



Identifying and Mapping Lands to Support Building Affordable Housing by Non Profit Organizations: Government and Faith Based Lands

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The Objective of Identifying Non Private Sector Land

- Land is a Primary Input into the development process
- Escalating Land Values presents a Key Problem in Providing Affordable Housing
- Consequently, Non-Profits have a difficult time finding reasonably priced land for development
- Non-Profits, unlike the Private Sector, price their product, housing, on a cost-plus basis, rather than at market prices
- Hopefully, governments and Faith-Based Organizations may provide their land at reasonable, below market, prices to support affordable housing programs

The Task: Identify Government and Faith Based Land

- It is not clear the governments have accurate inventories of their land portfolios
- Faith-Based organizations may not have good inventories of their land and/or their development Potential
- The “task” is to identify all government land and not only “surplus” lands
- The “task” is to Identify Federal, Provincial, and Municipal Land (including Agencies, Boards and Commissions), as well as Faith Based Organization land holdings

CUR: Identifying and Mapping Government Lands

- Project at the Inception of CUR (2014): GIS interactive map of all government land in the GTA and Hamilton
- CMHC: The “Housing Supply Challenge” and Map Your Property (MYP)
 - Working with MYP on extending the Government Mapping to Major Cities Across Canada
- Use and Applications of the Mapping
 - Governments will know what lands they own
 - Governments will know what lands other government’s own (especially within municipal jurisdictions)
 - NGO’s will find land opportunities and approach governments
 - Governments can partner and lever land with existing or potential programs

Some Opportunities and Examples

- NGO's may lever Government land and government programs (National Housing Strategy)
- City of Toronto and the Rapid Housing Program
- City of Toronto and its "Housing Now" Program
- Community Land Trusts: BC, Ottawa, TCHC donating sites to Parkdale Community Land Trusts
- Habitat for Humanity: Desire to Expand their model beyond "one house at a time"
- Initiatives by the United Church of Canada

Faith Based Context

- Over 27,000 Faith Based buildings across Canada
- Many are facing declining congregations
- Many aging structures (Churches) in need of repairs coupled with declining revenues
- Providing Affordable Housing (below market rate housing), supports the mission of providing a social need (including members of their congregation)

United Church of Canada

- 2015: CMHC Working Group on Assessing the United Church Land Portfolio
- 2016: Creation of an RFP and undertaking an assessment of their 3000 existing land parcels
- 2018: BC Government's Housing Hub Partners with the United Church to build over 400 rental homes in Vancouver, Richmond, Coquitlam and Nanaimo
- 2020: Creation of the "***United Property Resource Corporation***"
- 2020: *Affordable Housing Innovation Fund* will provide a \$20 million line of credit for predevelopment and preconstruction costs to develop 20 strategic sites across Canada
- 2022: Kindred Works associated with the United Church identifies a of housing 34,000 people over 15 years (1/3 of units below market rentals), projects underway in Toronto, Saint John, Ottawa, Orillia etc.

Types of Application

- **Converting or Retrofitting Existing Structures**
 - Complete Residential Conversion
 - To joint mixed use development
- **Building on Excess Land**
 - Land adjacent to existing Churches
 - Site redevelopment
 - Offsite parcels
- **Housing Types and Funding**
 - Rental with an affordable component (below market)
 - Utilizing CMHC funding (Affordable Housing Innovation Fund)
 - Opportunities to partner with Non-Profits on new Co-Op funding

Impediments and Challenges to Development by/with Faith Based Organizations

- Identify and considering a development (process) that aligns with their values
- Identify all the property with development potential (for organizations with multi-site portfolios)
- The need for support in feasibility assessment for sites, concept design, business planning and pro forma analysis
- Finding appropriate consultants to assist with the above analysis
- Selecting an appropriate development partner (private or non-profit)
- Assessing the new CMHC Co-op housing funding (if this is of interest to the organization)
- A recently identified consideration is the Property Tax treatment of below market housing

Conclusions

- In addition to government land, “Faith Based” property portfolios provide an opportunity for providing sites for affordable, below market housing
- These organizations/landowners need to obtain support to move forward in these initiatives both in terms of technical urban planning and development expertise.
- They also need to understand how to lever government housing subsidy programs for these developments as they are essential to make them financially feasible, especially to maximize the number of below market rate units provided in the development

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