



CHRA CONGRESS SESSIONS SERIES 2016

**Strategic Partnerships Advancing the
Development of Affordable Housing**

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BC Housing

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Introduction

Speakers:

Barbara Myers, Planner, SvN Architects + Planners Inc. (ON/MB)

Brenda Plant, Executive Director, Turning Point Recovery Society (BC)

Maynard Sonntag, President/CEO, Silver Sage Housing Corporation (SK)

Francois Giguere, Directeur général, SOLIDES (QC)

Remi Feredj, Director of Real Estate and Industrial Planning, Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens (RATP), Chairman of the Social Housing Subsidiary, Paris (France)

Moderator:

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There is no one-way to develop affordable housing. Each project requires a unique approach that is mindful of the client's needs, sensitive to the surrounding environment and utilizes the expertise of the provider. However, even while attentive to these principles, many organizations face political, economic, social and cultural barriers to implementing affordable housing.

Despite the numerous challenges, this workshop highlights five unique partnerships that have overcome such obstacles, enabling the development of affordable housing across Canada and in France.

- I. EDGE: A Network for Ministry Development:** The workshop first heard from architect and planning firm SvN Architects + Planners Inc., who are working with the United Church of Canada to incorporate affordable housing on church land as a way of adapting to neighborhood needs and congressional changes.
- II. A Multi-Stakeholder Approach To Developing Supportive Housing:** Next, Turning Point Housing Society showcased a project uniting five non-profits and all three orders of government to fill a critical gap in the supportive housing continuum in Richmond, BC.
- III. Fostering a Culturally Inclusive Approach to Housing Design:** Following, Silver Sage Housing Corporation discussed their Elder's Lodge that benefited from extensive consultations informing the design, and a new build providing support to single Aboriginal mothers.
- IV. Converting Private Sector Homes into Affordable Housing Through Innovative Financing:** Montreal based SOLIDES then spoke to their strategy to purchase existing multi-unit apartments from the private market and convert them into non-profit housing by means of innovative financing.
- V. An Integrated Model for the Production of Social Housing in Paris, France:** The workshop concluded with a presentation from RATP and social housing subsidiary Logis Transports in Paris, who shared strategic partnerships that have enabled them to build affordable housing in dense city centres and develop a social housing portfolio of over 10,000 units.

I. EDGE: A Network for Ministry Development

Barbara Myers, Planner, SvN Architects + Planners Inc. (ON/MB)

SvN is a Toronto-based firm of urban designers, planners and architects that have been leaders in the housing field, nationally and internationally for more than 35 years. The firm has built housing for non-profits groups, government agencies and departments and the private sector, and fosters a unique relationship with the United Church in Canada in helping churches to analyze and develop affordable housing on ministry properties in Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

The United Church of Canada is one of largest denominations in Canada, with over 100 congregations across the country. Despite the scale and scope of their presence, in recent decades the United Church of Canada has undergone a number of significant changes, such as a declining congregation and fewer younger members, resulting in less support to address building and maintenance costs. United Churches are also changing the way they worship, and the buildings and sites of the past are finding new ways to be relevant.

United Churches of Canada are beginning to look for creative solutions to remain vital in their communities, adapt to their congregations needs, and become financially sustainable. In pursuit of these goals churches have begun to recognize their land as a catalyst for change. As churches are often located in established neighborhoods and on significant pieces of land, their location and size gives their land particular value. United Churches are beginning to realize the value of this land, and its potential to stimulate social and financial opportunity.

Partnership Between SvN and the United Church:

The process of converting churches into affordable housing is initiated when congregations self-identify their need to transform, and reach out to the United Church of Canada to assist them with the process. The United Church of Canada then refers the church to EDGE, a ministry program established in 2011 with the purpose of renewing church ministries across Canada. Once EDGE is notified, it will contact SvN to provide design and planning expertise.

When SvN meets with the church they provide five essential services that facilitate the conversion process:

- First, SvN sits down with the congregation to listen to what their needs are. This allows them to develop solutions sensitive to the congregation's needs and aspirations.
- Secondly, SvN conducts a property survey that provides the church with an estimated market value for their property. SvN then looks outward at the surrounding community to understand the demographics of the neighborhood and what their needs may be.
- Third, SvN looks at the regulatory framework of the building to determine how many units of housing they can build within the current framework.
- Having collected this information, SvN then develops three schematic design scenarios for what that the church could feasibly build and what the property could bare.
- Finally, SvN prepares preliminary costing to advise the Church as to the advantages and opportunities of a housing development.

While this outlines the direct partnership between SvN and the United Church, there is also a strategic partnership between SvN and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which makes the program feasible. EDGE receives funding from CMHC, which is used to finance the research, consultation, and design process.

Examples of Commitments to Affordable Housing:

To date, this partnership has seen multiple affordable housing projects come to fruition on United Church of Canada lands across the country. One such example emerges from SvN's partnership with Knox United Church in Winnipeg. Located in central Winnipeg, the prominent structure of

Knox United Church plays a vital role in the community as it offers a wealth of social programs that cater to the needs of the growing immigrant population in the neighbourhood. In addition to requiring more spaces for social programs, the aging housing units and low vacancy rates in the area are both factors contributing to the prioritized need for more affordable housing. To address this issue SvN is working with Knox to repurpose an adjacent building to the church – currently owned by Knox – to build affordable housing for refugees and immigrants.



Another example of SvN's work in Winnipeg is their partnership with Augustine United Church, located on a large parcel of land in the vibrant mixed-used neighborhood of Osborne. To address the housing needs of the community and the church's financial needs, SvN and Augustine are looking to construct housing through in-fill development on the back of the property. This strategy would allow Augustine United Church to maintain their sanctuary and worship space while also adapting to their changing congregation. SvN is exploring different models for housing, including a co-op model that fits the needs and the market of the surrounding community, and remains aligned with the church's congregational focus. In addition to housing, SvN and Augustine are also looking at the possibility of developing either a day-care, which would provide support services to potential tenants, or a woman's shelter that could be managed by a local organization already operating in the neighborhood.

While these two examples provide a snapshot into SvN's work with United Churches, other congregations across the country are working to develop plans that address a wide range of needs, including day-cares, seniors housing and youth centres. Furthermore, some churches are using these opportunities to not only provide affordable housing, but also to acknowledge their role as mission focused organizations. One example of this is Immanuel United Church in Winnipeg, where a small housing village is being constructed. The church will be contributing a percentage of their affordable housing profits to the Truth and Reconciliation project, stating that:

"... as a form of acknowledgement of the fact that the land to be developed adjacent to the church building is treaty 1 land, and within the traditional territory of the Métis people, and that its development will result in revenue that the Immanuel congregation will use to continue to serve its ongoing mission in the area, Immanuel United Church will commit 1% of the revenue from its land development project to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation"

However, despite all the positive partnerships, SvN realizes that there is no one model for success and not all sites lend themselves to being feasible for this type of development. In Prince Albert

Saskatchewan, the Wesley United Church is similarly experiencing a changing congregation. However, the city is also experiencing slow growth, and what growth it does experience is on the periphery of the city, rather than in the downtown. As a result, the centrally located church was unable to attract a potential developer.

The unique partnership between the United Church of Canada and SvN has proven to be a successful model for developing affordable housing in neighborhoods. While much of EDGE's success comes from design and planning, it recognizes that change begins with groups who champion the idea, and demonstrate a commitment to work for a difference.

By being committed to developing affordable housing, the United Churches in Canada are using the challenges faced by their congregations – less need of space due to a declining congregation and increased need of revenue – to adapt and facilitate meaningful change in their communities.

II. A Multi-Stakeholder Approach To Developing Supportive Housing

Brenda Plant, Executive Director, Turning Point Housing Society (BC)

Turning Point Recovery Society (TPRS) is a non-profit organization in the Lower Mainland in British Columbia working to improve the health and well-being of individuals with addictions issues through a continuum of residential and outpatient services. One way TPRS fulfills this mission is through their sister organization, Turning Point Housing Society (TPHS), by providing their clients with affordable, supportive and transitional housing, one of the most important factors to supporting individuals in recovery.

As such, in 2011 TPHS began work on a project to develop and deliver affordable housing in the city of Richmond, B.C. This project not only required creative planning, but strategic partnerships that would bring together stakeholders in the sector and involve multiple levels of government.

In 2011 the city of Richmond and B.C. Housing co-wrote an Expression of Interest (EOI) to develop a downtown Richmond site. The EOI required the site to be developed in a manner that would ensure residents would have access to suitable and appropriate housing and the necessary community supports to meet the needs of a diverse population. As listed in the EOI the priorities of the site were to:

- 1) Utilize the site for affordable housing;
- 2) Increase the supply of secure, affordable housing in Richmond;
- 3) Create cost-effective, supportive housing, including mix-use housing for affordable and low-of-end market units without on-going operating subsidy; and
- 4) Include space for complementary community spaces that would benefit both the tenants and surrounding community.

Managing Scale Through Strategic Partnerships:

While the EOI presented a unique opportunity for social housing providers to develop on centrally located property, writing a feasible proposal for the site was difficult for smaller organizations given the large size of the property. The site, which would ultimately accommodate 129 units, posed a serious barrier for small service providers to manage, operate and justify a proposal because of a lack of organizational capacity at that scale.

Furthermore, the site was in high demand as it was centrally located, and it offered a unique opportunity for a diverse set of social sector development in the area. Since the site as a whole exceeded the needs of TPHS, they imagined an innovative approach to developing the site in a manner that fit their needs while also maintaining opportunity for other organizations.

The idea was for a joint project in which multiple organizations would each have a stake in the overall development of the land. Turning Point Housing Society then reached out to the following organizations, which ultimately participated in the bid:

- Atira Woman's Resource Society, who provide housing to women who have been living with violence;
- Coast Mental Health Foundation, who provide services for individuals with mental health needs;
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S., who work with new immigrants, seniors and youth, and is the largest social service organization in Richmond, and;
- Tikva Housing Society, who provide housing for Jewish families, seniors, and those experiencing poverty.
- Turning Point also reached out to Pathways Clubhouse, who support people with mental health issues to invite them to be a partner in the community amenity space part of the development.

In 2011 the joint proposal for the site was awarded to TPHS and the above organizations. Their successful application means that the development will consist of a diverse group of social and affordable housing providers, in addition to on-site service and program providers in a singular facility called Storeys.

Although not yet complete, Storeys is a 14-story building and has an aggregate 129 subsidized rental units, with occupancy for these units scheduled for Spring 2017. In addition to affordable housing, Storeys also has over 2,000 square meters of tenant amenities and community and social service spaces. Nearly half of this space is to be occupied by Richmond Pathways Clubhouse, who will provide space for a community kitchen, dining room, meeting areas, and administrative offices.

In 7,500 square feet of the space S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has constructed offices, group activity rooms, large multi-purpose rooms and an activity center. The remaining space is owned by TPHS, who will lease it to a local non-profit health organization to provide outpatient addiction counseling programs and services for the tenants in the building and the community at large. In addition to these services, Storeys also includes a social enterprise café and education and training centre. Together these spaces and housing not only offers a continuum of services for a diverse population, but also allows clients to live and socialize in a safe and central part of the city.



Financing – Organizational, Municipal, Provincial and Federal Partnerships:

While Storeys is a unique project in that it aligns multiple large partners for a singular housing project, it also includes an innovative financial structure that made the project possible. Financing includes the support of municipal, provincial and federal governments.

The total budget for Storeys is \$44.4 million. Of the total amount required, nearly half came from the city of Richmond, whose contributions equaled \$26.3 million. Of this, \$6.5 million of the contributions were for the land value of the site. An additional \$14.1 million was capital contributions channeled through the city's Affordable Housing Value transfer. The Affordable Housing Value transfer is a tool used by the municipality to generate funding for affordable housing by requiring developers in the city of Richmond to either build 5% affordable housing on-site, give the city cash in-lieu of constructing affordable housing, or build those units in another developer's building. In the case of Storeys, this \$14 million is reflective of other developers building their mandated affordable housing in the Storeys building.

In addition to the city's role, the provincial and federal governments also contributed financially. The provincial government supported the project by providing construction financing, providing a take-out mortgage for each of the societies with residential units, and with the provision of \$3 million in capital grants, while the federal government provided \$2.2 million through the Homelessness Partnership Strategy, a program that funds projects targeting homelessness. In addition to government financing, another innovative component of the project was that every single partner had to bring equity to the project. This meant that all organizations had to fundraise to cover part of the costs. In total, fundraising by partner organizations generated \$1.95 million.

By successfully bringing together multiple partners, Storeys sits in downtown Richmond as an example to what innovative solutions and strategic partnerships can achieve. By gathering the collective interests of social service providers in their community, Turning Point Housing Society was able to overcome an obstacle to affordable housing, and transform that barrier into a diverse centre that meets the community's service and housing needs. In doing so TPHS is contributing to an equitable, safe, and tenable community in downtown Richmond.

III. Fostering a Culturally Inclusive Approach to Housing Design

Maynard Sonntag, President/CEO, Silver Sage Housing Corporation

Incorporated in 1983, Silver Sage Housing Corporation is a provincial, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the availability of high quality, affordable housing for off-reserve First Nations communities in Saskatchewan. Silver Sage Housing is owned by 15 First Nations councils in treaty core areas and manages over 529 units throughout the province.

As a First Nations owned organization, Silver Sage Housing Corporation is continually striving to provide for the needs of off-reserve Aboriginal populations. To better understand these needs, Silver Sage held a strategic planning session in 2011, allowing First Nations communities to voice their concerns and desires for off-reserve housing, providing Silver Sage with an informed narrative on where to focus their future work.

From this strategic planning session, Silver Sage heard from the community that there is a need for senior, family and student housing that could be developed with culturally sensitive partners. In response to these needs, Silver Sage has engaged in the construction of two buildings, an Elders Lodge, and Fox Valley.

Elders Lodge: Pisimkamik

Pisimkamik, which is Cree for Sun Lodge, is a 26 unit – 16 one bedroom and 10 two bedroom – affordable housing Elder's Lodge in Regina that opened November 2015. While other Elder's

Lodges exist in the province, the unique aspect of Pisimpkamik comes from the participatory approach and community partnerships utilized throughout the development.

Silver Sage hosted six meetings with Elders to determine what their priorities were for an affordable housing facility. From these meetings, four key themes were routinely articulated:

- 1) Security;
- 2) Natural sunlight;
- 3) Interaction with other residents, and;
- 4) Immediate access to basic services.

The most commonly voiced of these themes was security, as Elders wanted to ensure that they lived in a place that they felt safe. In addition to feeling safe, the Elders wanted to live in a building that offered them a lot of natural sunlight in order to provide a bright, natural and warm surrounding. It was also important for the Elders that the lodge did not mimic the isolating feeling of contemporary seniors centers, where rooms are tucked off the end of long hallways. Instead, they expressed the desire for a floor plan that would encourage interactions in common spaces, and facilitate chance encounters.

Also, the Elders expressed a need to live in a place where they could easily access basic services and activities in order to remain independent and active. These priorities provided Silver Sage Housing with a clear, locally initiated direction, which they were then challenged to incorporate into a design.

To satisfy the Elders' requirements, Silver Sage, along with Krate Architecture, designed a unique floor plan oriented around four short wings that connected to a central, circular two-story community space.



Krate was selected as the partner architecture firm based on their experience working with First Nations communities, and for their reputation for providing a high-level of community integration and consultation into the final design. The two-story circular design of the central meeting area created a fully panoramic window on the second story, allowing for natural sunlight to flood into the building. The circular design also allowed for a second floor balcony that provided residents with a nearly uninhibited view of the facilities common area, allowing residents more interaction and connectivity to their neighbors.

To address the issue of security, technological enhancements were incorporated into Pisimkamik to ensure safety, including a single entry access system, with a card lock to ensure only residents and guests were able to access the building. Furthermore, the selected site was adjacent to a shopping mall and within close proximity to a hospital.

Aside from its participatory approach, Pisimkamik is also an innovative project in that it adheres to the values of its tenants to provide a more welcoming space to live. This has included allowing Elders to have small pets in the building, which helps prevent feelings of loneliness. Furthermore, Pisimkamik also distinguishes itself from other seniors homes because, although it is technically an independent living facility, Elders are able to have family members live in with them. This has provided family members the opportunity to continue to care for older relatives while allowing the Elders to provide guidance and support to their family. This not only strengthens family units, but also upholds cultural practices.

In order to fund the project, which cost \$7.2 million, Silver Sage partnered with local Saskatchewan credit union, Affinity Credit Union. The partnership was established in part because of the bank's annual earmarking of \$60 million for community-based organizations, which Silver Sage was able to access. In addition to this, Affinity has also demonstrated a commitment to social housing initiatives by annually committing 6% of pre-tax profits to the community for this purpose.

Fox Valley Partnership:

Building off the success of the Pisimkamik Elder Lodge, Silver Sage is also working to provide housing to First Nations single mothers who are at risk of losing their children to Child and Family Services. To achieve this, Silver Sage broke ground in April 2016 to construct the Fox Valley facility. Once complete, Fox Valley will help mothers to keep custody of their children by providing housing and 24/7 in-house supports and counseling.

After participating in a year of programming, and gaining a sense of stability in their lives, residents will be able to graduate to more permanent housing. In total, Fox Valley will have 14 units – eight two-bedroom and six three-bedroom. Similar to Pisimkamik, Fox Valley will incorporate culturally sensitive and environmentally friendly design, which includes solar heating and a grey water re-use system.

With a price tag of \$4.2 million, Silver Sage has sought out financial support for Fox Valley. Part of this support is coming from the federal and provincial governments who are contributing \$1.3 million dollars through the Canada-Saskatchewan Investment in Affordable Housing agreement, while an additional \$500,000 is being provided by the provincial government via the Ministry of Social Services' Child and Family Programs.

By actively listening to their clients, and incorporating their voices in all stages of project operations, Silver Sage Housing Corporation is working to develop culturally sensitive and locally derived off-reserve housing for First Nations communities in Saskatchewan. In doing so, these projects are responding to a diverse set of needs highlighted by the community itself.

Regardless as to whether it is housing for Elders or for at-risk mothers, Silver Sage Housing Corporation is ensuring that the design and final product are effective by carefully and selectively partnering with the most appropriate organizations along the way.

VI. Converting Private Sector Homes into Affordable Housing Through Innovative Financing

François Giguère, Directeur général, SOLIDES (QC)

Established in 2000, Société Locative d'Investissement et de Développement Social (SOLIDES) is a non-profit affordable housing provider in Châteauguay, which is related to the Comité

logement River-Sud, the Montreal south shore housing committee. What distinguishes SOLIDES from other affordable housing providers is their strategy to purchase apartments in the private sector and then convert them into non-profit housing by means of innovative financing.

SOLIDES emerged following a recognition that the social housing sector in Châteauguay was failing to meet the increasing demand for affordable housing in the community, and that the existing tools available to local social housing builders were unable to promote meaningful change. These problems were exacerbated by the withdrawal of provincial funding for social housing in 1994, and an aging rental housing stock that had become increasingly inadequate.

Noting this housing environment, and that there were minimal existing means at their disposal, SOLIDES was formed out of the Comité logement River-Sud to develop affordable housing that was maintained and priced according to the costs of the building rather than the market.

An Innovative Financing Model:

When SOLIDES began their first housing project they only had \$50, yet they set their sights on a 26-unit apartment building in the heart of Châteauguay. With little financial capital, they were required to develop an innovative financing model and facilitate a partnership that could aid in the materialization of their ambitions.

SOLIDES began this process by taking their plan to the city of Châteauguay. The particular building they were interested in had a noted history of problems and was frequently visited by police and the fire department, and receiving complaints by neighbours. When SOLIDES proposed the idea to convert the building to affordable housing and argued that, given the chance, they could operate and maintain it, the city was extremely interested.

However, what SOLIDES believes cemented their proposal was both their proven capacity to operate in the sector as an organization of Comité logement River-Sud, and the unique financial model they brought to the city to finance the purchase. Realizing that they required a significant financial investment to purchase the building, SOLIDES developed an attractive investment plan that would limit the risk to the lender, while maximizing their return.

The financial model was structured by means of a pivotal mortgage guarantee, in which the lender has the opportunity to purchase a guarantee on the loan. SOLIDES then asked the city of Châteauguay to back 25% of the mortgage. With the city of Châteauguay backing a quarter of the mortgage, SOLIDES could then go to a credit union to take out a loan for the remaining 75%. In addition to this loan, SOLIDES also takes out a second loan of 25% to pay back the city. This model is attractive and feasible for the credit union because while they own 100% of the mortgage, they only assumed 75% of the risk – with the other 25% owned by the city of Châteauguay.



While this financial structure and first asset helped solidify them as a social housing provider, SOLIDES required additional buildings to accumulate the volume they needed to financially maintain operating costs. Without more units, it would be difficult for SOLIDES to hire the staff necessary to provide the level of quality they wanted. To address this, SOLIDES sought out to purchase a second building.

Leveraging Private Sector Homes into Social Housing Assets:

For their second building, SOLIDES targeted a 128 unit building worth \$800,000. Although the building had tremendous potential for non-profit housing, it was in a state of disrepair with one-sixth of the units vacant despite an affordable housing shortage. However, the group currently operating the building, an old veterans complex built in the 1950's, was incapable of refurbishing it, and was ready to transfer it to someone else.

SOLIDES was able to purchase the building through their previously established financial structure, and a grant provided by the Société Canadienne de Promotion Immobilière (SPCI), which also included funding for an in-house homelessness prevention program. As part of this purchase, SOLIDES has agreed to uphold the rental agreements of the previous tenants.

Although SOLIDES had amassed 200 units from these two social housing projects, they were committed to increasing their presence and the non-profit housing stock in the area. In 2010, following a financial assessment of their assets, SOLIDES was able to leverage their first two buildings to generate enough capital to purchase additional projects. This began to set in motion a cyclical process in which SOLIDES was able to purchase more and more buildings, as they accumulated more assets.

At this point, SOLIDES has achieved financial stability and is no longer dependent on the city for a loan or a mortgage. This financial liberty afforded them the opportunity to purchase and expand as they saw fit. With 12 acquisitions, two-thirds of which required no subsidies, and 410 units, SOLIDES is now the second largest apartment owner in Châteauguay – behind only the municipal office – and they are now expanding into Longueuil.

Not only are there now more non-profit housing units in Châteauguay, but SOLIDES rents are generally 20% lower than the market rate. These results demonstrate that even in the face of unfavorable economic situations and a competitive housing market, innovation can produce meaningful housing opportunities. By developing their own innovative structure that addresses the sectors current inadequacies, SOLIDES was able to achieve results, and provide affordable housing opportunities to the south shore of Montreal.

V. An Integrated Model for the Production of Social Housing in Paris, France

Remi Feredj, Director of Real Estate and Industrial Planning, Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens (RATP), Chairman of the Social Housing Subsidiary, Paris (France)

The Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens (RATP) is a state owned public transit operator in Paris, France. Established in 1948, RATP is the first multi-modal transporter in the world, and its transit systems include buses, tramways, and subways. Responsible for the annual commute of over 10 million Parisians and tourists, RATP has over 45,000 employees.

Of these RATP employees, 25,000 are blue-collar workers who are eligible for social housing in Paris. Due to the nature of their work, these eligible employees present specific social housing requirements. Since the employees are responsible for operating the public transit system, those who work the first shifts are unable to access their places of employment via public transit since it is not yet operational.

In response to this problem, the RATP Real Estate and Industrial Planning Branch, and its social housing subsidiary, Logis-Transports, are working to develop social housing for their employees that is close to RATP bus, metro and service stations. In 2014, RATP signed an agreement with Paris City Hall to construct 2,000 social housing units on its own fields and through its subsidiary, with 50% of those being affordable social housing and the other 50% to be sold in the private market.

In addition to addressing the housing needs of their workers, RATP is also equally committed to maintaining and modernizing its bus centres, metro service locations, and industrial buildings in a manner that promotes an urban form that is balanced and sustainable.

To achieve these housing and development goals, RATP and Logis-Transports are undertaking an extensive citywide program that will transform and modernize their stations and infrastructure. This process is guided by three visionary ideas:

- 1) Increasing the capacity of existing service stations, which includes more parking spaces for buses, and maintenance stations for trains;
- 2) Modernization of infrastructure, including updated infrastructure for new subway cars;
- 3) The integration of these stations and facilities into the urban fabric of Paris to promote diverse neighborhoods and provide social housing for employees.

An Integrated Approach to Urban Renewal:

To be successful, the program has required the development of innovative strategies that address numerous building restrictions. One of these limitations is the finite amount of available real estate in the city. In the face of severe land constraints, RATP's Real Estate and Industrial Planning Branch and Logis-Transports are unable to build facilities in new locations or expand on existing locations. Instead, they are evaluating what they can achieve by building vertically, and upon their existing footprint. In doing so RATP and Logis-Transports hope to develop a dense and functional mix in Paris that promotes diverse livable and workable neighborhoods.

However, given the scale and organizational structure of RATP, just because they own the existing infrastructure they are expanding on, does not mean developing housing on top of it is a straight forward process. Instead it requires that RATP carefully construct partnerships with multiple organizations. First, the real estate department needs to discuss the terms of development with the larger RATP company as a whole. During these meetings, the Real Estate and Industrial Planning Branch proposes site locations that could benefit from service modernization and the addition of affordable housing.

If accepted, the Real Estate and Industrial Planning Branch then develops plans to temporarily house the service facilities while they are being modernized. Because of the scale of these sites, some of which house 150 buses nightly, finding adequate alternatives, even temporarily, can be logistically complicated. This problem is again exacerbated by the limited amount of vacant land in the city. In response to this problem RATP has developed a partnership with municipal and state governments to temporarily occupy land they own.

In addition to helping RATP find temporary spaces, the municipal government also plays a key role in providing the appropriate regulatory framework for mixed-used, high-density development to transpire. Many of RATP's sites and service locations are not currently zoned for the type of uses that RATP suggests and that Logis-Transports requires to build housing. As a result, they have to work with the city's planning department to adjust the zoning to accept the scale and mix of proposed projects.

While the municipal government is helping produce the necessary regulatory framework, the federal government provides a major part of the financial contributions, specifically for the

social housing component. In France, the federal government has allocated \$40 billion Euros, nearly 2% of its GDP a year, to housing. Half of this amount, \$20 billion, is dedicated to social housing.

Managing Strategic Relationships:

Lastly, RATP and Logis-Transports have to work with the trade unions to ensure the interests of its employees are being upheld. To navigate this relationship, RATP has had to make sure that employees have adequate access to temporary service stations during the transition stage, and this can sometimes require the resettlement of employees. Furthermore, RATP works with the union in order to ensure that employees become tenants in the new social housing units.

Once constructed, RATP employees can occupy half of the affordable housing units, while the other 50% are rented to tenants proposed by the municipal government or State, as counterparts of their financing efforts. These sales then provide additional housing subsidies, and help finance future development projects. As a result of these projects, the RATP Real Estate and Industrial Planning Branch and Logis-Transports have constructed nearly 350 social housing units a year, and will achieve an estimated 10,000-unit portfolio by 2018.

One example of a building constructed under this program is the Lagny-Pyrénées bus depot in the 20th arrondissement. Originally an above ground bus depot, the transformation moved the existing services and maintenance facilities underground, and on top of the site was placed 30,000 m² of offices and a 4000 m² day-care and middle school to be completed in 2017.



Another project currently being undertaken is the transformation of the Jourdan-Corentin maintenance site in Paris' 14th arrondissement. Once completed, the old bus station will include 365 student-housing units, 191 low-income residences, and 108 private residences. In addition to these units, the site will also have a day-care and childcare facilities.

By navigating relationships with department and government partners, RATP Real Estate and Industrial Planning and Logis-Transports have been able to successfully construct affordable housing for their employees despite severe land restrictions. The projects have not only succeeded in housing employees closer to their work sites, but have also modernized and increased the capacity of public transit facilities that service the city. As a result, Logis-Transports and RATP are helping develop a new urban form in Paris that is providing livable and workable spaces for a diverse and growing population.

In Summary

The Canadian Housing and Renewal Association's 2016 Congress workshop, *'Strategic Partnerships Advancing the Development of Affordable Housing'*, highlighted five organizations and the varying partnerships used to overcome barriers to affordable housing.

Across Canada, SvN is working with the United Church of Canada to create affordable housing that provides a needed revenue stream in light of changing congregational needs. In British Columbia, Turning Point Housing Society has gathered like-minded organizations to deliver affordable housing on a large downtown site that exceeded the needs of a single housing provider. In Saskatchewan, Silver Sage Housing Corporation has engaged with First Nations stakeholders to develop culturally sensitive housing, while in Quebec SOLIDES provides affordable housing by purchasing and converting units in the private market. Overseas, RATP and social housing subsidiary Logis-Transports, are working with multiple organizations and levels government to develop thousands of units in land-strapped Paris, France.

The creativity displayed by these organizations to overcome unique political, cultural, economic, and social barriers demonstrates that there is no one-way to develop affordable housing. Instead, these five organizations reveal that multiple barriers present rather unique opportunities, and by developing partnerships, affordable housing can still be delivered even under difficult circumstances.

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