

City-Regions and the Provision of Affordable Rental Housing

Leonore Evans

September 2007

This research was funded by the City of Ottawa as part of Infrastructure Canada's KOA project on social infrastructure.

The observations and conclusions are those of the author.

Contents

- Abstract ii**
- Executive Summary iii**

- 1. Introduction 1**

- 2. Methodology 1**

- 3. Context: Neoliberal Governance and the Attraction of “Place” 2**

- 4. The Players: Private Developers, Private Non-Profits and Governments 3**
 - 4.1 Private Developers 3
 - 4.2 Private Non-Profits 4
 - 4.3 Governments: Federal, Provincial and Municipal/Regional 4
 - 4.3.1 Role of Municipal and Regional Governments 4
 - 4.3.2 Role of Provincial Government 5
 - 4.3.3 Role of Federal Government 6

- 5. Case Study: Peel Region 7**

- 6. Case Study: City of Ottawa 9**

- 7. Conclusion 10**

- 8. Policy Recommendations 11**

- References 13**

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the complex jurisdictional arrangements, mechanisms and partnerships through which affordable housing in Ontario is provided. Many city-regions in Ontario have seen very little new affordable housing built since 1995, while existing stock is deteriorating or being converted to ownership. In order to examine how city-regions manage their rental stock, while providing opportunities for new developments, I use a case study approach. Peel Region and the City of Ottawa's local housing strategies were examined, and private developers, non-profit developers and city officials in both regions areas were also interviewed. Comparing two city-regions' strategies of affordable housing provision shows how different approaches and the particularities of place can affect varying degrees of success.

This research was funded by Infrastructure Canada and the City of Ottawa. The views reflected in this paper do not necessarily represent those of Infrastructure Canada and the City of Ottawa.

Executive Summary

Sustainable cities need affordable housing. The strength of local economies, the well-being of neighbourhoods and the health and welfare of diverse population groups depends upon the availability of quality, affordable housing. Yet many city-regions in Ontario have seen very little new affordable housing built, while existing stock is deteriorating or being converted to ownership. Ontario's city-regions need to see a re-investment in affordable housing in order to remain fiscally competitive, as well as socially and environmentally sustainable. This essay examines the financial, political and administrative complexities behind the local provision of affordable housing by using Peel Region and the City of Ottawa's local strategies as case studies.

Since 2001, municipal and regional governments in Ontario have been responsible for affordable housing provision. Affordable rental housing falls into a "market gap," and therefore unprofitable for private developers. Non-profit groups are trying their hand at it, with some success, but numbers of new rental units do not come close to those which are being demolished or converted to ownership. Many local governments are in a stalemate with regards to housing, being financially and politically constrained. The SHSC argues that housing is best managed at the local level. However, they state that if local governments are going to take on the long term responsibility for affordable housing provision, they need ongoing access to appropriate and adequate revenue streams.

Senior governments have always played a role in affordable housing. Current federal funding programs such as the Affordable Housing Initiative, Homelessness Partnership Initiative (HPI) HPI, and Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) are a continuation of their program funding approach. In Ontario, the province has played a central role in deciding how affordable housing will be delivered. Provincial funding streams for construction of affordable housing use the 80% of market rate definition. This means programs funding construction of "affordable" housing cater only to the wealthiest of the individuals and families on the waiting list.

A closer look at Peel Region and the City of Ottawa's strategies for affordable housing provision throws more light on the complexity of theorizing such diverse experiences. Peel has developed housing through its municipal housing corporation: Peel Builds. Working through Peel Builds meant that there was no RFP process, giving the Region more latitude in dealing with restrictive provincial programs. The City of Ottawa has struggled to create truly affordable units (30% of income) yet the high cost of building and the prescribed provincial programs has made achieving real affordability difficult. The situation remains acute, even in Ottawa and Peel Region, where despite the efforts of these local governments, the waiting list for subsidized housing is approximately ten years, or ten thousand households in each city-region.

City-Regions and the Provision of Affordable Rental Housing

1. Introduction

Sustainable cities need affordable housing. The strength of local economies, the well-being of neighbourhoods and the health and welfare of diverse population groups depends upon the availability of quality, affordable housing. Yet many city-regions in Ontario have seen very little new affordable housing built, while existing stock is deteriorating or being converted to ownership. (Turner, 2007) Ontario's city-regions need to see a re-investment in affordable housing in order to remain fiscally competitive, as well as socially and environmentally sustainable.

This essay's focus is primarily on the mechanisms through which affordable housing is provided. First however, I need to clarify why affordable housing is so important. The economic argument, which is the central focus of this research program states: provision of affordable housing creates more competitive cities. Availability of affordable housing helps attract and retain skilled and unskilled workers. Minimum wage workers can afford to live close to work, thereby keeping their transportation costs down. Employees' reduced costs means that companies' can keep their labour prices down. (Toronto Board of Trade, 2003) There exist, of course, a host of social and health related arguments, including the gender element as women are more likely to be living in poverty and in need of low cost housing.

The Canadian housing system favours homeownership, yet affordable rental housing is necessary for minimum wage workers and low-income families. This essay examines the financial, political and administrative complexities behind the local provision of affordable rental housing. First the broader context is assessed, then the different stakeholders are introduced, and finally Peel Region and the City of Ottawa's local strategies are examined in more detail. Comparing these two city-regions' strategies of affordable housing provision shows how different approaches and the particularities of place can affect varying degrees of success.

2. Methodology

I used a multi-pronged approach in gathering data for this research essay. This included an extensive literature review; including newspapers, government web pages, and research papers on housing issues. I also conducted a total of eight interviews. These were held over the phone, with the exception of one being in-person. They varied in length, but were approximately one hour each. I interviewed one federal official at CMHC, two regional officials in Peel Region, one municipal official in the City of Ottawa and one in Halton Region. I also spoke with a private developer in both Peel Region and the City of Ottawa. And finally, I interviewed a non-profit housing developer in each city-region. Interviews were followed up by emails, through which relevant papers and other more in-depth information was shared. This is the fifth paper in a series and builds on the secondary research and reading I did for my Moving towards Sustainability essay (Evans, 2007).

3. Context: Neoliberal Governance and the Attraction of “Place”

Byron Miller’s work on shifting modes of governance explains how local governments have become the primary entity responsible for affordable housing provision in Ontario. Miller’s expression of “localized, limited-capacity, market based governance” (Miller, 2007: 224) succinctly describes the position local governments have found themselves in with regards to provision and maintenance of affordable rental housing.

Miller describes the driving forces of neoliberal governance behind the increasing shift towards localized, limited capacity, market based governance as three interconnected phenomenon:

1. The reorganization of state responsibilities, with downloading of administrative functions to local levels, while at the same time uploading regulatory functions to supranational institutions, and freeing up international capital flows.
2. A shift in governance models as well as resource allocation as increasing privatization occurs, with public resources increasingly being used to promote economic growth and subsidize private companies.
3. The triumph of the market ideology coupled with a decline in democratic involvement in which citizens participate primarily as consumers and less as citizens, and public debates revolve around individual responsibilities, low taxes and user fees (Miller, 2007).

The devolution of affordable housing provision is a very good example of the reorganisation Miller describes above. In 1993, the Liberal federal government handed down responsibility for the administration and provision of housing to the provinces. In 1995, Mike Harris’ Conservative provincial government continued this trend by passing responsibility of housing provision on to the municipal and regional governments. While this devolution did come with funding for administrative costs, no funding for maintenance or upkeep of the housing stock was provided.

Cash-strapped municipalities are looking for ways to keep their economies buoyant. They compete with one another for business investments and high quality workers. In the housing sector, private developers provide a regular source of revenue through development fees. The houses they build also contribute to the municipal tax base through property taxes and utility costs. In return for continued favorable treatment, private developers contribute towards local political municipal campaigns.

These interconnected phenomena reflect what Miller calls an as yet “incomplete transition toward localized, limited-capacity, market based governance” (Miller, 2007: 224). This means that municipalities depend primarily on the political and financial support of propertied (read suburban) voters. These are generally more willing to support tax cuts, user fees and widening roads over more redistributive policies such as investments in affordable housing or public transit.

4. The Players: Private Developers, Private Non-Profits and Governments

Obviously, provision of adequate and affordable housing for all Canadians, cannot be achieved by one sector alone. Like investments in other infrastructure projects, governments, the market sector, non-profit organizations and communities all have a role to play. While the market provides the majority of housing for Canadians, residents whose income is in the lowest 40th percentile cannot meet market rates for rent or homeownership. This can result in many households spending more than 50% of their income on rent, as well as severely overcrowded and poor living conditions as families find themselves under-housed (ONPHA, 2006).

Affordable rental housing construction and maintenance is a good example of a complex issue facing municipalities today. Housing requires huge overhead costs, high financial risk as well as ongoing operating costs. This section examines the diverse roles that the private developers, the non-profit sector, and the state play in providing affordable rental housing at the city-regional scale.

4.1 Private Developers

Take the market: the development industry is interested in low risk, high return investments. This generally translates into single family homes (15% profit per unit) or condominiums (10% profit per unit), for immediate sale. The profit on the construction of rental units runs at approximately 2%. This is calculated over an extended time period, and also requires management and maintenance costs (Murphy, 2007).

Local governments' depend upon developer's levies for a substantial part of their revenue, as well as the property taxes ensuing from built units. This means that "business as usual" has translated into extensive development of single family homes for immediate sale. Hulchanski notes that Canadian public policy relies on and reinforces a market mechanism which works in favour of owners, but not renters (Hulchanski, 2004). In 1991 Ontario mandated a 25% affordability component for all new builds. This was never enforced (Murphy, 2007). The City of Ottawa currently has a 25% affordability target, which up to now, has not been achieved. Without this target being mandated or even widely promoted, it remains meaningless (Carr, 2007; Kreda, 2007).

In the 1970s the federal government offered tax incentives to private developers. This helped augment the amount of private funding and investment into the affordable housing system, while also building 30,000 units a year. Today, private developers involved in the provision of affordable housing are more likely to be "giving back." In both the City of Ottawa and Peel Region, some interesting initiatives have sprung up in which private developers have played a leading role. These will be further explored in the case study section.

4.2 Private Non-Profits

Affordable housing provision by non-profit groups is an important mainstay in light of local government's financial and political stalemate. Some groups, such as Ottawa's Centretown Citizen's Ottawa Corporation (CCOC) have grown into full fledged organizations, managing the day to day operations of 48 properties as well as developing new projects. Dennis Carr, a housing developer at CCOC has also helped establish Centretown Affordable Housing Development Corporation (CAHDCO) to assist other non-profit groups in developing and providing housing for their clientele. CAHDCO is currently working with a local community-based loan fund and a local credit union to set up a low interest fund for the construction of affordable housing.

The private non-profit sector faces many of its own challenges. Housing construction requires a lot of capital, equity, and experience, which not all non-profit groups have at their disposal. CMHC has recently released new policy disallowing non-profits to use existing equity to fund new projects. The added difficulties of NIMBY-type reactions can also slow a project down (this of course relates to any new construction).

Another challenge for small scale non-profit groups is that every housing project requires its own board of directors. Some argue this is an inefficient use of volunteers, and can lead to a high turnover due to burnout. It can also mean that volunteer boards are so focused on the day to day operations that they are unable to work towards developing new projects. Please see Sally Turner's paper for a full discussion of the challenges private non-profit housing providers face (Turner, 2007).

4.3 Governments: Federal, Provincial and Municipal/Regional

Government is the obvious player in the case of affordable housing provision. In Canada, legislation differs from province to province. For instance the provinces of British Columbia and Quebec run their own extensive affordable housing programs. In Ontario, either municipal or regional governments are responsible for affordable housing provision and maintenance, as well as the administration of other housing programs such as rent supplements.

A brief scan of Ontario newspapers reveals multiple articles on the extent of crisis that local governments are facing. Primarily dependent upon property taxes for their income, local governments rely on senior government's funding in order to continue the implementation of affordable housing programs. Yet as this section will discuss, senior governments feel that they have recently made significant funding contributions to affordable housing programs.

4.3.1 Role of Municipal and Regional Governments

In Ontario, there have been varying degrees of success since local governments took on the affordable housing portfolios. In Halton Region, for example, no new affordable housing over six units has been built since 1995. In Toronto, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty has recently mounted an active campaign against the City, holding them accountable for the poor housing standards of their rental stock.

One of the particulars of “place” is that local conditions, strategies and results differ. An interesting example is the localized definition of “affordable.” In the City of Ottawa, for example, homeowners spending less than \$200,000 on a house or renters spending \$1,100 and under is deemed “affordable.” Peel Region uses the definition supplied by Ontario’s Ministry of Housing which is: 80% of average market rent for an area. Using these definitions means that most new “affordable” housing is not affordable to the majority of people on the waiting list. Linking local government’s definition of “affordable” to CMHC’s income-based definition is a meaningful place to start, when a full-time, full year worker at minimum wage only brings home \$16,800 a year (Campaign 2000, 2007) and will never be able to afford their own home.

Local politics is another important aspect of place. Larry O’Brien, Ottawa’s new mayor has promised voters a 0% increase in property taxes. This translates into city officials scrambling to cut costs, and clearly no funding for new developments. During his campaign, the Mayor suggested that private developers could solve the City of Ottawa’s affordable housing shortage. This position is difficult to reconcile with the complexities of housing provision. The local housing officials I spoke with continuously stressed the importance of working with their local politicians in order to educate them about the need for decent housing for all, and the importance of funding it.

Social Housing Services Corporation (SHSC) is a strong advocate for continued direct municipal and regional administration of housing programs. However, they argue that if municipalities are going to take on the long term responsibility for affordable housing provision, they need ongoing access to appropriate and adequate revenue streams (SHSC, 2007). The limited financial capacity of local governments to adequately provide housing for their lowest percentile of earners is the source of much frustration within local housing branches. Local officials continue to work with senior government officials to lobby for sustained and sufficient funding for developing and maintaining affordable housing.

4.3.2 Role of Provincial Government

Currently, the Ontario government is the entity responsible for directing federal funds for affordable housing to local administrations. Provincial funding streams for construction of affordable housing use the 80% of market rate definition. This means programs funding construction of “affordable” housing cater only to the wealthiest of the individuals and families on the waiting list. The situation remains acute, even in Ottawa and Peel Region, where despite the efforts of these local governments, the waiting list for subsidized housing is approximately ten years, or ten thousand households in each city-region.

On June 7, 2007, City of Ottawa’s Councilor’s review of the Housing Needs in Ottawa Report, led them to recommend the report be forwarded to Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing as the City of Ottawa’s request for funding for the next three years. The full amount requested was \$526.3 million as well as an annual investment of \$63 million per year in ongoing funding beyond the three year horizon. Yet in its 2007 budget, Ontario only provided \$127 million to municipalities for new affordable housing or to rehabilitate existing housing (Ontario Budget, 2007). This amount is to be shared across all the municipalities in Ontario.

Apart from the massive gap in funding available to maintain, let alone build new housing, SHSC has come up with a series of principles for re-balancing the social housing equation. Four of these relate directly to the provincial role:

1. reduce number of housing programs in order to simplify administration,
2. set basic operating standards and principles to ensure that adequate resources are available, and then step back,
3. transfer mortgage administration to municipalities,
4. reform the Social Housing Reform Act to be more supportive of non-profit housing providers (SHSC, 2007).

The province of Ontario has recently come out with a new Growth Plan for the Greater Toronto Area. While regional and municipal planning departments are taking up the challenge of re-writing their planning policies to include these “smart growth” policies, it will be interesting to see to what extent these new measures will be enforced. For instance, one of the prescribed policies is that by 2015, 40% of new residential units must be within the existing built up urban area (Sajeckj, 2007).

4.3.3 Role of Federal Government

The federal government has always played a role in housing. After the most recent investments in the Affordable Housing Initiative the federal government feels that it has made a significant re-investment in housing in the last few years (Solberg, 2007). Yet while they laud any funding for affordable housing, critics deplore the program funding approach and state that what Canada really needs is a permanent investment in affordable housing, or a national housing strategy.

This section examines two main sources of funding which local governments have accessed since 2001.

Homelessness Funding

Although homelessness funding is not traditionally regarded as funding for housing, it became, in the early 2000s, one of the main sources local governments in Ontario accessed for building new housing. Formerly known as the National Homelessness Initiative, this pilot program is currently in its third round. The main goals of this program have been to:

1. build and maintain existing shelters, transitional and supportive housing.
2. develop the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS),
3. fund research into homelessness, and
4. build capacity of community groups and municipal administrations to tackle homelessness in a collaborative manner.

Emerging from the homelessness crisis in the late 1990s, this program has allowed 61 communities from across Canada to access funding. Each eligible city-region was asked to create a Community Plan, with multiple stakeholders at the table, including federal and

provincial representatives. It was through these Community Plans that city-regional priorities were established. The first round of funding focused on building and maintaining homeless shelters. In this phase, for instance, Peel Region built two singles shelters and one family shelter. The second and third rounds of funding have attempted to move homeless individuals along the continuum, and are now funding more instances of transitional housing. Non-profits and municipalities alike have accessed funding through this program.

Critics of this program highlight the fact that while there are funds available for the construction or renovation of shelters and transitional housing, operational costs are not covered. The nature of the program requires that municipalities work in partnership, and match federal funds with provincial and other (in-kind) donations. This includes donations of land or staff support. However, with the operating funds issue, municipalities need to engage long-term support from their provincial counterparts, in order to secure the continued existence of their newly built shelter or transitional housing.

Affordable Housing Initiative

The Affordable Housing Initiative is a one-time allocation made in 2001 (\$680 million) and topped up in 2003 (\$320 million) (Shapcott, 2007). This program has promised to deliver 15,000 new affordable housing units and 5,000 housing allowances to Ontario households in need, by March 2009. While this funding is sorely necessary, rental costs of new “affordable” units remain beyond the reach of many low-income residents. By using the 80% of average market rent as the definition of “affordable,” any new construction under this program is unaffordable for the majority of people on the waiting list. Also, this funding does not include operating costs of these units.

Other federal programs include CMHC’s Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP). RRAP provides financial assistance to homeowners and private entrepreneurs to convert or develop existing residential properties to accommodate a secondary self-contained unit (CMHC, 2007).

5. Case Study: Peel Region

Peel Region is the regional government for the municipalities of Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga. It operates essential infrastructure services such as ambulances, transit, and low income housing. It also provides the planning framework for those municipalities. This means that under the same regional government, there are different approaches to planning. For instance, Brampton has capped development at 4,500 units a year, while Mississauga is promoting downtown densification through extensive condominium developments.

How then, has Peel Region been able to build 602 units of affordable housing since 2003? The Region has taken a series of steps in order to make this possible. One of the main activities of the Housing Department is the ongoing education of local and regional politicians as well as citizens. Their long term strategic plan facilitating zoning procedures was passed by Council. Key to Peel region’s success was that new housing developments are delivered through their municipal housing

corporation: Peel Builds. Working through Peel Builds means that there is no RFP process, giving the Region much more latitude in dealing with restrictive provincial programs.

The long term strategic plan was initially developed by a group of local stakeholders convened as early as 1998. Their goal was to make the elimination of homelessness a priority. Interdepartmental collaboration at the Region meant that Health, Social Services, Housing, Finance, Planning and the HR departments worked together. When in 2000 the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) was announced, with federal funding behind it, Peel already knew what the communities' priorities were. Peel Region also set up a Social Housing Reserve Fund in order to save money for affordable housing construction and maintenance.

By cobbling together different funding pots, and pursuing partnerships with private developers, Peel Builds built Angela's Place (20 units for high needs families), Peel Youth Village (48 rooms for youth and a community centre for the surrounding area), Millbrook Place (248 units for seniors and singles) and Summerville Pines (136 units for seniors). They also built two singles and one family shelter, as there were previously none in the area. Two more developments with a total of 225 units will be opening soon.

Peel Region donates land, and offers tax incentives. Partnering with private developers and suppliers who donate materials has kept costs down. Some of the impediments Peel Housing Authority has faced in building more affordable housing are: lack of senior government support, restrictive mortgage loans, the high cost of building housing, and the many risks a housing provider must take on.

Peel Region is now also starting an RFP process for local non-profit groups. Up to now they have been able to provide much of their own affordable housing stock through Peel Builds. There are many non-profit groups who are eager to get into housing construction, yet these groups are mostly run by volunteers, and do not have the experience to develop new housing projects.

Despite Peel Region's efforts the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) released a report in 2006 stating that most of the workers employed in the service or unskilled manufacturing industries cannot afford to live in the Peel Region, without substantially eroding their financial well being. A ten year waiting list for affordable housing in Peel is among the highest in the province (ONPHA, 2006). Whereas Peel Region has claimed primary responsibility for providing affordable housing, it can only do so much. Peel Region continues to advocate for more financial and political accountability from senior governments.

6. Case Study: City of Ottawa

On the homelessness side of things, the City of Ottawa has worked in a similarly pro-active and cooperative method as Peel Region. In 1995, the City of Ottawa Housing Department convened staff and service providers from across the city to form the Alliance to End Homelessness. When the National Homelessness Initiative was announced, the city became the administrative entity and was able to present the Alliance's priorities as the central aspect of the required community plan.

Currently, the City of Ottawa uses the strategies available to municipalities under the Municipal Facilities Bylaw to promote construction of affordable housing. They offer relief of development charges, waive permit fees, offer a grant in lieu of school board development charges and take a Housing First policy for surplus lands. However, since 1996 only 6% of new developments have been rental units. And in the last three years only 300 affordable rental units were built while over 2,000 units were lost to demolition or through conversion to ownership (City of Ottawa, 2007a).

The City of Ottawa, then, could be doing arguably more. In order to really promote the construction of affordable housing city officials need to enforce a percentage of affordable housing in every development project. Currently, the city's target is 25%, but if not mandated, this becomes meaningless. The City also needs to connect its definition of affordable housing to CMHC's. Currently the City of Ottawa's definition of "affordable" is that the cost of purchasing a house needs to be under \$200,000, while rentals need to come in under \$1,100. These figures are not connected to unit size, or income.

The biggest quandary that the City of Ottawa faces is with the condition of its existing housing stock. Currently, housing managers administer 22,500 social housing units across the city of Ottawa (City of Ottawa, 2007). The estimated cost of bringing these units up to current building and safety codes is about \$600 million (Rupert, 2007). A review is being currently being carried out in order to determine a) what needs to be done, b) how much it will cost, and c) whether the buildings should be repaired or replaced.

While the city service managers are facing this predicament, Ottawa's non-profit sector is moving ahead. The Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation (CCOC) has recently won the bid to redevelop the Beaver Barracks site. The city owned the land, and has contributed \$4.5 million in cash and waived fees. This project is receiving \$7 million from the latest federal-provincial announcement. A total of 195 units will be developed in the first phase with possibly another 50-70 units development in a second phase. Another interesting project is Somerset Gardens in downtown Ottawa. The City has partnered with a retired developer to build "affordable" housing in the downtown core. These units will each cost under \$225,000. A local non-profit organisation by the name of Multi-Faith Housing Initiative is purchasing 10 units to rent out at affordable rates. While excellent examples of partnerships, the amount of units actually being produced is miniscule in comparison to the ongoing need.

7. Conclusion

The provision of affordable housing has become an extremely complex problem. No longer does the federal government simply hand out tax incentives to private developers, as they did in the 1970s. Instead, a myriad of partners need to work together to make the best out of a very tight financial situation. Local governments are facing many different challenges, from transportation and transit to more demands for policing and security. Housing represents another kind of security, a rooted kind, providing residents with more or less access to other forms of social infrastructure, depending on their neighbourhood.

Peel Region and the City of Ottawa are local governments that have worked in pro-active and cooperative ways. Both administrations work tirelessly to engage and educate local politicians and residents. Yet both administrations believe that there needs to be a shift at senior government levels, reflective and respectful of municipalities' added responsibilities. The most glaring example is that income redistribution programs should not be loaded on the property tax (SHSC, 2007). Municipalities would benefit from access to revenue streams which are appropriate to and adequately support the level of funding needed for subsidized housing.

New modes of neoliberal governance act to place local municipalities in competition with one another, for government funding, business investment or quality workers. At the same time, high income earners are looking for places most suited to their lifestyle. The City of Ottawa and Peel Region are both facing massive population growth, yet their strategies for maintaining and enhancing their affordable housing stock are remarkably different. Much of Peel Region's success with new affordable rental developments has been through their municipal housing corporation, yet even here there is a deficit when it comes to ongoing capital repair.

This essay has examined some of the complexities of affordable rental housing provision in two Ontario city-regions. Highlighting the experiences of these two city-regions has shown how manifestations of neoliberal governance differ from place to place, as local governments react under the neoliberal processes of downloading responsibilities.

8. Policy Recommendations

This final section summarizes what we have learnt from the case studies. In order for local actors to more effectively provide and maintain affordable rental housing in their city regions this essay concludes with a series of recommendations. In essence, local officials, non-profits and private developers need to work more closely together. Senior governments could help facilitate this important area by loosening restrictions on programs and providing ongoing funding for maintenance and construction of affordable rental housing.

Local governments to:

- Develop lasting partnerships with private developers and non-profit organizations
- Have politicians on side through ongoing education and lobbying
- Have a comprehensive housing strategy
- Strategize on how to provide more incentives to private developers
- Connect their definition of “affordable” to 30% of income
- Demand appropriate financial support from senior governments

Senior Governments to:

- Sustain their city-regions through permanent funding for housing
- Be held accountable
- Simplify access to funding programs
- Provide more incentives to developers

Local non-profit housing providers to:

- Share knowledge and resources
- Work together to lobby for sustained financial support
- Raise funds from the larger community

References

- Aubry, Tim, Fran Klodawsky, et al. 2007. *Panel Study on Persons who are Homeless in Ottawa; Phase 2 Results: Final Report*. University of Ottawa.
- Builthaus, Mike. 2007. *BC Capital Region's Quality of Life CHALLENGE: Leadership*. Ottawa: The Caledon Institute of Social Policy.
- _____. 2007. *Leading to Enable: Government Engagement in Vibrant Communities Saint John*. Ottawa: The Caledon Institute of Social Policy.
- Campaign 2000. 2007. Statement on 2007 Ontario Budget. See www.campaign2000.ca/on/pdf/C2000_OntarioBudget07_statement.pdf.
- Carr, Dennis. 2007. Development Coordinator, CCOC/CAHDCO (Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation). Personal Communication. June 28.
- City of Ottawa. 2007. *Housing Needs in Ottawa*. Report to Council. June 7.
- _____. 2007a. *Draft City Housing Strategy 2007-2012*. Internal Document. Ottawa.
- _____. 2006. *Developing the City Housing Strategy: Final Report*. See http://ottawa.ca/residents/housing/strategy/phase3/final_report/final_report_en.pdf.
- Evans, Leonore. 2007. *Moving Towards Sustainability: City-Regions and Their Infrastructure*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks. See www.cprm.org/doc.cfm?doc=1801&l=en.
- Falvo, Nick. 2007. *Addressing Canada's Lack of Affordable Housing*. Presentation for PEF Panel: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Economic Issues. Canadian Economics Association. Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, June 1-3.
- Fich, Mike. 2007. Board Member of Pathway Non-Profit and Regenis. Personal Communication. August 2.
- Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain. 2007. *Let's Make Room for Social Housing*. Montreal.
- Goursky, Drew. 2007. Housing Initiative Manager: Peel Region. Personal Communication. June 21, and July 11.
- Hulchanski, J. David. 2004. "What Factors Shape Canadian Housing Policy? The Intergovernmental Role in Canada's Housing System." In Robert Young and Christian Leuprecht (eds.). *Canada: The State of the Federation. Municipal-Federal-Provincial Relations in Canada*. Institute of Intergovernmental Relations. Montreal and Kingston.

- Kreda, Janet. 2007. Senior Policy Analyst, Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation. Personal Communication. August 15.
- Laird, Gordon. 2007. *Homelessness in a Growth Economy: Canada's 21st Century Paradox*. Sheldon Chumir Foundation for Ethics in Leadership: Calgary.
- Miller, Byron. 2007. "Modes of Governance, Modes of Resistance. Contesting Neoliberalism in Calgary." In Helga Leitner, Jaime Peck and Eric Shppard (eds.). *Contesting Neoliberalism*. The Guilford Press, New York and London.
- Moloney, Paul. 2007. "City Running on almost Empty; Toronto's reserve funds are depleted, despite promises amalgamation would save millions." *Toronto Star*, August 6.
- Murphy, Jim. 2007. New Housing Initiatives Coordinator, Halton Region. Personal Communication. July 17.
- Ontario Budget Backgrounder. 2007. *Expanding Prosperity through Ontario's Infrastructure; Building on Infrastructure Investments to Strengthen the Province*. March 22.
- Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association. 2006. *Where is Home? A Picture of Housing Needs in Ontario*. See www.onpha.on.ca/affordable_housing_initiatives/fight_resources/#home.
- Parkes, Jeff. 2007. Director of Development, Tamarack Homes. Personal Communication. July 11.
- Peel Living, 2007. *About Peel Builds: Why Peel Needs More Social Housing*. See www.region.peel.on.ca/housing/peelbuilds/about/index.htm.
- Pomeroy, Steve. 2007. *Minimum Housing Wage: Housing Continues to Move out of Reach for Minimum Wage Workers*. Ottawa: Canadian Housing Renewal Association.
- Purcell, Mark. 2006. "Urban Democracy and the Local Trap." *Urban Studies* Vol. 43, No.11: 1921-1941.
- Rupert, Jake. 2007. "City Housing Authority to carry out review; Study to include assessment of buildings, social conditions." *Ottawa Citizen*, June 28.
- _____. 2007a. "Affordable Housing Funds Approved." *Ottawa Citizen*, August 10.
- Sajecki, Ed. 2006. "The Growth Plan will soon be Law. I say Bravo." *Ontario Planning Journal* Vol. 21, Issue 3.
- Shapcott, Michael. 2007. "Housing picture is not quite so rosy." *Toronto Star*, July 19.

- Social Housing Services Corporation. 2007. *Social Housing and the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review: Sustaining a New Partnership*. See: www.shscorp.ca/content/Resources/DiscussionResearchPapers/LSRfinalFebruary2007.pdf
- Solberg, Monte. 2007. The message is simple: People deserve housing. *Toronto Star*, July 16.
- Stoney, Chris and Sandra Elgersma. 2007. *Neighbourhood Planning through Community Engagement: The Implications for Place Based Governance and Outcomes*. Unpublished paper presented at Canadian Political Science Association, Saskatoon, June.
- Thibert, Joël. 2007. *Inclusion and Social Housing Practice in Canadian Cities: Following the Path from Good Intentions to Sustainable Projects*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks.
- Toronto Board of Trade. 2003. *Affordable, Available, Achievable. Practical Solutions to Affordable Housing Challenges*. Toronto.
- Turner, Sally. 2007. *Sustaining Ontario's Subsidized Housing by Supporting Nonprofit Organizations*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks.
- Vyas, Archana. 2007. Policy Planner. Region of Peel. Personal Communication, August 9.
- Wilder, Stanley. 2007. Senior Housing Policy Planner, Environment and Infrastructure Policy Branch, City of Ottawa. Personal communication, August 2.