

AN OUTLINE HISTORY

TWENTY YEARS OF FEDERAL HOUSING ACTIVITIES IN CANADA:

Compiled by *J. David Hulchanski*

1968

Paul Hellyer is named Minister Responsible for Housing on April 20.

Canadian Conference on Housing, sponsored by the Canadian Welfare Council (now the Canadian Council on Social Development), is held in Toronto.

The federal budget in October announces increased funds for direct CMHC lending for owner-occupied housing.

1969

Report of the Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Development, Paul Hellyer, Chairman, is published in January.

Paul Hellyer resigns as Minister Responsible for Housing on April 29, having served 374 days in that position.

Robert Andres is named Minister Responsible for Housing on June 3. He serves until January 27, 1972 (a total of 32 months).

1970

Urban Canada: Problems and Prospects by N.H. Lithwick and *Housing in Canada* by L.B. Smith are published, two studies in the urban Canada research project sponsored by the Minister Responsible for Housing, R.K. Andres.

A special \$200 million Innovative Housing Fund for low-income housing is announced, and CMHC direct mortgage lending is increased due to insufficient private funds.

1971

The Ministry of State for Urban Affairs is established.

Programs in Search of a Policy: Low Income Housing in Canada, by M. Dennis and S. Fish, is published.

A \$100 million Assisted Home Ownership Program is introduced in May, as an extension of the 1970 \$200 low-cost housing program.

Major tax changes are introduced, including changes in housing-related tax expenditures. Losses created by Capital Cost Allowances on rental property are no longer deductible from nonrental income.

1972

Ron Basford is named Minister Responsible for Housing on January 29. He serves until August 7, 1974 (a total of 31 months).

1973

The National Housing Act is amended. New programs include: Assisted Home Ownership Program; nonprofit and co-op housing assistance; Neighbourhood Improvement Program; Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program; land assembly assistance; new communities program; native housing assistance.

1974

The May 6 federal budget announces the introduction of the Registered Home Ownership Savings Plan (RHOSP) to "ease the formidable difficulty facing young people" in accumulating a down payment.

Barnett Danson is named Minister Responsible for Housing on August 8. He serves until November 2, 1976 (a total of 27 months).

The November 18 federal budget introduces the Multiple Unit Residential Building (MURB) tax provision "to provide a quick and strong incentive to the construction of new rental housing units."

The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) and the Rural and Native Housing Program (RNH) are established.

1975

The Assisted Rental Program (ARP) is introduced in April to encourage the development of modest rental housing.

The June 1975 federal budget increases funding for AHOP and ARP to "stimulate demand and help make adequate housing more accessible to Canadians of moderate means." A total of 122,647 rental units are subsidized by ARP between 1975 and 1980. A total of 94,205 ownership units are subsidized by AHOP between 1975 and 1979.

1976

United Nations Conference on Human Settlements is held in Vancouver.

André Ouellette is named Minister Responsible for Housing on November 3. He serves until March 31, 1979 (a total of 29 months).

1977

Additional funding for ARP is provided.

1978

National Housing Act program are revised, some abolished: "federal disentanglement" has begun. ARP and AHOP are abolished. The public housing program is discontinued in much of the country.

The Ministry of State for Urban Affairs is abolished.

Down to Earth: The Report of the Federal/Provincial Task Force on the Supply and Price of Serviced Residential Land, D. Greenspan, Chairman.

New federal/provincial global housing agreements signed (November 1978 to December 1979).

The Urban Native Housing Program and the On-Reserve Housing Program are established.

The November 16 federal budget extends the MURB program for another year.

1979

Federal election (May 22); minority Conservative government in office for 272 days.

Elmer Mackay is named Minister Responsible for Housing on June 4. He serves until March 2, 1980 (a total of nine months).

Mortgage interest deductibility and property tax credit program are announced on September 17. Estimated annual cost for 1980 is \$1.2 billion; by 1982, the cost would rise to \$2.9 billion.

Report on CMHC by the Task Force on CMHC is released on October 26; it recommends replacing "most existing social and departmental programs with a direct income maintenance or direct housing allowance scheme" (p.114).

Finance Minister announces that the MURB program will expire on December 31.

1980

Federal election on February 18 elects a majority Liberal government — in office for four-and-a-half years.

Paul Cosgrove is named Minister Responsible for Housing on March 3. He serves until September 30, 1982 (a total of 31 months).

The MURB program is reintroduced in the October 28 federal budget for one more year (until the end of 1981) to “reduce shortages of rental accommodation and provide a needed stimulus for the construction industry.”

1981

An “All Sector National Housing Conference” is held in Ottawa, sponsored by the Canadian Real Estate Association.

The November 12 federal budget introduces the Canada Mortgage Renewal Plan (CMRP) and the Canada Rental Supply Program (CRSP). A total of 21,205 rental units are subsidized by CRSP during the life of the program.

CMHC announces the start of an evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the nonprofit and co-op housing programs.

1982

The Canadian Home Renovation Plan (CHRP) is established in March (terminated in April 1983). A total of 121,476 homeowners receive assistance under the program.

The June 28 federal budget announces the Canadian Home Ownership Stimulation Plan (CHOSP), an additional allocation of 2,500 social housing units, and increased funding for the Canada Rental Supply Program, the Canada Home Renovation Plan, and the Canada Mortgage Renewal Plan. A total of 260,115 house buyers are assisted by CHOSP during the life of the program.

Romeo LeBlanc is named Minister Responsible for Housing on September 30. He serves until July 2, 1984 (a total of 21 months).

A mortgage renewal insurance plan is proposed by Romeo LeBlanc in November.

1983

The April 19 federal budget includes additional funding for CHOSP, CHRP, RRAP, and native housing.

Section 56.1 Non-Profit and Co-operative Housing Program Evaluation, by CMHC, is released in November.

1984

Federal budget on February 14 promises the Mortgage Rate Protection Program and mortgage-backed securities.

Charles Lapointe is named Minister Responsible for Housing on July 2. He serves until September 4, 1984 (a total of two months).

William McKnight is named Minister Responsible for Housing on September 18. He serves until July 2, 1986 (a total of 22 months).

The Task Force on Program Review (Neilson Committee) is established in September. A Study Team on Housing Programs is directed to evaluate 24 housing programs. James Shapland, a senior vice-president of Markborough Properties, is appointed team leader.

In a November budget statement called “An Agenda for Economic Renewal,” Finance Minister Michael Wilson announces cuts in housing programs.

CMHC announces that the actuarial deficit of the Mortgage Insurance Fund (MIF) at the end of 1984 was \$786 million, due largely to ARP and AHOP defaults.

1985

The release of a *Consultation Paper on Housing* initiates the Conservative government’s “fundamental review of housing policy.” At the same time, private meetings with all provincial and territorial housing ministers are held.

On December 18 the federal Minister Responsible for Housing releases a 33-page housing policy paper titled *A National Direction for Housing Solutions*.

1986

Housing Programs in Search of Balance, one of 21 volumes, is released on March 11 by the Task Force on Program Review. The report concludes that the "record of current programs in meeting social housing needs is dismal."

Stewart McInnes is named Minister Responsible for Housing on July 2.

The first index-linked mortgages, the new financing instrument for the co-op housing program, are sold by the Co-operative Housing Foundation of Canada.

New global funding agreements are signed between the federal government and the provincial and territorial governments.

1987

The nonprofit and residential rehabilitation programs are substantially changed, with increased targeting to the very low-income groups. Universality is introduced.

The year is declared International Year of Shelter for the Homeless by the United Nations. In recognition of this declaration and to bring the plight of homelessness and inadequate housing to the Canadian consciousness, a major national/international conference is held September 13-15 in Ottawa. It was co-sponsored by the Canadian Association of Housing and Renewal Officials and the International Council on Social Welfare-Canada.

1988

The federal government commissioned a study by the Canadian Association of Housing and Renewal Officials to propose an "Agenda for Action to the Year 2000."

J. David Hulchanski is with the School of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia.