untrustworthy of the newcomers. The municipal government needs to play a more visible role in supporting these developments.

**and b.) Change zoning by-laws that hinder development of housing for these populations.**

Some by-laws in the City of Toronto currently dictate the number of supporting living developments that can be located in a given area, regardless of the suitability of the site. Sites which are deemed suitable by PNP developments for their housing projects need to be quickly re-zoned to allow the potential new units to be built.

**6.) Encourage PNP housing providers to share resources and ideas, e.g. through semi-annual meetings, and tax-incentives for joint projects and services.**

Considering that their actions all form one system working in relative harmony, it is important that PNP housing providers are encouraged to work in collaboration, rather than operating like individual businesses taking clients from the same centralized waiting list. In this regard it is perhaps the role of the municipal government to better facilitate the pooling of ideas and resources of PNP housing providers. This could be done through semi-annual meetings, and tax incentives for PNP organizations who jointly work on housing projects and services.

**7.) Facilitate greater communication between the municipal government and PNP organizations to get feedback on initiatives and better understand what these groups need in way of support.**

At present, Toronto's social housing system is relatively fragmented, with most PNP housing providers only coming in to contact with the municipal government through RGI agreements. As the lowest level of governance, municipalities should endeavour to meet with representatives from PNP housing providers on a regular basis to discuss their needs and the appropriateness of current municipal and provincial funding programs. This would ensure that funding is provided where it is most needed, and keep governments better informed as to what assistance PNP organizations require.

**8.) Reduce investment in the shelter system, moving this money into the affordable housing system.**

As this study has previously documented, it is significantly more expensive to house people in temporary shelters than to provide more permanent accommodation. Dis-investment in the shelter system without ensuring that suitable accommodation is made available for current residents would be irresponsible. The municipal government needs to look at this shift as a long-term cost-saving measure that must occur gradually. The municipal government needs to separate housing the homeless from traditional social housing as they arguably have more pressing and complex needs than applicants who already have some sort of private market accommodation. This is a complex proposal that requires further research.

Overall, the municipal government needs to look towards long-term funding of PNP housing developments that reaches beyond RGI payments. As the lowest level of governance, it is the municipality's responsibility to facilitate communication with PNP organizations to ensure that funding and support provided by all levels of government is appropriate. They could also work to improve communication between PNP housing providers to share resources. The municipal government needs to more visibly support PNP housing providers to encourage community support of their projects and developments.

## **6.3 Recommendations for the Provincial Government**

### **1.) Reform the Ontario Municipal Board to allow them to quickly throw-out cases obviously based on NIMBY-ism (Connelly, 2005).**

At present communities opposing the construction of new PNP subsidized housing developments for any reason can bring their case to the Ontario Municipal Board. This results in an expensive, protracted battle in which PNP housing providers must prove that their development will not be harmful to the community. This drains PNP organizations of valuable financial resources, and can deter some groups from venturing into new developments altogether (Connolly, 2005).

### **2.) Provide more funding to the municipal government to increase their capacity to deal with the specific needs of PNP housing providers.**

The provincial government has greater financial ability to support subsidized housing than its municipal counterpart. However it does not currently contribute financially towards supporting **existing** housing projects. While the municipal government, as a lower level of governance, is better equipped to distribute funds to the many small PNP organizations supplying subsidized units, the provincial government can help municipalities by providing them with additional financial resources. Many of the recommendations suggested in this paper for the municipal government require significant investment. The provincial government can help realize these recommendations by contributing financially.

### **3.) Work more closely with organizations like ONPHA to better understand the needs of PNP organizations, in contrast to large-scale municipal programs.**

PNP housing providers have different needs from municipal programs. While it is the job of municipalities to communicate with small-scale PNP housing providers, the provincial government can help ensure that its funding is appropriate to their needs by working more closely with province-wide organizations like ONPHA.

### **4.) Increase funding programs for existing developments *in addition to* focusing on new developments.**

Both the municipal and provincial governments need to change their approach to funding subsidized housing – moving towards long-term programs that provide new and existing PNP organizations with the financial stability they need to continue and expand their operations. Moreover, this funding needs to be more flexible to support PNP developments outside of RGI agreements.

This project does not dispute that the municipal government should remain responsible for administering subsidized housing programs: As the lowest level of governance they have the best ability to communicate with small-scale PNP organizations. However the province has an important role to play in terms of providing municipalities with sufficient financial resources to allow them to effectively do this. In addition, the province needs to ensure that funding at all

levels of government adequately and appropriately addresses the needs of PNP housing providers through improved communication with province-wide organizations like ONPHA.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for the Federal Government**

This paper has not yet discussed the role that the federal government needs to play in supporting PNP housing providers. Since devolving responsibility for Ontario's social housing to the province in 1998, the federal government has gradually reduced the level of financial support it provides. Today few funds are received outside of existing agreements with buildings developed under the federal programs of the 1970s and 80s.

As the highest level of governance, the federal government is too far removed to distribute funds to, or meaningfully communicate with, the hundreds of PNP housing providers across Ontario. However it can help both the provincial and municipal governments by providing them with the necessary funds required to better support the operations of PNP housing providers, through the recommendations described earlier in this section.

While no longer primarily responsible for funding and administering social housing programs, the federal government needs to realize that its financial contribution is still required. Currently it only supports developments it constructed decades earlier in large-scale federal housing programs. However with the method of housing provision changing, and PNP housing organizations playing an increasingly important role in the subsidized housing sector, the federal government needs to realign its support towards these groups.

## 7. Conclusions

PNP housing providers play an important role in supplying subsidized housing to Toronto's low-income residents contributing 15% of all municipal units. In addition to these 9959 contracted units, PNP organizations also supply almost 3000 privately subsidized units outside of the governmental housing system.

PNP housing providers in Toronto focus much of their energies on housing specific target populations whose unique needs may not be met by traditional government-run social housing: PNP organizations supply targeted subsidized housing to twenty-seven different populations ranging from different ethnicities and religions to persons with disabilities and the hard-to-house. Unlike traditional social housing, subsidized units provided by PNP organizations often offer supportive living, offering residents easy access to services that help them live independently and/or facilitate rehabilitation back into mainstream society. It is in this way that PNP housing is of greatest value to Toronto's social housing system. Despite these successes however it is clear that demand still exists. It remains important for the municipal and provincial governments to continue providing funding for PNP organizations so that they can expand their operations to help meet this demand.

The best way for different levels of government to support PNP housing providers is to help reduce the barriers they face in supplying subsidized housing units. Survey respondents indicated that the most significant barrier to their operations was a lack of fundraising capacity, followed closely by access to both public and private funding. Less prominent but still significant barriers included a lack of experienced staff and managerial capacity, low levels of community support, and isolation from related organizations. When asked for additional barriers not mentioned in the survey, three main categories became clear – a shortage of housing putting a squeeze on already strained supplies of social housing, demands from the municipal service manager, and restrictive organizational visions.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of Toronto's social housing system, both the municipal and provincial governments need to improve the way they currently support PNP housing providers. The provincial government needs to work more closely with ONPHA to ensure that the funding programs it provides (and channeled for the federal government) better target the needs of small-scale PNP organizations. In addition, it should provide municipal governments with more funding for their social housing programs to allow them to provide a wider range of support for PNP organizations. The municipal government only provides funds for RGI service agreements. However if increased, municipal funding could be used, as seen in British Columbia, to help cover the administrative and other miscellaneous costs that PNP housing providers accrue. Moreover, it is vital that this funding is made available to all PNP housing providers, whether or not they enter into RGI service agreements with municipal service managers. The focus of funding at all levels of government needs to be changed to support **both new and existing developments**. To help raise these extra funds the private sector can be encouraged to play a more active role in supporting PNP housing providers financially. This **increased** and more **flexible** funding would help to address many of the barriers PNP organizations face, greatly contributing to the long-run sustainability of Toronto's social housing system.

## 8. Further Research

This project has raised many questions about the ways in which different levels of government should support PNP housing providers. It has focused on the question from the point of view of the PNP organizations themselves, giving them a voice to air their concerns about the level of government support they currently receive. A further point of inquiry would be to approach this topic from the government's point of view. It would be interesting to interview government officials on the topic of the role of PNP organizations providing subsidized housing, and consequently their own role in providing support.

A further extension of this project could be the application of its methodology and/or research questions on PNP organizations in other sectors of the economy (i.e. other than housing). The contribution of PNP organizations in other areas of service provision may differ, as may the perceived role that different levels of government could take. Additionally this project could be applied to other cities and/or provinces, assessing the size and scope of PNP housing providers, the most significant barriers they face, and the role of government, in a different regulatory environment.

Finally, this project raised concerns about continued government investment in the shelter system as the primary method of housing the homeless. It contended that it would be less expensive, and in the benefit of the homeless themselves, for governments to focus on providing more permanent housing options. While this project suggested that a transfer of funds from the shelter system must be gradual, the method in which this could be done remains an important topic of investigation for future researchers.

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## Appendix 1. Survey

### Sustainability of Social Housing in Toronto: Questionnaire

*These questions all pertain to the size of your organisation, your target populations, and the challenges you face in providing affordable housing. It should take no longer than twenty minutes or less to complete. Thank you!*

Name of Organisation:

Address:

Email Address:

#### Part A: Services

1.) What services do you offer? (Please check all that apply)

- Subsidised/RGI housing units
- In-home care (e.g. for seniors, physical disabilities, medical)
- Employment resources
- Food bank
- Homeless Shelter
- Assistance registering for and/or using Toronto Community Housing Services
- Other(s) (please specify)

2.) Have you expanded your services in the past five years?

YES / NO

If yes, how so?

3.) How many subsidised and/or RGI units do you currently own or operate?

If you do not own these units, on whose behalf do you operate them?

4.) How many of your subsidised/RGI units are:

Single rooms	_____	1 bedroom townhouses	_____
1 bedroom apartments	_____	2 bedroom townhouses	_____
2 bedroom apartments	_____	3 bedroom townhouses	_____
3 bedroom apartments	_____	4 bedroom townhouses	_____
4 bedroom apartments	_____		

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
please specify type(s)

5.) Who is (are) your target population(s)? (please check all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single Men                | <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with mental illness(es)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single Women              | <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with mental disability(es)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Families                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with physical disability(es)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific ethnicity(ies) (please specify)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors                   | <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 350px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recent Immigrants         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native Populations        | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific religion(s) (please specify)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with addiction(s) | <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 350px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s) (please specify) |   |

6.) Do you accept applications from persons who do not fall in your target population(s)  
YES / NO

7.) Do you work with any other non-profit organisations? YES / NO  
If yes, please complete appendix 1  
If no, please move on to question 8

**Part B: Goals and Barriers**

8.) What is (are) the goal(s) of your organisation?

9.) What are the most significant barriers to your organisation in providing affordable housing services and units to your community? Please check all that apply and feel free to add any that do not appear below, as this list is not exhaustive.

- Community opposition
- Lack of community support
- Limited fundraising opportunities/capacity
- Managerial capacity
- Lack of experienced staff/ access to staff training programs
- Financial burdens (e.g. loan repayments, maintenance payments)
- Isolation from related organisations
- Access to private funding
- Access to public funding
- Municipal program management (please elaborate)

- Obligations to house persons other than your target population(s) (please specify from whom)

- Other(s) (please specify)

10.) Please rank the 3 most significant barriers mentioned above to your organisation (1 being the most significant)

1.) \_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_

11.) How supportive do you feel the municipal government is of non-profit organisations providing affordable housing? (*please circle one*)

Very Supportive   Supportive   Neutral   Unsupportive   Very Supportive

Please elaborate

12.) How supportive do you feel the provincial government is of non-profit organisations providing affordable housing? (*please circle one*)

Very Supportive   Supportive   Neutral   Unsupportive   Very Supportive

Please elaborate

**Part C: Recommendations**

13.) What support could the municipal and provincial governments offer that would help you to maintain and improve your services?

## Appendix 2. Rationale behind Survey Questions

### Sustainability of Social Housing in Toronto: Questionnaire

#### Part A: Services

1.) What services do you offer? (Please check all that apply)

- Subsidised/RGI housing units
- In-home care (e.g. for seniors, physical disabilities, medical)
- Employment resources
- Food bank
- Homeless Shelter
- Assistance registering for and/or using Toronto Community Housing Services
- Other(s) (please specify)

Rationale: To get a better idea of the range of services provided by PNP organizations (see Research Section 1 p.11)

2.) Have you expanded your services in the past five years?  
If yes, how so?

YES / NO

Rationale: To see if the SHRA has created a regulatory environment in which PNP organizations can expand their operations

3.) How many subsidised and/or RGI units do you currently own or operate?

If you do not own these units, on whose behalf do you operate them?

Rationale: To see if the provider answering this survey is contracted by TCHC. This is interesting when looking at the level of municipal support for PNP organization the respondent perceives.

4.) How many of your subsidised/RGI units are:

Single rooms \_\_\_\_\_  
1 bedroom apartments \_\_\_\_\_  
2 bedroom apartments \_\_\_\_\_  
3 bedroom apartments \_\_\_\_\_  
4 bedroom apartments \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_  
please specify type(s)

1 bedroom townhouses \_\_\_\_\_  
2 bedroom townhouses \_\_\_\_\_  
3 bedroom townhouses \_\_\_\_\_  
4 bedroom townhouses \_\_\_\_\_

**Rationale:** To obtain information about the variety of subsidized units provided that was not available online.

5.) Who is (are) your target population(s)? (please check all that apply)

- Single Men
- Single Women
- Families
- Youth
- Seniors
- Recent Immigrants
- Native Populations
- Persons with addiction(s)
- Other(s) (please specify)
- Persons with mental illness(es)
- Persons with mental disability(es)
- Persons with physical disability(es)
- Specific ethnicity(ies) (please specify)
- Specific religion(s) (please specify)

**Rationale:** To obtain information about target populations that was not available online. See p.14 for a detailed description of the target populations of PNP subsidized housing providers.

6.) Do you accept applications from persons who do not fall in your target population(s)  
YES / NO

**Rationale:** To see if PNP organizations contracted by TCHC need to accept persons who are not part of their original mandate.

7.) Do you work with any other non-profit organisations? YES / NO  
If yes, please complete appendix 1  
If no, please move on to question 8

**Rationale:** To understand the degree to which PNP organizations share resources.

**Part B: Goals and Barriers**

8.) What is (are) the goal(s) of your organisation?

**Rationale:** To understand the goals of PNP housing providers in Toronto, and their organizational visions.

9.) What are the most significant barriers to your organisation in providing affordable housing services and units to your community? Please check all that apply and feel free to add any that do not appear below, as this list is not exhaustive.

- Community opposition
- Lack of community support
- Limited fundraising opportunities/capacity
- Managerial capacity
- Lack of experienced staff/ access to staff training programs
- Financial burdens (e.g. loan repayments, maintenance payments)
- Isolation from related organisations
- Access to private funding
- Access to public funding
- Municipal program management (please elaborate)

- Obligations to house persons other than your target population(s) (please specify from whom)

- Other(s) (please specify)

**Rationale:** To understand the barriers faced by PNP housing providers in Toronto. See p.26 for a detailed analysis of these results.

10.) Please rank the 3 most significant barriers mentioned above to your organisation (1 being the most significant)

1.) \_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_

**Rationale:** To get a better idea of the most prominent barriers facing PNP organizations.

11.) How supportive do you feel the municipal government is of non-profit organisations providing affordable housing? (*please circle one*)

Very Supportive    Supportive    Neutral    Unsupportive    Very Supportive

Please elaborate

**Rationale:** To determine whether the municipal government is perceived as a barrier or asset to PNP subsidized housing, and why. See p.37 for a discussion on the role of government in supporting PNP housing providers.

12.) How supportive do you feel the provincial government is of non-profit organisations providing affordable housing? (*please circle one*)

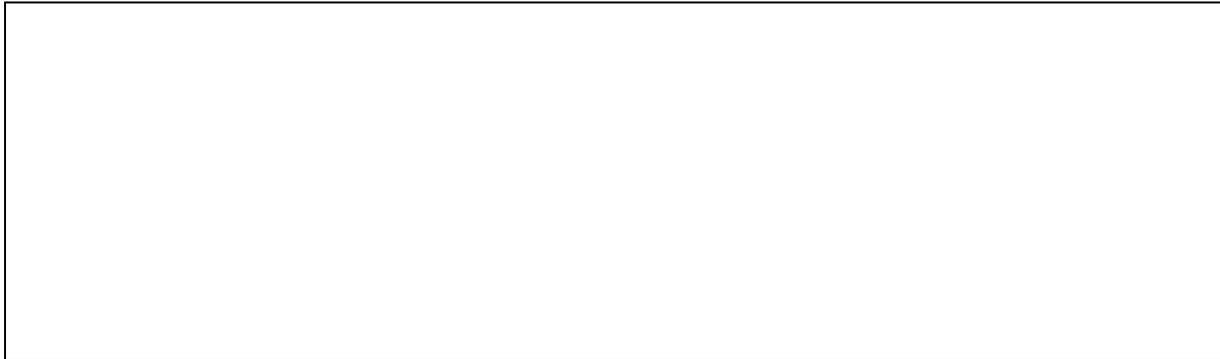
Very Supportive    Supportive    Neutral    Unsupportive    Very Supportive

Please elaborate

**Rationale:** To determine whether the provincial government is perceived as a barrier or asset to PNP subsidized housing, and why. See p.37 for a discussion on the role of government in supporting PNP housing providers.

### **Part C: Recommendations**

13.) What support could the municipal and provincial governments offer that would help you to maintain and improve your services?



Rationale: This study attempts to put forward recommendations to the municipal and provincial governments pertaining to how they can better support PNP subsidized housing providers. This section allowed PNP organizations to give their own suggestions.