



PEEL'S STRATEGIC HOUSING COMPONENTS: OUR ACTIONS

- **Politically committed** to eliminating homelessness;
- **Built a social housing portfolio** worth a half billion dollars in assets including more than 7,100 apartments and townhouses on 67 sites in three area municipalities;
- **Established social housing capital reserves**; adding \$2 million annually;
- Established 15-year capital reserve plan;
- Partnering with community on:
 - ✓ continuum approach to homelessness prevention, housing, support services;
 - ✓ community enhancement and safety programs with residents and police;
- **Partnering with federal and provincial governments** as a participant in the Affordable Housing Program (AHP) and implementing creative homeless preventions through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiatives (SCPI); lobbying the federal and provincial governments for increased funding to help maintain existing social housing stock and create more assisted housing for a growing homeless population;
- **Partnering with builder** to reduce capital costs and extend building life;
- **Partnering with area municipalities** for expedited planning approvals; building designs that fulfil urban planning and growth needs and blend in with neighbourhoods;
- **Dedicated funds to capital improvements** for extending building life;
- **Established comprehensive financial risk mitigation** strategy.

AS SOCIAL HOUSING SERVICE MANAGER:

- Provides leadership to housing and service providers of 15,225 units
- Steward of provincial legislation directing housing providers in areas of capital reserve planning and regulatory adherence;
- Disperses \$100 million in subsidies annually;
- Co-ordinates a central waiting list of 14,700 applicants for subsidized housing.

SOCIAL HOUSING: THE FUTURE?

A number of risks threaten the viability of existing social housing stock, primarily rapidly depleting capital replacement funds and already stressed property tax bases.

Each level of government has a vested interest in maintaining social housing stock and the Region of Peel is committed to doing what it can to mitigate the risks faced by all housing providers in Peel. In September 2006, Council approved a long range capital maintenance reserve strategy.

However, sustainable funding from senior levels of government is necessary to protect our investments into the future. Without increased contributions from the provincial and federal governments, Peel sees its social housing stock and its ability to provide affordable housing to be seriously compromised in the near future.

For more information on Peel Region's strategic approach to affordable housing, visit www.peelregion.ca, or www.peelbuilds.ca

Contacts

**Keith Ward, Commissioner of Housing and Property
and General Manager of Peel Living** 905-791-7800, Ext. 4670

**Drew Goursky, Manager, Housing Initiatives
(For Information on New Development)** 905-791-7800, Ext. 3571



**STABLE
FAMILIES**

**COMPETITIVE
ECONOMIES**

**STRONG
COMMUNITIES**



**Peel's Affordable Housing
Returns on Investment**

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS A COMMUNITY ASSET

There are more than one million people in the Regional Municipality of Peel with another 100 people moving to Peel each day. A great deal of prosperity is evident in Peel's three area municipalities – the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the Town of Caledon – but there are thousands of Peel citizens still unable to afford suitable housing for their families. Many are homeless.

Affordable housing has been shown time and again to be at the core of family stability. It's also a pillar for local economic strength. As a result, Council has built up a substantial social housing portfolio since 1979, and in recent years, a comprehensive infrastructure of supports, including partnerships with community agencies and senior governments, to assist in stabilizing thousands of households in need.

Through innovation, creativity, and collective government funding sources, Peel's newest housing projects together comprise one of the largest social housing initiatives in Ontario since 1995.

However, the sustainability of social housing is only possible with the ability to repair and replace an aging infrastructure. Already overstressed local tax bases don't have the capacity to do that, making the future viability of social housing rest with senior governments.



INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE, INVESTMENT IN THE ECONOMY

Peel understands the inextricable link that exists between affordable housing and health. Without affordable housing, child learning, development and behaviour is shown to suffer and chronic illness increase. Family stability is believed to foster healthier children and adults, who in turn become productive contributors to a community's economy.

Adequate affordable housing is also a municipality's competitive edge. It increases opportunities to live and work in the same locale, reducing highway grid-lock while increasing the worker pool. And workers do benefit – Peel has generated 917.5 person years of employment based on the construction activity from our most recent developments.

For those reasons, Peel has invested significantly in social housing for its most vulnerable citizens, providing housing for thousands of mixed-income households since the 1970's. Over the years, many of Peel's social housing residents have been able to make the move from subsidized housing to market rentals and others to home ownership, a fact that eliminates any doubt of affordable housing's stabilizing impacts.

Challenges

Much of the general rental housing stock in Peel is beyond the reach of many low and moderate income individuals and households. As a result, the number of applicants for subsidized housing in Peel has increased from **5,000** households in 1995 to over **14,700** in 2006. Most disturbingly, the majority of applicants will wait up to **21** years for an available subsidized unit.



IN 2005, 10,911 INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING 2,205 CHILDREN, USED THE EIGHT EMERGENCY SHELTERS IN PEEL. THEIR STAYS WERE LONGER THAN THOSE IN PREVIOUS YEARS AS AFFORDABLE HOUSING HAD BECOME HARDER TO FIND.

The number of individuals seeking help from Peel's eviction prevention program grew from **100** to **1,300** residents in five years. Peel's Homelessness Outreach Program regularly helps about **200** homeless individuals. As well, food banks are serving many more people than ever before.

Navigating the Course to More Affordable Housing

In 1979, Peel Regional Council began to build what presently amounts to a substantial portfolio of social housing.

However, by the mid-1990's, Peel's housing initiatives were seriously compromised when senior governments stopped funding social housing, causing homeless rates to spike. Buoyed by its certainty that adequate affordable housing was the key to solving homelessness, Council nevertheless moved forward and built one of the first new social housing developments in Ontario in almost 10 years.

Peel's view of what solved homelessness was also evolving. Adding bricks and mortar was now seen as just one part of a broader equation. A holistic approach was needed to get to the root causes of homelessness, considered to be more complex than what earlier experience had revealed. Partnerships established with the community proved invaluable in determining the appropriate design and program delivery that would most benefit the targeted resident groups. Today, Peel Youth Village and Angela's Place provide unique, 'wrap-around' transitional housing and supports for youth and families.

During this time, the federal and provincial governments renewed their commitment to social housing. Through the Affordable Housing Program, municipalities had access to funds for new social housing construction. Rent supplement increases in 2005 also made more units affordable.

Peel added a total of 367 permanent and transitional units to its housing portfolio between 2003 and 2005. Another 465 units are being developed and planned for completion starting in 2007.

