



Session 108: Bringing sectors together to improve public infrastructure

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REACH³ Study:

Implementation of Municipal Housing and Homelessness Plans in
Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver

PhD Research:

Intensifying Inequality? Smart growth intensification and affordable
housing in an era of neoliberal urban governance



Housing Need in 2013

Emergency Shelter Use

Ottawa: 6,705 individuals

Toronto: 17,075 individuals

Waiting lists for subsidized housing

Ottawa: 10,000+ households

Toronto: 70,000+ households (active apps)



Housing and homelessness plans

2010: Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy

2011: Housing Policy Statement

Housing Services Act

- Focus on “ending homelessness”, “Housing First”
- Municipal 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plans in place January 1, 2014.

However,

- No targets or timelines
- No new \$ for affordable housing



Housing affordability is worsening ...

1. Stagnating incomes and social assistance rates
1. Changes in local housing markets
 - New construction focused almost entirely on ownership market, particularly condominiums
 - Very little new purpose-built rental housing over last two decades
 - Rising rental housing costs and low vacancy rates.
1. Inadequate public expenditure on new affordable housing, expiry of social housing agreements.



New affordable housing

Canada-Ontario Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) program

2011-2014: \$481 million

2015-2019: \$801 million

New Affordable Housing, 2009-2013

City of Toronto: 4,077 units

City of Ottawa: 855 units (+ 1,718 new rent supplements)

Affordable housing = rents at or below 80% average market rent.



Little new private market rental housing

Limited new construction of private market rental housing, new builds almost exclusively for ownership market.

Completions By Tenure, 2009 - 2013

	Freehold	Condominium	Rental	Total	% Rental
Toronto	73,497	77,570	8,099	159,166	5%
Ottawa	21,600	6,606	1,176	29,382	4%

Source: Rental Market Reports, 2009-2013.



Limited powers, but not powerless

In Canada, municipalities are regarded as “creatures of the provinces”

Jurisdiction and authority are limited in many areas of public policy

Ontario municipalities *cannot* compel private real estate developers to build affordable housing as part of new large-scale residential development

- Such powers would require new provincial legislation.

However, provisions under Ontario’s Planning Act permit municipalities to secure affordable housing through the development process in particular circumstances...



Section 37: Ontario's Planning Act

S37 of the Ontario Planning Act:

Allows municipalities to secure “community benefits” from developers in return for permitting development that exceeds existing height and density restrictions under municipal by-laws.

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Community benefits may include: affordable housing units, public cultural facilities, parks upgrades, improvements in rapid transit stations, public art, heritage conservation etc.

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Ottawa's Official Plan

“Smart Growth”: “growing in, not out”

Urban intensification:

- directing growth to existing built-up areas, infrastructure in place
- Higher density, mixed use development, through:

Remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites;

Infill development (e.g. vacant/underutilized sites);

Conversion/adaptive reuse of industrial, commercial or institutional properties for housing etc.

Since 2003, the OP contains provisions with regard to the use of Section 37.



Ottawa's Official Plan

2.5.2 Affordable Housing

The City will encourage the production of affordable housing in new residential development and redevelopment to meet an annual target of:

- 25% of all new rental housing is to be affordable, 15% targeted to households in the 30th income percentile; and
- 25% of all new ownership housing is to be affordable to households up to the 40th income percentile.

Affordable housing and intensification presented as compatible policy goals.

HS cautioned that intensification be closely monitored to ensure it does not lead to rising land values and the loss or exclusion of affordable housing during the redevelopment process.



Section 37: (missed) opportunity?

Over the last 5 years:

The City has exceeded its Intensification targets ...

Largely taken the form of medium and high rise condominium development.

75% of intensification located in Ottawa's Central and Inner Urban wards

Only 10% of new housing built through intensification defined as “affordable” at 40th income percentile (\$57,763 in 2007)

Under Ottawa's intensification policy, developers have been routinely granted an increase in building height or density without community benefit agreements, under S37, in place.



The outcome?

Public policy support for high density urban development *without measures to ensure affordability* entails:

- A missed opportunity to align municipal housing and planning goals

The result ...

- Low income individuals and families have been largely excluded from new housing opportunities produced through intensification
- Affordability pressures have intensified, and ...
- Gentrification in Ottawa's Central and Inner Urban neighbourhoods has accelerated as a consequence of intensification.



Moving forward ...

1. Planning and housing policies (and public and private sectors) currently working at cross-purposes, must be more closely aligned under new 10 Year Plans
1. Better use of existing tools, like Section 37 agreements, to build affordable rental and/or ownership units as part of intensification projects.
1. Changes in provincial legislation:
 - Inclusionary zoning – to grant municipalities the authority to *require* affordable housing as part of new large-scale (re)development
 - OMB Reform to reduce powers overturn municipal decisions
4. Innovative public-private partnerships and community-based approaches to advance the development of new affordable housing.



Thank-you!

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