

The
CO-OPERATIVE
HOUSING
FEDERATION
of Canada



Fixing Ontario's Affordable Housing Crisis

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Province's Affordable Housing Strategy Consultations



2007 Liberal Election Platform on housing...

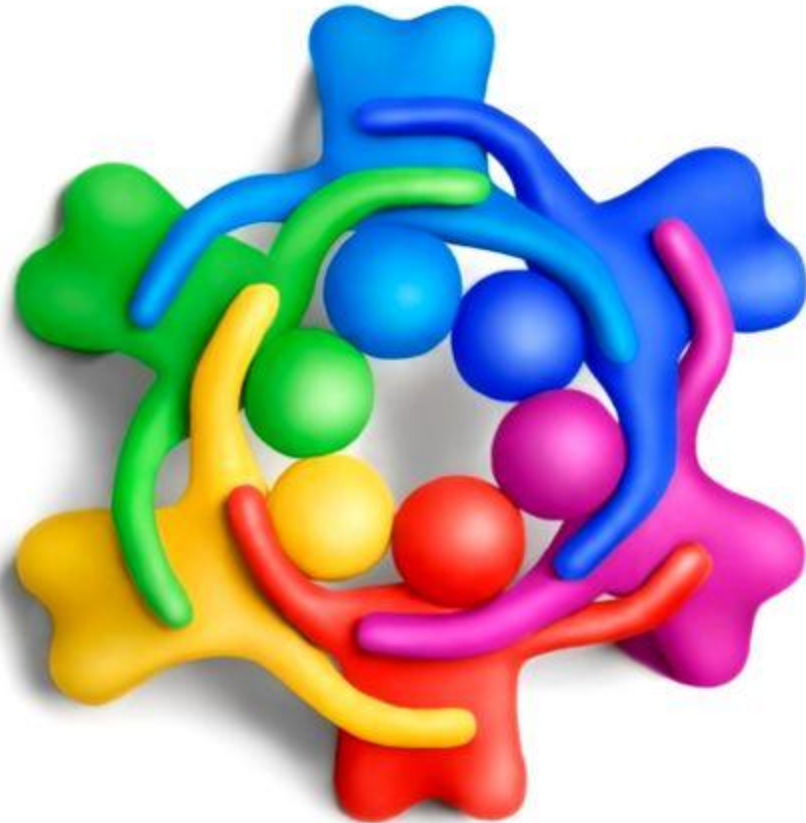
“...create a long-term strategy for Affordable Housing. We will ensure that this strategy contains a mix of non-profit and co-operative housing and takes advantage of creative financial options”

Public Consultation on Affordable Housing Strategy:

- Historic opportunity
- Need to replace patchwork of on & off again programs
- Vision required for affordable housing in this province
- Blueprint for achieving it



AHS Consultations – Some Key Issues



Housing supply

Affordability

State of Housing Stock

Role of Community-based
Housing

Provincial Leadership
required in Housing Field

Affordable Housing Supply

- Housing need far from being met
- On its own the market does not produce affordable homes
- Mix of housing options should be available
- Focus on tenant policy direction
- Government should work with community partners

Government Role Critical for New Affordable Homes



- Since 1995, about 96% of homes built were on ownership side, with only 4% rental. In twenty year period previous, ratio was 75% ownership, 25% rental
- Economics of housing are such, no one will produce for affordable market without some form of government assistance

Typical Government Financial Assistance in Housing Programs

- Some form of government financial assistance to make development affordable
- Can take the form of capital grants, mortgage subsidies, tax incentives/write offs or other financing mechanisms
- Rent supplements for a portion of the units
- Funding for long-term capital replacement reserve contribution usually included in operating budget
- Usually government capital assistance decreases over time

Housing Affordability

- Growing affordability problems
- One in five renter households pay over 50% of their income on rent, danger of being homeless
- Little dent in long social housing waiting lists
- Vacancy rates tightening up last four years
- Housing allowance programs last number of years have been:
 - Short-lived
 - Narrowly targeted
 - Excluded many in need

Maintain Existing Affordable Housing Stock

- Long-term viability of Ontario's social housing stock is at serious risk
- Many of the housing units are 30 to 50 years old and require major capital investment
- A series of studies have all found that the capital reserves of these building are seriously under-funded
- Some amounts in both the 2008 and 2009 Provincial Budgets for renovation and repair of existing social housing stock
- Long-term approach required

Review of Social Housing Reform Act (SHRA)

- Legislation, which downloaded cost and administration of social housing to 47 Municipalities is ill conceived
- Rule based Act, no overall objectives stated
- Punitive to residents receiving Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) assistance
- Modeled after Social Assistance Reform Act (SARA)
- Undermines community-based housing model and local decision-making

Provincial Leadership Required on Housing: *Needed to boost economy*

- If Ontario is to remain competitive in global market-place few factors carry more significance than an adequate supply of housing that is affordable for workforce
- Well documented that new affordable housing construction and rehabilitation of existing stock provides great economic stimulus and job creation.
- Has a very strong multiplier effect, uses Canadian/Ontario building materials and creates and maintains a valuable asset for the province's populace.

Provincial Leadership Required on Housing: *Needed to be effective in reducing poverty*

- Province recently passed Poverty Reduction Act that requires government to report on progress in key areas including affordable housing
- To make inroads into reducing property affordable housing must be a cornerstone of the foundation
- For low and modest-income Ontarians, cost of housing is single largest budgetary expenditure

Without Secure Housing...

The ability :

- To get and hold a job,
- To maintain a harmonious household,
- To look after family's health,
- For children to succeed in education,

...are all jeopardized.

Queen's Park Must Take the Lead on Housing

- While Federal Government has traditional role to play in affordable housing field, must be spurred on by the Province
- By developing a long-term affordable housing strategy Queen's Park can prod Ottawa to be a full partner in endeavour
- Municipalities do not have the tax base to either sustain existing housing or play a lead role in building new supply

Consultations Must Build Momentum

- Critical that all regional public meetings are well attended
- Imperative that MPPs be met with and understand the essential role that affordable housing plays in their riding
- Many competing priorities at Queen's Park
- Requires a concerted effort to insure a comprehensive, long-term and well-funded strategy
- Necessary to build broad-based support throughout Ontario with many organizations, constituencies, the media, and the corporate community

Housing for All... Province must hear the message



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