

**Caledon Institute, Social Policy Record, Policy Measures
Policy Area: HOUSING and HOMELESSNESS**

(additions or comments welcome)

Last updated: June 14, 2007

**Federal
Policy and
Program
Announcements**

First Nations Housing Fund announced (Apr 20-07)

- \$300m First Nations Market Housing Fund announced, increasing access to financing options for First Nations households (on-reserve) to build, buy or renovate a house (funds initially announced in 2007 Budget). Fund will provide financial backing to a First Nation, which can negotiate agreements with a lender or lenders to allow members to obtain housing loans.
- Government anticipates that up to 25,000 new housing units over 10 years could be provided through this fund.

Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) announced Dec 19-06 by Minister Finley (HRSDC and CMHC), effective April 1, 2007 (already received Treasury Board approval; therefore, not dependent on passage of 2007 Budget)

- total funding over two years is \$270m.
- 3 components: (1) money for federal surplus properties for homelessness related initiatives; (2) a Homelessness Accountability Network (building on research/HIFIS); and (3) the Homelessness Partnership Initiative, funding (a) designated communities, (b) rural and outlying areas, (c) partnerships with Aboriginal groups and (d) projects encouraging federal departments to pilot initiatives to work more closely.
- greater emphasis on transitional and supportive housing.

RRAP (Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program): renewed Dec 19-06 with \$256m over two years (funding now available until March 31, 2009) – along with various other CMHC renovation programs.

\$45m reduction to CMHC Sept 25-06: among \$1B in cuts announced, a \$45m reduction to CMHC (likely a combination of savings in the social housing portfolio, arising from “step out” dollars (efficiencies in the existing social housing portfolio as projects mature, etc.) and savings resulting from lower interest charges and lower than expected inflation.

Bill C-48 (passed by Parliament in 2005) funding released into 3 trusts (Sept 2006); total is \$1.4B to expand initiatives to build more affordable housing. Three subcomponents: \$800m in urban centres; \$300m in northern and remote communities; and \$300m for non-reserve aboriginal people. Funding to be made available to P/Ts, in trust to undertake initiatives to increase supply of affordable, supportive and transitional housing.

ecoENERGY Retrofit Program (announced Jan 21-07)

- \$220 million (over 4 years -- \$160m for residential component) ecoENERGY Retrofit program announced (beginning April 1), offering financial support and information to encourage retrofit of homes, small buildings and industrial processes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> homeowners to initially pay for energy audits, renovations and retrofit; grants (averaging \$1000) are available if the property is made more energy efficient; targeting 140,000 retrofits. no low-income component (as in previous EnerGuide for Low-Income Households).
Federal Policy and Programs Watching	<p><u>Social Housing Operating Agreements Expiry</u>: federal expenditures on long-term commitments are declining; will these be re-directed?</p> <p><u>Low-Income Energy Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservative Government promised a replacement to the EGLIH as part of a new “green plan” (to be determined). January 2007 announcement of ecoENERGY (details in next column); does not include a low-income component. <p>Conservative Party 2006 election proposal suggested that \$200 million be allocated annually in the form of federal tax credits to encourage developers to build or refurbish affordable rental units.</p> <p>(Mar 29-07) House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development submits its Seventh Report, arguing that federal housing programs are not meeting needs of Aboriginal Canadians for adequate, suitable and affordable housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends close collaboration with Aboriginal organizations to develop and implement an accelerated, co-ordinated, comprehensive 10 year Housing Action Plan to address and remedy the critical shortage of adequate, suitable, affordable housing affecting Aboriginal people on-and off-reserve and in the North. <p>(Feb 2007) Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology begins year-long study on poverty, focusing on urban issues such as homelessness and housing.</p> <p>(Mar 26-07) Homelessness Partnering Strategy Accountability Action Network (community involvement) meets for first time, discussing ways to engage the private sector and provinces more fully.</p>
Key Events (National)	<p>Monte Solberg appointed Minister of HRSDC and CMHC (Jan 4-07).</p> <p>National Youth Homelessness Conference (Beyond the Street) in St. John’s, NL, September 2006 and articulate a Homeless Youth Action Agenda.</p>
Provincial and Territorial Policy and Program	<p><u>Alberta</u> (Apr 24-07) Government responds to Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force Report (\$285m spending for 2007-8), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Sustainability Housing Program (\$100m/year for 3 years); capital enhancements (\$96m in 2007-8); increased homelessness funding (from \$13m to \$35m); enhanced Provincial Homeless Initiative (beyond current 7 cities); increased Rent Supplement Program (from \$14.3m to \$33m); increased support to housing providers and special purpose housing; new

<p>Announcements</p>	<p>Homeless and Eviction Fund (\$7m); funding to Alberta Transitional Housing Initiative (\$2.5m); allocation of federal funding to Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Program (details below).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2007 legislation to limit rent increases to 1x/year; to require 1 year notice to tenants of rental-to-condo conversions (Bill 34, the <i>Tenancies Statutes Amendment Act</i> tabled May 2, 2007). • cross-Department ADM committee to examine a coordinated approach to housing announced. • pilot Residential Tenancies Dispute Resolution Service (Edmonton) to go province-wide. • May 10-07: Interdepartmental teams (Service Alberta, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Employment, Immigration and Industry) begin staffing Service Centres in Edmonton and Calgary, providing information and assistance on tenancy laws, housing and social service programs. <p>Alberta (Apr 12-07) Increased support for women's emergency shelters Additional \$1.5m to support professional development and training for staff, child care for families where parents go to shelters, and emergency services at rural shelters</p> <p>Alberta (Feb 26-07) Investing in Fort McMurray Province to invest \$45M to create 300 affordable housing units in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo; \$1M/year for 3 years to offer rent supplements for about 150 households in the oilsands service and support industry; and \$1.5M/year for 3 years to assist Marshall House (offering transitional and shelter spaces in Fort McMurray).</p> <p>Alberta (Nov 8-06) Case management support for homeless individuals Province to invest \$16M over 2 years in new pilot program supporting one-on-one case management support with homeless individuals; includes recommendation for formal mechanism to bring provincial departments together.</p> <p>Alberta (Oct 27-06 and Nov 6-06) Shelters Operational Funding Province increases operational funding to Calgary (\$1M) and Edmonton (\$800K) for shelters in winter 2006/7.</p> <p>British Columbia (Apr 3-07): \$80m to buy hotels and other buildings in Vancouver, Victoria and Burnaby to reduce homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components of the Provincial Homelessness Initiative. • Province will purchase 15 buildings for affordable and supportive housing (providing 996 new units). • 10 SRO hotels (623 rooms) in Vancouver; 4 buildings for supportive housing in Victoria and Burnaby (86 units). • 287 additional new supportive housing units to come in Vancouver on three city-owned sites. <p>British Columbia (Feb 20-07) Budget 2007 Budget 2007 includes new \$250 million Housing Endowment Fund; an increase in shelter allowance rates; more permanent shelter beds; additional funding for women and children's transitional houses; a higher annual income ceiling for Rental Assistance Program eligibility; conversion of 750 units of social housing to supportive housing for seniors; changes to First Time</p>
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Home Buyers' and Home Owner Grant programs; lowered age (60 to 55) permitting property tax deferral; reduction in personal income taxes (framed as housing investments) (details below).

British Columbia (Oct 3-06) Housing Matters BC announced

Province announces *Housing Matters BC*; includes new direct financial assistance for renters, 450 new supportive housing subsidies, 550 new assisted living subsidies and \$3.6M for one-on-one homelessness supports (connecting with government housing and income supports).

Manitoba (Apr 17-07) Four-Pillar, Low-Income Housing Strategy announced, valued at \$188m

- To enhance community-driven solutions: public housing, homeless shelters, basic home repair
- Four Pillars: (1) HOMEWorks! - \$104.5m / 3 years (\$43m provincial and \$61.5m federal) for affordable homes for: inner city revitalization (\$35.0m) (focused on refugees and immigrants), older Manitobans (\$16.5m), urban Aboriginals (\$24.85m), northern Manitobans (\$20.7m) and homeless Manitobans (\$7.4m). \$17.7m in allocations announced; (2) Foundations (\$76.2m) – revitalization of existing public housing through 6 point, 3 year strategy; (3) A Roof Over Each Bed (\$3.9m) - emergency and transitional shelter for homeless people in 2007-8; (4) Basic Renovation (\$4m) - contribution to 2-year extension of federal housing renovation programs (details below).

Newfoundland and Labrador (Jun 14-07) Provincial contribution to Home Repair Program to rise from \$24M to \$48M over six years.

- Cost-shared program assists low-income households with critical home repair needs and adaptations to permit accessibility; primary beneficiaries are seniors living in rural areas of the province. Estimated to support 2500 households in 2007.

Northwest Territories (Feb 12-07) Launches 'Housing Choices'

NWT Housing Corporation (NWTHC) consolidates housing programs under the new structure Housing Choices, including four programs: (1) STEP: Solutions to Educate People, (2) HELP: Homeowner Entry Level Program, (3) PATH: Providing Assistance for Territorial Homeownership and (4) CARE: Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancement

- Will include standardized and consistent program requirements, simplified and flexible program structure, improving access, education and counselling for success, expanded eligibility criteria and broadened access for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Nova Scotia (Apr 2-07) Additional Energy Efficiency Rebates announced

Additional grants made available for retrofit programs (including the federal ecoEnergy retrofit program and the provincial EnerGuide for Houses program), offering homeowners a maximum \$6500 in rebates. Entire costs of home energy audits will be rebated for low-income participants.

Nova Scotia (Jan 29-07) Energy Affordability pilot

Conserve Nova Scotia, with the Department of Community Services, announces \$650,000 to pilot 2 approaches to help 105 low

income home-owned households through its Residential Energy Affordability Program.

Nova Scotia (Oct 4-06) Pilot rent supplement for low-income student parents

Pilot rent supplement initiative for 30 low-income single parent students attending university full-time announced, funded by the Canada-Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Agreement.

Ontario (Mar 22-07) Ontario Budget allocates \$392m to affordable housing (federal dollars authorized in 2005 and allocated to Ontario)

- \$127m to municipalities for new affordable housing or repairs to existing housing (unconditional grants).
- \$185m over five years for housing allowances (\$100/month housing subsidy for 27,000 working families, targeting those on social housing waiting lists).
- \$80m for 1100 new homes for off-reserve Aboriginal housing.

Ontario (Feb 20-07) Ontario Power Authority and green affordable housing

- OPA, Canada and Ontario announce \$3.7m program to encourage the use of energy efficient products in the construction of 5000 new affordable housing units through the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (\$2.4m from OPA and \$1.3m from Natural Resources Canada)
- Rebates of \$850/unit available to housing providers for energy efficient products

Ontario (Nov 3-06) Energy Affordability pilot

- Ontario Power Authority (OPA) launches \$2.9 million low-income energy efficiency pilot program, the Energy Efficiency Assistance Program for Houses (1400 households across Ontario), including: energy audits, installation of energy-efficient measures (no charge), education and outreach, and monitoring and verification. Delivery through EnviroCare (Ottawa) and Green Communities Canada (15 other communities).

Saskatchewan (Mar 26-07) EnerGuide for Houses extended and enhanced (\$28m over four years)

- Additional four years (to Mar 31-11) announced for homeowner retrofits, reducing energy and water consumption.
- Maximum grants available increase from \$2000 to \$5000 per homeowner (up to 20,000 households), with support for ½ of pre and post-retrofit evaluations.

Saskatchewan (Feb 23-07) Housing and Neighbourhood Revitalization – expansion of *HomeFirst*, five-year housing strategy \$100M announced for central neighbourhood revitalization, including: \$60M for affordable housing in central neighbourhoods in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and North Battleford and in northern communities (affordable rental and homeownership units; ongoing rent subsidies and youth at-risk training); and \$40M for capital investments in inner-city neighbourhood revitalization projects in Saskatoon and Regina targeted at education, skills training and community services centres (details below).

Funding allocations announced Apr 13, 19 and 20-07 (Saskatoon: \$22.8M; Regina: \$18.7M; Prince Albert: \$7M; North

	Battleford: \$3M; northern communities: \$8M).
Provincial and Territorial Policy and Programs Watching	<p>Alberta (Mar 7-07) Speech from the Throne Among five priorities, managing growth pressures is one: “Your government recognizes that adequate housing is essential for all Albertans to share in the prosperity of their province. It has created a provincial task force to find ways to make affordable housing more accessible to Albertans. It will focus on solutions for homelessness and the provision of affordable housing.”</p> <p>Manitoba (Oct 2006) Improving housing in Winnipeg inner-city neighbourhoods \$1.85M plan to improve housing stock, hire private security night patrol and implementation of new projects (i.e. teen clinic, parenting program and family literacy program for CD).</p> <p>New Brunswick (Jan 22-07) Support for First Steps During \$104,000 announcement for First Steps Housing Project Inc. for short-term financial challenges, Province announces it is looking at options for long-term financial solutions for organizations like First Steps.</p> <p>New Brunswick (Mar 13-07) Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget provides an additional \$15.3m to the NB Energy Efficiency and Conservation Agency for comprehensive home energy conservation initiatives. Residential energy efficiency programs announced in January 2007 represent a commitment of more than \$26m in 2007-8 by the provincial government for residential energy efficiency improvements. These programs include grants and loans for energy conservation projects by existing homeowners, small apartment owners, low-income housing or apartment units, and for new home construction. <p>Ontario * <i>Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review</i> announced August 2006 - issues of delivery and funding of housing, and devolution could be discussed over the 18 months (report expected spring 2008)</p>
Key Events (Provincial and Territorial)	CHRA hosted the first national summit of Provincial Housing organizations in Ottawa, October 19, 2006
Local Policy and Program Announcements	<p>BC Capital Region District (Mar 26-07) Regional Housing Affordability Strategy approved by all 13 municipalities on the Capital Regional District Board (details below).</p> <p>City of Edmonton (Oct 2006): City announces two components to <i>Cornerstones Plan</i> (goal to create 2500 units of affordable housing over five years), including: (1) \$25M over five years (\$5M/year) towards 5-year, fixed-rate rent subsidies for about 400 low-to-moderate income households; and (2) a Fee Rebate for Affordable Housing Program, offering rebates for municipal fees and charges for designated affordable housing units</p>

- Other components: creation of a Land Bank, developing new units, purchasing existing units, acquiring a percentage of units in new private sector developments, retain and renovate existing stock.

City of Edmonton (Nov 22-06): New initiative will make about 20 unused school sites available for development of about 1000 homes for first-time buyers (Neighbourhood First Time Homebuyers Program), through a pilot partnership with the Province and School Boards.

Fort St. John (Apr 11-07) Council donates lots to trades program students for housing construction

- Council will donate six lots to the school district's residential construction program.
- School District will bear costs of constructing two homes in each of the next two years.

City of Hamilton (May 2006): City Council approves HomeStart

- Approval of a homeownership education and downpayment assistance program with the goal of transitioning CityHousing Hamilton social housing tenants into affordable homeownership.
- City providing up to \$4500 over 3 years as matched downpayment assistance.
- Scotiabank, Threshold School of Building and CMHC providing technical and some financial assistance for homeownership.

Region of Waterloo November 2006 announcement, using funds received through the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (total of \$2.2M going to Municipality):

- Landlords can receive up to \$300/month from the Region to make vacant units more affordable (160 units in total). Builders also to receive below average market rent capital funding, as long as a minimum of 26% of new units are made available at 80% of current average market rent (total 74 units).

City of Vancouver (Feb 16-07) Levy for conversion of single-room occupancy dwellings into condominium units in downtown to rise from \$5,000 to \$15,000 per unit, as part of the single-room accommodation by-law.

City of Vancouver (Feb 26-07) City purchases 36-unit rental apartment building (\$6.6m), to lease to Helping Spirit Lodge Society for social housing for Aboriginal women at-risk of homelessness.

- Province (BC Housing) to provide \$4.1m in mortgage financing to the Society.
- City's equity investment (\$2.5m) to be funded through Property Endowment Fund (\$2m) and Affordable Housing Fund (\$.5m).

City of Welland (Mar 28-07)

Welland Mayor announces partnership between Opportunities Niagara, Meridian Credit Union and Royal LePage to facilitate affordable homeownership for working families (minimum one child)

- Meridian to select successful mortgage applicants and to offer free life-long financial coaching to successful applicants, Royal LePage to offer real estate support and to contribute 25% of real estate fees to closing costs.

<p>Local Policy and Programs Watching</p>	<p>City of Calgary (Jan 9-07) Committee to End Homelessness announced (24 members, private sector CEOs, non-government organizations, 3 orders of government, faith community, chaired by Steve Synder, CEO TransAlta), plans to develop a ten-year plan to end homelessness (plan to be developed within 18 months)</p> <p>City of Calgary (May 7-07) Calgary City Council approves request from Lehigh Inland Cement to construct temporary accommodations (transitional housing, for a maximum duration of six months, for employees on company property)</p> <p>City of Edmonton (Jan 9-07) City agrees to purchase 5% of the units within a 750 unit yet-to-be-built private sector development at 15% below list price (part of Cornerstones Plan).</p> <p>City of Hamilton: 2006: HomeStart announced Partnership formed between CityHousing Hamilton, Scotiabank, Hamilton Community Foundation and the Threshold School of Building to help 55 social housing tenants purchase their first home</p> <p>London, Ontario (Mar 07) First Home at Last affordable home ownership project completed (renovation of a property); a public-private partnership including the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS, the London Home Builders Association, the London Affordable Housing Foundation and CMHC (through the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program). The City of London also contributed a grant.</p> <p>City of Toronto (Apr 17-07) Affordable Housing Committee offers fast-track approval for 8 new subsidized housing projects, producing 600 new units, drawing on \$74m in federal and provincial funds allocated to Toronto</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing discussions on other proposed projects to meet annual target of 1000 new units. • City to contribute property tax exemptions, waived development fees, leases on 2 properties and 110 rent supplements. <p>Toronto (Apr 12-07) Governments of Canada and Ontario partner with Daniels Corporation to open WAVE Lakeshore West affordable housing development, intended to make condominium units available to low-to-moderate income households. Funds through the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program Agreement (\$1.61m) to provide 5 per cent downpayment assistance to households. Daniels Corporation to provide additional 5 per cent loan.</p> <p>City of Vancouver Project Civil City (2006/7) includes commitments to reduce homelessness and aggressive panhandling by 50% by 2010. In 2006, the City approved 250 units of new social housing for South East False Creek and required that 33 percent of all units be allocated to affordable housing – an investment of \$97 million. The City also purchased 12 land sites and has them earmarked for social housing; funding to be determined.</p>
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	<p>City of Vancouver (Mar 1-07): City, with Vancouver Coastal Health, launches public discussions in March and April on City's draft 10-year Supportive Housing Strategy for people with mental health and/or addiction issues (final report expected May/June).</p>
<p>Key Events or Reports (Local)</p>	<p>Association of Municipalities of Ontario (Mar 30-07) Board endorses Statement of Principles for Housing in Ontario</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To present a clear message to the Province re the review of downloaded social services (due Spring 2008) • Includes core principles (e.g. why housing matters, considerations beyond subsidies, role of municipalities) • <i>“Housing stability and affordability is a primary factor in determining the economic, social and physical health and well-being of Ontario's families and Ontario's communities. Housing is more than just shelter, it is the interrelated system of services, supports, funding and policies that enable Ontario's citizens to live in their community.”</i> <p>FCM Big City Mayor's Caucus Anne Marie DiCicco-Best (Mayor of London, Ontario) and Sam Sullivan (Mayor of Vancouver, BC) are co-chairing a task force developing a homelessness plan and National Housing Strategy to be presented to be released Fall 2007.</p> <p>Calgary: City's biennial count of homeless people on May 10, 2006, found a 32% increase since 2004 (total of 3,436).</p> <p>Edmonton: Joint Planning Committee on Housing releases data on 7th count (occurred on Oct 17-06) on Nov 8-06: higher numbers, citing econ prosperity, low vacancy and lack of affordable housing</p> <p>Vancouver 2010 Olympics (Mar 07)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report of the Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table, submitted to the four Partners to the Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement of 2002 (Canada, British Columbia, Vancouver and the Vancouver Olympic Committee) • Group reviewed previous hallmark events, researched housing and service issues and implications on housing markets • Report makes 25 recommendations in 5 clusters; contends Games legacy should be elimination of homelessness • With regards to new supply, recommends: 3200 new social housing units over 4 years; secure operating subsidies for low-income households in the Olympic Village post-Games; acquiring/leasing 800 units of existing low-income rental housing; constructing 200-250 units of housing for Games workers, to be converted to social housing post-Games. <p>3rd annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey (2007) released (Jan 22-07)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * showing housing affordability in 159 markets across Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and England * Based on how many years of earnings of earnings at the city's median household income (gross earnings) it takes to afford the median priced home * Scores of 3.0 or less were deemed “affordable;” 7 of 17 markets looked at in Canada are deemed affordable

Federal Policy and Program Areas: Details

Homelessness Partnering Strategy (announced December 19, 2006)

- Government of Canada announces the 2-year Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), effective April 1, 2007, to follow the expiry of the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI). Total funding for the HPS over two years is \$270 million (equal to 2003/4 to 2006/7 annual federal funding for the NHI)
- Government also announced a two-year renewal of funding for various CMHC renovation programs, most notably RRAP (the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program), effective April 1.
- The Government of Canada's Press Release is available at: <http://news.gc.ca/cfmx/view/en/index.jsp?articleid=263819>
- HPS will consist of three primary components: continuing to make surplus federal properties available for homelessness related initiatives, investing in a Homelessness Accountability Network (building on current research/HIFIS), and creating the Homelessness Partnership Initiative (the HPI, which appears to be SCPI's successor).
 - within the HPI, funding will be allocated via four streams, including designated communities, rural and outlying areas, partnerships with Aboriginal groups and projects encouraging federal departments to pilot initiatives to work more closely
 - the HPS may place a greater emphasis on transitional and supportive housing, and will also seek to engage provinces more fully on the services side
- specific funding allocations have not yet been announced (it is unclear whether specific communities will get the same amount they got last year, or less, or more)

Bill C-48

- Given the \$13.2 billion 2005-6 surplus, the GOC released the promised \$1.4 billion dollars for affordable housing first detailed in *Bill C-48*
- appears that the money is now spread over three years instead of two
- the funding is not intended to support ongoing operational funding for existing housing stock, rent subsidies or to replace provincial and territorial investments in affordable housing (correspondence between Minister Diane Finley and MP Irene Mathysen).
- Funding is being placed in three third-party trusts, with funding to be made available to provinces and territories:
 - *\$800 million for the Affordable Housing Trust* to help address short-term pressures with regard to the supply of affordable housing. Funding will be notionally allocated over three years (2006–07 to 2008–09) on an equal per capita basis among provinces and territories.
 - *\$300 million for the Northern Housing Trust* to help meet short-term pressures with regard to the supply of affordable housing in the North. Funding will be notionally allocated over three years (2006–07 to 2008–09) among the three territories as follows: \$50 million each for the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, plus an additional \$150 million for urgent needs in Nunavut.
 - *\$300 million for the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust* to help provinces address short-term housing needs for Aboriginal Canadians living off-reserve. Funding will be notionally allocated over three years (2006–07 to 2008–09) among provinces based on the provincial share of the Aboriginal population living off-reserve.

Issues to Watch:

Housing Tax Credits:

- Conservative election proposal suggested that \$200 million be allocated annually in the form of federal tax credits to encourage developers to build or refurbish affordable rental units. Affordable units were defined as those in which at least 40 per cent of the occupants earn less than 60 per cent of the local median income; The funding will be distributed among the provinces on a per capita basis, but smaller provinces will be guaranteed a minimum amount of funding; and the credits will be administered by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Expiry of Operating Agreements:

- For example, between 2001 and 2005, 8,000 units reached the end of their subsidy agreements, and related federal expenses declined accordingly; between 2006 and 2010 a further 22,000 will mature further reducing federal expenditures so that total federal expenditures on long term commitments will have declined in total by more than \$100 million annually, compared to 1996.
- With savings from interest rate reductions and over time from mortgages retiring, there will be substantial cost reductions for social housing.
- CHRA refers to these current and future savings as “legacy savings” and we need your help in retaining them for future needs and to make the social housing sector more independent and business focused in the future.
- \$45 million in CMHC’s budget was reduced in program changes announced on September 25, 2006, removing “step out” dollars (efficiencies in the existing social housing portfolio as projects mature, etc.).

Homeless Youth Action Agenda:

- Six point agenda arising from Beyond the Street, a conference on youth homelessness in St. John’s, September 2006
- <http://www.youthhomelessness.ca/english.html>

Provincial Policy and Program Areas: Details

Alberta

- Apr 24-07: Government responds to Alberta Affordable Housing Task Force Report (\$285m spending for 2007-8), including:
 - Municipal Sustainability Housing Program (\$100m/year for 3 years) (part of the new Municipal Sustainability Initiative; primarily high-growth areas).
 - Capital enhancement of \$96m in 2007-8 to increase affordable housing.
 - Homelessness funding (transitional housing and more shelter spaces) increased \$13m to \$35m (beyond the current 7 centres).
 - Provincial Homeless Initiative increased from \$3m to \$6m (beyond the current 7 centres).
 - Rent Supplement Program increased \$14.3m to \$33m (majority to individuals; \$1m to Fort McMurray for assisting essential workers).
 - Support to Housing Providers and Special Purpose Housing increased \$4.3m to just under \$43m.
 - \$45m for affordable housing in Fort McMurray (300 units) re-announced.
 - Homeless and Eviction Fund worth \$7m (supporting households) to be administered by Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry.
 - Alberta Transitional Housing Initiative receives \$2.5m.
 - Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Program to receive \$16m over the year.

- 2007 legislation to limit rent increases to 1x/year; to require 1 year notice to tenants of rental-to-condo conversions.
 - Cross-Department ADM committee to examine a coordinated approach to housing announced.
 - Province-wide program will be introduced modeled on the pilot Residential Tenancies Dispute Resolution Service in Edmonton.
 - Several recommendations not accepted (e.g. creating a Home Ownership Assistance Program, matching federal funding for Aboriginal off-reserve affordable housing, an Innovation Challenge Fund, incentives for “green construction,” strengthening the non-profit sector and adopting a client-focused service model that informs people of their entitlements, and how to access those services).
- Nov 8-06: Alberta to invest \$16M over 2 years in new pilot program, supporting homeless individuals with support services to achieve independence in transitional or affordable housing (24 hour/7 day outreach support teams)
 - Response to proposal from 7 Community-Based Organizations responsible for managing funding for homelessness in 7 major Alberta centres (Report: Sustainable Solutions for Homelessness in the Province of Alberta submitted in August to Province), requesting additional support for integrated case-management systems to be piloted, to inform a long-term approach (for long-term housing solutions).
 - Included a recommendation to create a formal mechanism to bring together departments associated with homelessness.
 - Coalition had asked for 5 years of funding.
 - Province to work with municipalities/organizations re: funding allocations, local initiatives and expected outcomes.
 - Funding is in addition to \$23M provided annually towards operating costs of emergency shelters and transitional housing spaces, and \$3M provided to municipalities for priority projects that meet the needs of homeless people in Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Red Deer.
 - Oct 27-06 and Nov 6-06: Province pledges \$1M extra to Calgary, then \$809K to Edmonton for shelter operational funding for winter 06-07.
 - Home prices in Edmonton and Calgary surged 46.3% and 45.7% respectively in September 2006 on a year-over-year basis (Cdn Real Estate Association).

British Columbia

- Feb 20-07: Budget 2007
 - Shelter allowances to increase by \$50 / single person (\$325 to \$375 / month) on social assistance.
 - Establishment of a \$250 million Housing Endowment Fund, to make \$10 million / year available for innovative housing projects (unaddressed by existing programs).
 - Conversion of 300 wet/cold shelter beds to year-round beds with support services (worth \$27 million / 3 years).
 - \$6 million / 3 years for transitional houses for women and children fleeing domestic violence.
 - raising the annual income ceiling for Rental Assistance Program eligibility from \$20,000 to \$28,000 for low-income working families (additional 5800 families).
 - conversion of 750 social housing units for low-income seniors to supportive housing (\$45 million).
 - First Time Home Buyers' Program (exempting purchaser from Property Transfer Tax) threshold to increase from \$325,000 to \$375,000 (worth \$63 million).
 - Home Owner Grant threshold to rise from \$780,000 to \$950,000 (worth \$42 million).

- Personal income taxes to be reduced 10 percent (over 3 years) for individuals earning up to \$100,000 (worth \$1.5 billion).
 - Social assistance rates also increased \$50 / month.
 - All low-income seniors to be eligible for Home Owner Grant (worth \$3 million).
 - Age at which property taxes can be deferred to be reduced from 60 to 55.
 - 250 new units of housing for formerly homeless persons (\$50 million of federal money).
 - improving off-reserve housing conditions for Aboriginals (\$51 million of federal money).
- Feb 23-07: Through Housing Matters BC, commitment of \$196 million confirmed for 758 supporting housing units for those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness (\$5.6 million / year for 35 years), with \$42 million in federal funding through the Canada-BC Affordable Housing Agreement
- Oct 3-06: BC announces Housing Matters BC, new housing strategy to help 15,000 low-income working families and the homeless access affordable housing; Province's budget for shelters and affordable housing to increase from \$218M to \$250M by 2008
 - A rental aid program for families with an annual income of \$20,000 or less (Province spends \$40M annually; households to receive direct financial assistance towards appropriate rental accommodation).
 - Province to build an additional 450 units of new supportive housing under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, subsidized at a cost of \$10.7m / year for 35 years.
 - Province will provide a subsidy of \$13 million a year for 35 years to create 550 new assisted living units under the Independent Living BC program for seniors.
 - Also includes \$3.6 million over 3 years for homelessness outreach, allowing communities to work one-on-one with homeless individuals to access government housing and income support, and make appointments and accompany individuals to meetings on life-skills training, personal health, household and financial management.
 - Also transfers management of 2600 units of affordable housing to the Aboriginal Housing Management Association.
- Week of Oct 26: Shelter allowance increase is announced after frozen for 12 years
 - Campbell acknowledges deinstitutionalization as a failed experiment.
 - Possibly to look to "Out of the Shadows at Last" (Senate Kirby report on mental health in Canada).

Manitoba (Apr 17-07) Four-Pillar, Low-Income Housing Strategy announced

- Total initial investment announced is more than \$188m.
- New fund to enable community-driven construction or renovation of affordable homes.
- New investments to enhance public housing, homeless shelters, basic home repair.
- Joins Rewarding Work and child care enhancements as Budget 2007's framework for greater opportunities for low income Manitobans.
- First pillar: HOMEWorks! - \$104.5m / 3 years (\$43m provincial and \$61.5m federal) for affordable homes for: inner city revitalization (\$35.0m) (focused on refugees and immigrants), older Manitobans (\$16.5m), urban Aboriginals (\$24.85m), northern Manitobans (\$20.7m) and homeless Manitobans (\$7.4m). \$17.7m in allocations announced.
 - Aboriginal governance and decision-making process to be created for off-reserve Aboriginal housing

- \$6m for neighbourhood housing assistance to be through Neighbourhoods Alive!
- \$8.5m for home-ownership
- all new and renovated units to meet green standards for energy efficiency
- Second pillar: Foundations (\$76.2m) – revitalization of existing public housing through 6 point, 3 year strategy (including conversion of some seniors units to supportive housing; new playgrounds; enhanced security; renovations and maintenance; pilot co-op and rent-to-own homeownership conversions; community empowerment supports.
- Third pillar: A Roof Over Each Bed (\$3.9m) - emergency and transitional shelter for homeless people in 2007-8. Homelessness to become a departmental focus in the housing portfolio.
- Fourth Pillar: Basic Renovation (\$4m) - contribution to 2-year extension of federal housing renovation programs.
- Note: Manitoba also to develop a community led multi-sectoral and multi-year prevention action plan to tackle homelessness.

New Brunswick (Jan 22-07) \$104,000 announced for First Steps Housing Project Inc. to address short-term financial challenges

- Minister of State for Housing and Minister of State for Seniors Mary Schryer notes her intention to work with Family and Community Services to look at various options to help establish a long-term financial solution for organizations like First Steps; refers to Community Non-Profit Task Force and announces intention to bring forth a new strategy to improve services for youth at-risk, and a new Youth at Risk Income Supplement Program

Nova Scotia (Oct 4-06) Pilot rent supplement initiative for 30 low-income single parent students attending university full-time announced, funded by the Canada-Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Agreement

- To qualify, single-parent students must be enrolled in university full time, eligible for public housing and approved for Nova Scotia student assistance
- Rent supplement assistance is available for qualifying students whose apartments have been safety inspected and approved by the local housing authority

Ontario:

- Feb 27-07: Province announced (at Toronto City Summit Alliance's Summit 2007) that it will be releasing \$392 million of new federal funding (the trust fund) for affordable housing
 - Likely to be a mix of new housing units and rental supplements.
 - \$312m for affordable housing and \$80m for off-reserve native housing.
 - Also promised an extra \$4.8m for the \$14m 'rent bank,' which gives affordable short-term loans to help tenants.
- Oct 26-06: 300 units of affordable housing announced for brownfields redevelopment, using the existing federal-Ontario housing agreement
 - So far, 6,670 units are occupied or under planning and construction.
 - (Toronto: 67,000 households on affordable housing waiting list; Provincewide: 122,000).
- Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act becomes law January 1, 2007

- municipal governments now have broader power to pass bylaws ranging from local governance structure to the economic, social and environmental well-being of their communities to the protection of persons and property, including consumer protection.
- The Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act, 2006, was proclaimed January 1, 2007
 - Municipalities have a greater ability to promote sustainable technologies, develop energy efficient buildings and support transit-friendly communities.
 - Making it easier to redevelop underused or abandoned sites within existing neighbourhoods (brownfields), to help revitalize communities and preserve valuable greenspace.
 - Establishing a more effective and accessible process for community planning – with clear requirements for information and consultation at the front-end of the planning process and providing more opportunities for public involvement.

Saskatchewan Feb 23-07: Saskatchewan to allocate \$100 million to revitalize central neighbourhoods, emphasizing housing

- Includes \$60 million for affordable housing (HomeFirst) in central neighbourhoods in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and North Battleford and in northern communities (\$49.5 million for 500 affordable rental and homeownership units for low to moderate income families and youth at risk; \$10 million for ongoing rent subsidies for 300 very low income families and youth at risk; and \$500,000 to support construction training for inner city and northern youth)
- Further \$40 million for capital investments in inner-city neighbourhood revitalization projects in Saskatoon and Regina targeted at education, skills training and community services centres
 - \$17 million for an integrated training facility in Saskatoon (spanning K-12 and post-secondary systems).
 - \$8 million for health and community services in Saskatoon inner city residents (i.e. health services).
 - \$15 million for a more integrated approach to engaging youth in learning and the labour market; also a North Central community services centre.
- Incorporating some feedback from recent Youth Summit in Saskatoon.

Municipal / Regional Policy and Program Areas: Details

BC Capital Region District (Mar 26-07) Regional Housing Affordability Strategy approved by all 13 municipalities on the Capital Regional District Board (details below)

- Five strategies proposed:
 - expansion of Regional Affordable Housing Trust Fund and solicit more funding from senior governments.
 - promote local regulatory, fiscal and policy actions, increasing pro-affordability regulations and policies.
 - promoting community-based partnerships and collaborations.
 - build neighbourhood-level support for housing affordability.
 - expand the scope of the Victoria Homelessness Community Plan to the Region, create a Regional Homelessness Task Force.
- three goals:

- increase the supply of affordable housing in the Region.
- reduce the number of households in core housing need.
- reduce the number of homeless people and facilitate pathways out of homelessness.
- Includes Secretariats for affordable housing and homelessness.

City of Edmonton (Cornerstones Plan)

- Feb 21-07: Edmonton announces \$13 million in 2007 for affordable housing, and pursuing joint projects with the private sector and other levels of government.
 - Fixed Rate Rent Supplement Pilot Project
 - \$5M/year (for five years) rent supplement program announced Oct 24-06, supporting about 400 low-to-moderate income households and those with special needs, providing program participants with a 5-year, fixed rate rent subsidy averaging \$200/month.
 - Program to be managed by the City; local housing management bodies identifying/assessing applicants' needs; funding provided to for-profit and not-for-profit landlords.
 - supported by Canada (\$1.25M), Alberta (\$1.25M), Edmonton (\$2.5M).
 - Calgary-based Boardwalk Rental Communities (with 10,400 rental units in Edmonton) agrees to apply 200 supplements to its units
 - Fee Rebate for Affordable Housing Program (FRAHP) to rebate municipal fees and charges for designated affordable housing units comprising all or a portion of new or existing residential development project proposals (for long-term reduced affordability)
 - Money available to developers is \$350,000/year.
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