

Financialization and Housing

A Social Innovation Approach to a Better Housing System

Lab Report

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Terms and Definitions

The following list of terms and definitions is presented to provide the reader with a consistent and clear framework in which to read, assess and contribute to their understanding of the report.

Affordable housing - For the purpose of this report we have prioritized the shelter-to-income ratio (STIR) approach to measuring affordability, and focused on those in core housing need due to affordability conditions. “Affordable” is therefore defined as households that spend 30% or less of their before tax income on shelter costs.¹

Core housing need - A household is considered to be in ‘core housing need’ if it spends more than 30% of its before tax income on housing, or if the housing fails to meet adequacy or suitability standards.²

Decolonial approaches - Decolonial approaches, methods, and movements seek to disrupt colonial and settler-colonial logic and the seeming “naturalness” of racial capitalism. These methods and practices deconstruct Eurocentric forms of knowledge which perpetuate colonial power dynamics and instead incorporate the different ideas, social practices, histories, identities and beliefs of the marginalized and overlooked into how knowledge is produced and legitimized. It reprioritizes the perspective and values of those who had been colonized.³

Financialization of housing - The application of financial instruments by institutions and investors in local housing markets.

Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) - GBA Plus is an analytical process that provides a rigorous method for the assessment of systemic inequalities, as well as a means to assess how diverse groups of women, men, and gender-diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives. The “plus” in GBA Plus acknowledges that GBA Plus is not just about differences between biological (sexes) and socio-cultural (genders).⁴

1 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/46-28-0001/2021001/article/00017-eng.htm>

2 <https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en/TableMapChart/CoreHousingNeedMethodology#:~:text=If%20a%20household%20not%20living,of%20its%20before%20tax%20income>

3 What is Decoloniality? (2022). Retrieved December 23, 2022, from William & Mary website: <https://www.wm.edu/sites/dhp/decoloniality/index.php>

4 Government of Canada. (2015). What is Gender-based Analysis Plus - Women and Gender Equality Canada. Retrieved December 23, 2022, from Canada.ca website:

<https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus/what-gender-based-analysis-plus.html>

Institutional investor - Organizations that invest, including insurance companies, depository institutions, pension funds, investment companies, mutual funds, and endowment funds.⁵

Non-market housing - Housing that exists outside traditional market mechanisms. This can include ‘any housing protected from market forces, thus offering affordable rents and ownership in perpetuity’ and can include a range of ownerships, governance and finance models, including non-profit, co-ops and government-owned community housing.

Primary rental market (a.k.a. purpose-built rental) - Privately-owned rental apartment buildings containing at least three rental units.

Prototyping - This is a preliminary version of something. It is a design that is repeatedly tested and improved upon. It can take any form (e.g., idea, product, service, model). In social innovation labs, prototyping is a key approach to developing, testing and improving on an idea at an early stage before many resources are committed to implementation.⁶

Regenerative design - Regenerative design seeks to not merely lessen the harm of new development, but rather to utilize design and construction methods as positive forces so that new developments can work to repair natural and human systems.⁷

REIT - A Real Estate Investment Trust is a company that owns, operates, or finances income-producing properties.

Relational systems thinking: “Relational Systems Thinking is a framework that encourages strong relationships with each other and the land – an idea grounded in Indigenous knowledge”.⁸

Retail investors - Individuals or households who purchase housing units designed for owner-occupation as investment properties.

Secondary rental market - Rental dwellings that were not originally purpose-built for the rental market, including condominiums and other property types that retail investors rent out.

5 <https://www.nasdaq.com/glossary/i/institutional-investors>

6 MaRS Innovation Lab, Prototyping. Living Guide to Social Innovation Labs, <https://mars-solutions-lab.gitbook.io/living-guide-to-social-innovation-labs/doing/prototyping>

7 Hutton, P. C. (2021, January 25). The Shift from Sustainable to Regenerative Design. Retrieved December 23, 2022, from Sustainable Brands website: <https://sustainablebrands.com/read/product-service-design-innovation/the-shift-from-sustainable-to-regenerative-design>

8 Ivey Business School, Centre for Rebuilding Sustainable Value. Relational Systems Thinking: Innovation Lab Explores Accessing Knowledge from the Land. <https://www.ivey.uwo.ca/sustainability/news/2021/06/relational-systems-thinking-innovation-lab-explores-accessing-knowledge-from-the-land/>

Securitization - The process of creating a marketable financial instrument by merging or pooling various financial assets into one group, which can then be repackaged and sold by the issuer to investors.⁹

Shelter costs - The average monthly total of all shelter expenses paid by households that own or rent their dwelling. For owners, this includes (where applicable) mortgage payments, property taxes and condominium fees, along with the costs of utilities and other municipal services. For renters, shelter costs include rent, utilities and other municipal services (where applicable).¹⁰

Social Innovation - “In its simplest form, Social Innovation is an innovation that works to drive social and environmental outcomes. And yet, Social Innovation is so much more. Social Innovation aims to address the root causes of complex challenges and, if successfully implemented and scaled, has the potential to impact entire systems.”¹¹

Social Finance - “Social finance is an approach to mobilizing private capital that delivers a social dividend and an economic return to achieve social and environmental goals. Mobilizing private capital for social good creates opportunities for investors to finance projects that benefit society and for community organizations to access new sources of funds.”¹²

9 “Securitization: Definition, Pros & Cons, Example”, Investopedia, 2023. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/securitization.asp>

10 “Dictionary, Census of Population, 2016,” Statistics Canada, last modified January 3, 2019, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/censusrecensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menage033-eng.cfm>

11 Lapointe, S., & Nemtin, A. (2023). All Hands on Deck: Enabling Social Innovation. Social Innovations Journal, 17. Retrieved from <https://socialinnovationsjournal.com/index.php/sij/article/view/5583/453>

12 Government of Canada. (2015). Social Finance - December 23, 2022, from Canada.ca website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/social-finance.html>

Introduction About the Lab

The Financialization of Housing Lab was part of CMHC's Solutions Lab program. It co-designed and co-developed innovative, bottom-up solutions to complex housing problems that are of high priority with the National Housing Strategy.¹³ Our goal was to understand the impact of financialization of housing on affordability for those in core housing need, as well as to support the prototyping of solutions to address those impacts, and identify how those solutions could be implemented and scaled.

The lab began by identifying the macro-trends related to financialization, and then completed a deeper analysis in the areas of mortgages, home ownership and rental markets. Our scope did not include exploring the added complexity of on-reserve housing, assisted and supportive housing or homelessness.

We started with a process of problem definition, taking a systems-thinking approach to fully understanding the issues. This process engaged over 160 participants from multiple sectors through individual and group interviews, and secondary research including a comprehensive literature review of policy and academic documents, and historical datasets. The research findings were published in a [report](#) in December 2021 and were the basis for our next phase which focused on identifying, developing and prototyping solutions. We further engaged a diverse group of 60+ stakeholders who self-organized to formulate six “clusters” or working groups, to generate prototypes on specific problem areas. The SI Canada and CMHC teams supported with facilitation, coaching, research and coordination through the innovation process of problem definition, ideation, prototyping, and testing.

Using a decolonial lens to social innovation approaches and methodologies, the lab engaged community-based organizations, researchers, key financial actors and developers to work with the affordable housing sector, housing policy professionals and social entrepreneurs to ensure a balanced approach that incorporated a diversity of perspectives. Taking a relational systems design approach, the team aimed to build trust and relationships among participants.

¹³ CMHC's National Housing Strategy, 2018. Available online here: <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/nhs>

Impact of Financialization of Housing:

Before we could understand the impact of financialization of housing on housing affordability we had to define the term. We found that financialization held a range of meanings and referred to different things depending on who we asked.

In the end, we defined “financialization of housing” as “the application of financial instruments by institutions and investors in local housing markets.” We determined that when people speak about financialization, they are typically referring to one of three trends or dimensions:

- **The financialization of mortgages:** The structural transformations of residential mortgage markets associated with the development of mortgage-backed securities, the growth of the mortgage market and the rise of household debt.
- **The financialization of home ownership:** The rise of domestic and non-resident retail investors in housing markets and the growing reliance on these investors for new rental supply.
- **The financialization of rental markets:** The growth of institutional investors in purpose-built rental markets.

Although there are certainly other elements to the story of the financialization of housing in Canada, we believe that these are the most relevant to understanding the overall issue of housing affordability.

Our next challenge was to assess if the increased financialization of housing was linked to affordability challenges. If so, how?

Financialization has brought both benefits and drawbacks. It has facilitated a rise in home ownership rates, increased the financial well-being of many Canadians, stabilized the economy, brought investments and improvements to aging purpose-built rental stock and, some would maintain, increased capital for affordable housing development.

However, it has also contributed to market changes that have led to unintended and detrimental consequences, including rising house prices - a driver of wealth inequality between owners and renters; reduced security of tenure arising in part from the growth of the secondary rental market; and led to a decrease in the supply of affordable and below-market rental units.

The long-term impacts of wealth inequality, lack of security of tenure for renters, and decreased supply of affordable housing for those in core housing need has been significant and far-reaching.

Since the 1990s, the value of real estate as a share of total household assets has steadily increased, which has contributed to rising wealth inequality between renters and owners.

From 1999 to 2016, the median net worth of homeowners (measured in constant dollars) more than doubled, whereas the median net worth of renters remained negligible.¹⁴ Wealth inequality results in limited opportunities for upward social and economic mobility for those with lower incomes. This, in turn, contributes to social exclusion, poverty, and marginalization, which can have negative impacts on health, education, and social cohesion.

The associated increase in wealth has allowed many homeowners to purchase income properties as investments rather than places to live. A report by CMHC in 2016 reported that the secondary rental market increased to 49.5 %.¹⁵ Urbanation reported that investors' purchases made up half of all condo sales in 2017¹⁶, and our analysis leads us to believe this has continued to grow. There have also been indications that an increase in non residential investors may have contributed to both speculative price increases and the growth of the secondary rental market.

The rise of retail investors has meant that the lines between homeownership markets and rental markets are increasingly blurred, as a greater proportion of rental units are drawn from housing units designed for owner-occupation. Unlike tenants in purpose-built rental markets, tenants who live in secondary rental units face the unique possibility that their owners can evict them on the ground that they are taking 'personal use' of the property and unlawful evictions (purposeful or due to ignorance of the rules) are on the rise. The growing reliance of secondary rental units for new rental supply thus reduces tenant security.

14 Social Innovation Canada. Financialization and Housing: A Social innovation approach to a better housing system. https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Financialization_of_Housing_Report.pdf

15 CMHC, 2011 Census/National Household Survey Housing Series: Issue 11 — The Secondary Rental Market in Canada: Estimated Size and Composition, pg. 1, <https://assets.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/sf/project/cmhc/pubsandreports/pdf/68565.pdf?rev=960c40f1-b6d7-4cf0-ae6aa832159ee503>.

16 According to a report by Urbanation on the Greater Toronto Area's (GTA) condo market, investors' purchases made up half of all condominium sales in 2017. https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Financialization_of_Housing_Report.pdf

Renters make up the majority of the 1.6 million people in Canada who do not have a home they can afford that meets their needs. The most vulnerable are over-represented in this group: low-income and single family households, people with long-term disabilities, Indigenous people, visible minorities and sexual minorities are most impacted.¹⁷ Security of tenure is a key component of the right to adequate housing - without it renters experience instability, uncertainty, and even eviction (lawful or unlawful) which can negatively impact mental health, well-being, and community cohesion.

This insecurity is exacerbated when there are fewer and fewer options for places to go. The number of affordable housing units has been decreasing since the 1990s. The CMHC predicts that to restore affordability, at the current rates of new construction Canada will need an additional 3.5 million units by 2030.¹⁸

The decrease in affordable housing for those in core housing need, compounds existing social and economic inequalities. It is a critical determinant of health, education, and economic opportunity. Limited options can result in overcrowding, homelessness, and housing insecurity, which can have negative impacts on physical and mental health, social inclusion, and economic opportunities.

We end up with a vicious cycle: renters' costs are rising and individuals spend their income on accommodation and are unable to accumulate enough savings to enter the housing market. If they can find a place they can afford, they may be evicted easily, and if they are evicted the new prospects are few and far between.

What are the possible levers for change?

Understanding the impacts allowed us to identify areas where solutions ought to be developed. The “levers” for change included innovative approaches to ownership, financial models, regulatory tools, and greater alignment of housing supply and government incentive programs, policy reforms, and deeper coordination among stakeholders. Notable interventions to address the issues of wealth inequality and increase the security of tenure and supply of affordable housing are listed below:

¹⁷ Source census of populations, 2006, 2011, 2016 - chart 1.1 core housing need by tenure

¹⁸ CMHC, 2022, Housing Shortages in Canada: Solving Affordability Crisis.

<https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/housing-markets-data-and-research/housing-research/research-reports/accelerate-supply/housing-shortages-canada-solving-affordability-crisis>

Wealth inequality

- Shared ownership models that promote local and community-based ownership of purpose-built real estate
- Policy aimed at non-resident ownership, land transfer taxes and vacancy taxes may help to address speculation-fueled price increases.

Security of tenure

- Revision and alignment of tenancy regulations, improved education and enforcement to protect renters' right to housing that applies to both the primary and secondary rental market.

Supply of Affordable Housing

- Leveraging of tools and assets at all levels of government to enable the increased provision of more affordable housing.
- Increased alignment and effectiveness of municipal, provincial and federal programs designed to incentivize the creation and retention of affordable rental housing.
- Innovative uses of underwriting and securitization tools to increase the supply of capital for affordable and below market housing.

Some of the conditions that contributed to this crisis have already begun to change, for example, the interest rates a—major driver of housing prices—have risen substantially. Additionally, a number of policy steps have been taken to address speculative buying. The federal government has introduced the Prohibition on the Purchase of Residential Property by Non-Canadians Act (the “Act”), which prevents non-Canadians from buying residential property in Canada for two years.¹⁹ Similarly, the B.C. government introduced the speculation and vacancy tax, and Ontario introduced the non-resident speculation tax (NRST).²⁰ Additionally, a number of municipalities including Toronto and Ottawa have introduced vacancy taxes.

The housing market appears to be cooling - the CREA reported the actual (not seasonally

¹⁹ Government of Canada. (2022). Prohibition on the Purchase of Residential Property by Non-Canadians Act.

<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-25.2/page-1.html>

²⁰ Government of Ontario. (2022). Non-Resident Speculation Tax.

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/land-transfer-tax/non-resident-speculation-tax>

adjusted) national average home price was down 18.9% from the all-time record in February 2022 with sales activity dropping 40%.²¹ It is too early to tell how far the correction will go. Although cooling is generally a good thing, if the decline is too fast or deep there is a danger that individuals end up owing more on their properties than they are valued at, and will be unable to renew their mortgage or sell their properties for the amount that they owe on them. This is an example of the complexity of the financial and policy system that surrounds housing in Canada.

The housing system in Canada involves every level of government and spans multiple ministries within each of them. It is impacted by local, national and global financial markets and affected by social factors such as immigration flows, employment conditions, changing demographics as well as attitudes, beliefs, and social norms. The sheer amount of stakeholders, their unique roles, and their distinct perspectives is almost overwhelming.

The Lab worked to incorporate as many of these perspectives as possible. In line with our participatory approach to this lab's design, SI Canada both invited participants active on the issues and put out a general call for participation to the wider social innovation, social impact and housing communities. We ended up with a representative set of stakeholders energized to address some of the biggest challenges resulting from the financialization of housing. Consequently, a group of 60 participants from all walks of life gathered to understand the various manifestations of financialization in their communities and contexts, and self-organized to co-create potential solutions.

The clusters that formed included a group of Toronto based affordable housing providers interested in leveraging their existing assets to create and preserve community-owned affordable housing and community infrastructure, and two groups working on incorporating training programs in the construction and development of new affordable housing. Two other groups led by representatives of commercial developers formed to look for ways to address supply, one through increasing the available capital for development and the other through new approaches to partnerships. Lastly, a group of representatives from small municipalities including community and council members worked to understand how to meet their unique housing needs.

²¹ CBC. (2023). "Home sales fell 40% in February compared to a year ago, says CREA report". <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/crea-numbers-february-1.6779324>

Key Themes and Trends

Over the course of the lab, these six cluster groups were guided through the prototyping process by the SI Canada team with support from the CMHC. Additionally, the cluster groups met each other in plenary gatherings where they had the opportunity to learn, share and use the insights they gleaned from one another. Early into their work together, the working groups noticed how intermeshed and connected their challenges were, and were quick to draw on one another's experiences and models in their prototyping efforts. As a result, a series of overlapping themes and trends emerged.

Social finance as a key tool

Social finance emerged as a key tool in leveraging various pieces of the housing crisis. This ranged from convincing municipal leadership of the potential of social finance as a tool, to designing an affordable housing fund to attract institutional and retail investors. Every group was looking for innovative approaches to financing the development and retention of housing.

Weaving partnerships

Framing housing as a tool to attain “home” and “belonging” led to a sense of shared purpose. The larger plenary gatherings where clusters were able to share and learn together led to the weaving of deeper relationships and the emergence of new perspectives in support of one another's work. Some clusters ended up gathering outside the formal lab programming to exchange ideas, introduce one another to new networks, and even transferred goals and deliverables aimed at one set of players to another when tweaking and testing gave unexpected results.

Multi-solve approaches

Taking a decolonial, regenerative approach to the lab meant that environmental considerations and climate change took center stage alongside social and economic goals. As part of the lab's design, the SI Canada team partnered with and convened organizations that take a multi-solve approach to housing and the social finance sector at Wasan Island in advance of the launch of the prototype phase. Working with these partners ensured that a multi-solve, complex systems approach was a key component of any work engaged in as co-creators and supporters of the prototyping teams and clusters.

All hands on deck is essential

A lesson reaffirmed itself yet again and was compounded by the framing of a shared goal of enabling “home” for all: we are all in this together - we are all a part of the problem, and we can all be a part of the solution(s). The lab team, participants and wider stakeholders wholeheartedly embodied this approach, and worked together across competing intellectual, political and other interests and mindsets, to show up with the spirit of deep relationality, collaboration and trust. This is evident in the diversity of the prototypes that emerged from our lab.

Insights and Recommendations

Whereas the financialization of housing and the larger housing crisis presents a complex and wicked series of challenges, social innovation labs such as this one are able to bring together the necessary stakeholders and create environments conducive to problem solving, systems sensing, and gritty implementation.

A GBA+ lens was utilized in the development and roll-out of this social innovation lab. It is recommended that the direct impact of solutions to BIPOC and underserved communities be better measured to ensure outcomes are indeed achieving established project and program goals and objectives.

The lab underscored the opportunity to pursue social finance pathways as viable solutions to increase the supply of affordable housing, specifically those that incorporate government involvement to provide a tranche of concessionary capital to leverage private investment. This should be explored further through future social innovation labs and projects. However, there is a need to balance expectations of social finance and impact investment solutions and the responsibility imposed on community and philanthropic organizations with that of developers, and the role of government agencies to implement effective regulations and policy regimes to solve housing issues.

The lab engaged stakeholders across the ecosystem and in doing so revealed challenges and opportunities in different domains. One of the key observations revolves around the important role municipalities can play in addressing the housing crisis. By sharing best practices, better evaluation efforts, access to data, and actively engaging all levels of

government, municipalities can build their internal capacities and benefit from the removal of barriers to financing for a more affordable housing supply.

Every level of government owns real estate assets and has jurisdiction over how that land ought to be used and yet their policies and programs are not working in unison. If each level of government were to coordinate and work together towards the provision of more affordable housing supply based on the learnings from the Grey-Bruce cluster, we will see cascading cycles of social impact in this space.

Insight: Although there is general consensus of the need for affordable housing, confusion around the causes, and lack of understanding of the system, NIMBYism, and mental models were identified as challenges among small municipalities and for-profit developers.

Recommendation: Allocate resources for education, engagement and research around the issue at both a community and national level.

In working with Indigenous and BIPOC communities, the Purpose Construction and Keepers of the Circle clusters revealed that there is a great need for access to national philanthropic and federal funding. These can be used for workforce development support, the creation of more innovative shared equity, co-housing models, and also experimentation with models such as community land trusts. To support this kind of innovation, SI Canada recommends the creation of incubators and other ecosystem support entities that can prove as testing grounds for innovative purpose-driven models which can eventually increase the supply of affordable and below market housing.

There is also an incredible opportunity for social innovation actors and ecosystem builders to partner with existing nonprofits, charities, governments, and private sector individuals to take a multi-solve lens to the housing crisis. Funding that takes equity lens, gender lens, and climate resiliency lens, can be compounded to address these complex interrelated challenges in the housing space.

Insight: The creation of affordable housing can be a lever to drive other community-based outcomes including health, employment and skills development. Projects that engage the community as more than tenants create long-term local and community assets that have the potential to create deep and lasting impact.

Recommendation: It is important to consider all of the potential impacts when designing and implementing a strategy that will be sustainable in the long term.

Access to timely and appropriate funding came up as a barrier across the board. In this vein, SI Canada recommends the creation of impact and social finance funds that can provide efficient, flexible, and affordable financing. They can be used to acquire projects, provide equity like contributions in order to access existing programs such as the CMHC mortgage programs, provide construction financing, allow for seed funding which remains a barrier to many new innovations, and provide bridge funding in the case of projects that are already looking to scale.

Insight: Investors who want to support affordable housing and non-profits need financing but the numbers don't add up. By contributing to an independent affordable housing fund, that is focused on the need and impact, the government can facilitate the creation of an investable financial instrument that will provide the required flexible, efficient and affordable capital needed to acquire, maintain and build affordable housing units.

Recommendation: Pilot an affordable housing fund that focuses on the needs of the non-market sector.

Capacity building is required for the affordable housing sector to grow and innovate and meet the demand of the current crisis. This includes financial literacy and impact measurement and connecting back to the sustainable development goals. There is a growing number of corporate and other entities and potential investors who are more interested in ESG investing. In order to tap into this potential avenue of finance, better impact measurement strategies and tools need to be developed and applied to the housing space.

Insight: There are many community-based organizations that have real estate and would like to be involved in the solutions, but we could find only one incubator that supports learning and project development.

Recommendation: Invest in affordable housing incubators that can support the development of skills and projects.

The need to continue convening and gathering all stakeholders associated with the housing and connected sectors became starkly clear. An all-hands-on-deck approach is the only way to surface new challenges as we try our hands at more innovative approaches. These convenings will provide the necessary fodder to move from clusters of organizations working on these challenges into a model that is able to create and leverage systems of influence and eventually shift the needle on the financialization of housing.

We encourage the creation, funding, and support of more labs such as this one, and further suggest the creation of more spaces conducive to social innovation prototyping and co-creating to address these wicked challenges.

Prototype Solutions

Prototypes can be understood as preliminary or initial version of a product or service. They are developed to test and validate assumptions, refine features, and identify potential issues before investing significant time and resources into a final product or system. Prototyping can help to reduce risks, increase efficiency, and improve user experience by allowing designers and developers to gather feedback and make necessary adjustments early in the design process. Prototypes can take many forms, from basic sketches or mockups to fully functional models, depending on the goals of the project and the stage of development.

At the start of the Prototyping phase, we shared the insights from our research and the identified levers with all participants. The stakeholders were given the opportunity to self-select areas where they felt they could make an impact. The following image shows the different prototypes that were developed and illustrates how they focused on a few key levers and impact areas.

The prototypes looked to address issues of wealth inequality and lack of supply of affordable units through:

1. Shared ownership models that promote local and community-based ownership of purpose-built real estate,
2. How underwriting and securitization tools can help increase the supply of capital for affordable and below market housing by enabling purpose-driven financial models, products and services.
3. Leveraging tools and assets at all levels of government to enable the increased provision of more affordable housing.

The lab showed that the barriers were at times related to a lack of resources or the result of mental models and attitudes. The prototypes included housing funds and financing models, some of which incorporated training, as well as tool kits, engagement activities and frameworks to shift attitudes and behavior. This section introduces the prototyping work of each of the clusters and the potential next steps in their trajectories.

Interventions in the Housing System

Levers of Change



FOH Lab Projects / Prototypes



Project Components



Public Investment Tool

Challenge: Lack of private capital to address the supply of affordable housing across Canada

Lever: Innovative uses of underwriting and securitization tools to increase the supply of capital for affordable and below market housing.

Prototype: Affordable Housing Public Investment Tool

Roadmap Report:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_realpac_publicinvestmenttool_cluster_2-1.pdf

This cluster specifically looked at how to create *a public market vehicle that will allow ordinary Canadian residents and Canadian institutions to invest in affordable rental income producing housing projects across the country.*

Public Investment Real Estate Investment (REITs) Trusts and Mortgage Investment Corporations (MICs) have both been shown to be effective financial instruments for shifting capital to the creation and retention of market-based rental units. Timely access to affordable capital has been identified as one of the barriers to the creation and retention of affordable rental housing units in Canada. Is it possible that REITs or MICs could be tailored to be vehicles for investment by market/profit, below/not for profit players that could work in regions throughout the country to accommodate local conditions? And if so, are there additional interventions and incentives (tax, land, zoning) that would be required for them to be successful?

The solution: Noticing the current social friction between naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), and the need to repair and upgrade older buildings or redevelop existing buildings, and intensify the sites to create more options for Canadians, the REALPAC cluster wanted to be a part of the solution by exploring how the private sector can provide capital that could go towards increasing the supply of affordable housing across the country. Addressing a lack of capital in the affordable housing sector, this cluster looked to create an innovative investment vehicle that would be accessible to institutional and retail investors. Given the scope of challenges being addressed, the work of this cluster engaged with *innovative approaches to increasing affordable housing supply.*

The feasibility of an Affordable Housing Public Investment Tool was explored and it was

realized that such a model could not practically be created due to current market conditions. Utilizing the insights gleaned, the REALPAC-led cluster pivoted focus to how they can encourage an affordable housing contribution portfolio within REALPAC members that own apartment buildings.

Potential & next steps: A target achievement of this cluster is for REALPAC members to establish a division to increase the share of affordable units, resulting in the addition of 100 affordable rental units for households in need.

The REALPAC cluster is looking to scale its social and environmental impact by incorporating ESG standards for the REALPAC member REITs and companies who commit to keeping a percentage of the apartments they have in their investment portfolios affordable. This could provide a framework for reducing their emissions, looking ahead at net zero buildings and considerations of equity, diversity and inclusion in their staffing and operations.

Creating Community Wealth Through Housing

Challenge: Lack of affordable housing supply and wealth inequality

Lever: Innovative approaches to underwriting and securitization to support new financial models, products and services to increase the supply of capital for affordable and below market housing.

Prototype: Affordable Housing Fund

Roadmap Report:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_communitywealth_cluster_2-1.pdf

The starting point of the Toronto Community Wealth working group was a shared value that housing solutions inclusive of homelessness and households in core housing need will require the non-market sector, and the communities they serve, in the driver's seat. Nonprofit leaders along with allies in government and finance, convened around their common mission of creating housing and community infrastructure inclusive of the most marginalized.

Many Toronto nonprofits started decades ago as settlement houses, churches, soup kitchens, hostels, and safe havens for the disenfranchised. They purchased buildings and

established physical places of welcome and refuge. Today, these same nonprofits are sitting on real estate assets in active use for community housing, service, and enterprises. Indeed, at an initial meeting, the small cluster of seven nonprofit organizations calculated that they jointly own over \$1 billion in public benefit real estate assets.

Non-market organizations face unique challenges when trying to retain, acquire and develop affordable housing, and these challenges vary depending on the type of housing they provide. Those who are serving the most vulnerable face funding challenges- e.g., they can not access financing, their properties are not considered an asset, time delays, they can not work quickly enough or lose deals in acquisition.

Their key question for the duration of the lab was how can non-market players with existing real estate assets use land, unutilized land value or other accumulated equity of their real estate assets, to create or preserve community-owned affordable housing and community infrastructure – thereby creating a pathway for community wealth building, sustainability, and autonomy. In exploring this question, this cluster’s work connected to the levers around *reducing wealth inequality and using innovative models to boost affordable housing supply*. To this end, the group explored a number of different options including a shared guarantee process, collaborative investment funds, and approaches to co-financing.

It was clear that what the non-market players really needed was access to efficient, flexible, affordable capital. The nature of that capital, however, varied. It depended on where they were in the acquisition, retention, and development management cycle, what kind of affordable housing they were providing - where they landed on the affordability continuum, their organizational capacity and the requirements of the specific project.

Non-markets needed financing for different reasons, some could not access capital quickly enough and were losing deals, some had the income to service debt but could not meet the financiers or CMHC’s required ratios, and others working in deep affordability did not have the income to service debt. Others faced liquidity challenges, millions of dollars tied up in shared equity second mortgages or existing property that they could not leverage.

The solution: The group joined forces with members from the cluster group that was working on a public investment tool for affordable housing, and began exploring possible fund structures that would allow for both the flexibility needed on the nonprofit side with the risk and return profile required by investors. They looked to target a “bond like” modest return with a low risk that would balance the need for long-term patient capital with investors’ desire for income and liquidity. Inspired by the success of the social bonds in the U.S., the group modeled combining government “concessionary capital” and the benefits

of securitization with a portfolio approach to lending.

The result was a prototype for a \$500M - \$1B Affordable Housing Fund that would include 10% first loss, concessionary capital from government sources with philanthropic, institutional, and eventually retail investors.

Potential & next steps: The Affordable Housing Fund would allow needed efficient, affordable, flexible capital to flow to non-profit housing providers so that they could acquire, develop and retain affordable housing units along the continuum. It plans to do this, in part by creating a fund that is large and secure enough for accredited and larger institutional investors to participate in while maintaining focus on the needs of the sector. By providing “cradle to grave” financing and support, the fund would be able to balance the risk and return and impact of the entire portfolio. Early modeling assumed an average 30% per unit contribution of \$100,000, which could be augmented with available mortgage lending to enable 1000 units.

The next steps include verifying the demand with the non-profit sector and financial modeling to create a model portfolio. They intend to create a systems map to articulate how this fund will fit with existing programs and funds, and identify potential partners. The concept will be verified or “field tested” with the sector and seed investors. Their final step will be to identify and approach government partners.

Purpose Construction Cluster

Challenge: Wealth inequality and supply of affordable housing

Lever: Shared ownership models that promote local and community-based ownership of purpose-built real estate and innovative uses of underwriting and securitization tools to increase the supply of capital for affordable and below market housing.

Prototype: Shared Equity Mortgage Model

Roadmap Report:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_purposeconstruction_cluster_2.pdf

The Purpose Construction cluster explored how the Purpose Homes prototype might be able to leverage a Shared Equity Mortgage model to create a scalable model for the development of affordable single family housing and create training and employment opportunities for people (particularly BIPOC communities) with barriers to employment

while avoiding a long-term reliance on government funding models. This cluster's work connects back to the *levers around reducing wealth inequality and increasing the supply of affordable housing through innovative models.*

Solution: The Purpose Homes model provides a down payment of 25% of the value of the home upfront and, as a result, becomes an investor and co-owner of that home. A low-income family is able to purchase the home at 75% of the listed cost, lowering monthly mortgage payments and removing the significant upfront barrier of a down payment.

Potential & next steps: As a shared equity mortgage fund, Purpose Homes anticipates the pilot project will also serve as a demonstration of the model, hopefully attracting future partnership opportunities for key partners such as the City of Winnipeg, as well as potential investment partners for future scaling. There is potential for national scaling once it has reached the annual investment requirement at a scale that allows access to investment through larger funds such as the CMHC Shared Equity Mortgage Fund. They will then partner with social enterprises as well as trades and training organizations across Canada to create affordable homeownership opportunities for low-income families using the Purpose Homes model. The model will be tweaked and pivoted as necessary to allow for spreading, scale-up, or replication.

The Purpose Homes' cluster aims to scale its Shared Equity Mortgage Prototype in 2023-2028 by attracting catalytic investments to provide the capital needed to provide second mortgages on 49 homes and develop the program enough to be able to construct 20 homes annually. The most significant barriers in the way of their progress remain access to funding and fluctuation in the price and supply of construction materials. The annual revenue requirement for most mid-to-large scale investment schemes doesn't apply to small developers like Purpose Construction. Continued inflation, material cost fluctuations and instability in the housing market create challenging conditions for scaling.

Sustainable Construction Cluster

Challenge: Lack of affordable housing supply and wealth inequality

Lever: Innovative approaches to underwriting and securitization to support new financial models, products and services to increase the supply of capital for affordable and below market housing.

Prototype: Community-based social enterprise operating a modular, passive house construction, training and retail facility.

Roadmap Report:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_sustainableconstruction_cluster_2.pdf

The Keepers of the Circle led this cluster focused on the importance of Sustainable Construction methods based on inspiration and support from Indigenous models. They created three community-based social enterprises operating a modular, passive home construction, training and retail facility in Northern Ontario. Their dual purpose through this model is to build skills for Indigenous women in passive home construction, and through this process *increase the supply of more affordable units while reducing wealth inequality.*

The solution: EcoBuild North offers sustainable, renewable and natural materials and techniques while providing the training and employment space to build long-term capacity for the green construction revolution. The EcoReno training programs aim to renovate six affordable housing units in years 1 and 2, increasing that number to 18 by year 4. An EcoMap building systems facility has been designed to produce up to 150 homes/per year. Production is set to begin in 2024 and by 2027 full production capacity will be achieved. The EcoBuild North Social enterprise will direct a percentage of proceeds to the development of new transitional or affordable housing units in the communities in which they operate.

Potential & next steps: The Sustainable Construction cluster is looking to scale through partnerships with interested organizations across Canada by identifying/replicating social enterprise stakeholder groups in other regions. They are looking to create regionally local ‘install and renovation’ teams as well as expand training and manufacturing hubs local to the ‘install and renovation’ teams. Ultimately this model can replicate the EcoReno training programs and social enterprise model in many other communities and parts of the country. Their new build/year (2-6 unit multiplex) is starting in 2025. Furthermore, the partnerships created through EcoBuild North will contribute directly to three or more alternative energy projects each year starting in 2024. To date, they have generated four full time jobs for Indigenous women in the Temiskaming district, trained 26 women in various trades and expect to add five full time jobs every year starting in 2023.

The cluster, through its three social enterprises, looks to continue promoting, presenting and expanding concepts and programs to increase awareness. They also want to develop regional and national partnerships in order to scale this model regionally, and eventually nationally. Some challenges to scale may be seen in terms of access to catalytic scaling funding, geographical distance, and communities’ perceived comfort and know-how of social enterprise models.

South Georgian Bay: Affordable Housing in Rural Communities & Small Municipalities

Challenge: Lack of affordable housing supply and wealth inequality

Lever: Leveraging of tools and assets at all levels of government to enable the increased provision of more affordable housing.

Increased alignment and effectiveness of municipal, provincial and federal programs designed to incentivize the creation and retention of affordable rental housing.

Prototype: An affordable housing [toolkit](#) that includes: housing definitions, strategies against NIMBYism, data tools and stories, and a social finance primer. An [Affordability Matrix](#), and other data tools and stories linking housing affordability to key employment sectors, such as hospitality and tourism, healthcare, and sectors targeted to seniors.

Roadmap Report:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_southerngeorgianbay_socialfinance_cluster_2.pdf

The South Georgian Bay Cluster was looking to address the issue of affordable housing in rural communities from a financialization and systems perspective. Recognizing that small municipalities face a unique combination of issues including price increases, vacation rentals, under-developed non-profit housing sector, and small municipalities' lack of funds to create new affordable units.

They identified that the housing crisis is affecting local businesses, particularly in the hospitality and healthcare industries, and sought to develop community conversations and tools that interrupt the current system of housing distribution and development at the municipal level. They aimed to increase collaboration between sectors and municipalities and to develop innovative social finance and housing models that are sustainable, inclusive, and value people-first housing for all. The main problem they have continued to address is the lack of coherent and equitable approaches to affordable housing in rural regions, including confusion over jurisdiction, definitions, and the complex development process, as well as NIMBYism blocking new affordable builds.

A key objective for them has been advancing the use of SDG #11 on the sustainability of communities to create an avenue to use housing data linked to key employment areas significant to a community's economic sustainability. This is a longer-term project to shift the

narrative about affordable housing from a justice and access issue (with Statistics Canada's core housing need measure) to also include an economic imperative to affordably house the workers that are essential to the community including those in health care (PSWs), retail and the hospitality industry. Their solution was not a model of housing but a model of community conversation that engaged the public in a cross-sectoral conversation increasing pressure for action and awareness of innovative new approaches to affordability.

The solution: As their flagship approach to community advocacy and engagement, this cluster worked on the development of a social finance tool kit that includes: housing definitions, strategies against NIMBYism, data tools and stories, a social finance primer and a pro forma case study demonstrating the way social finance mechanisms and government incentives can achieve affordability. The other core activity for this cluster was to put together and test an [Affordability Matrix](#), and other data tools and stories linking housing affordability to key employment sectors: hospitality and tourism, healthcare and seniors.

Potential & next steps: This cluster has the potential to significantly deepen its impact by connecting directly with other municipalities that experience similar challenges and share tool kits and case studies that have worked in other localities. They are also exploring what it would take to organize regional partnerships and strategies amongst municipalities.

The cluster is looking to scale its solution by broadening the menu of options available for rural municipalities to implement with collaborative community engagement. The challenges of accessing adequate funding for the replication of this work, as well as deepening relationships with municipal leaders and governance structures, in times of flux, remain present. In terms of the Affordability Matrix in particular, access to clean, usable data across geographies and government bodies also remains a barrier. The group will continue their work through engagement activities and look to develop connections to other municipalities and like-minded organizations. The Affordability Matrix further requires funding to support a data scientist and design.

Denormalizing of Development Cluster

Challenge: Housing supply and wealth inequality

Prototype: Series of cases, and convening

Roadmap Report:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_dofd_cluster_2.pdf

This cluster aimed to take innovative, just, and equitable ways of building that exist and

help frame them as the ‘new normal’ for development. Their focus has been on telling the stories of what is already being done and what is possible through a series of cases, and convening actors who can contribute to building the new normal. This aim connects back to the levers around reducing wealth inequality and increasing affordable housing supply.

The solution: Their prototype is a living framework co-created through case studies and conversations with developers and others in the sector. They intend for the framework to offer communities a way to evaluate projects and support developments that benefit the community or achieve critical goals, with supports like pre-approvals, risk sharing, or density bonuses. They also hope this will offer funders a rigorous, tested way to evaluate projects that allow for inputs into creditworthiness that represent other dimensions of project desirability in addition to the financial, and thus help to build a more just and regenerative distribution of wealth and opportunity.

Potential & next steps: The Denormalization of Development Framework Prototype cluster sees the potential to scale its impact by co-creating a formal framework and a set of tools for those who can take on projects utilizing the niche and innovative models that have been tested in completed case studies and also help developers evaluate their impact. They also foresee taking learnings from the previous phases of the Lab and directly engaging the network built through the convenings and collaboration to build relationships and focus on sustained capacity building. Their key goal is to support existing developers in low-risk experiments to make the transition to new sustainable and affordable development and ultimately support larger systems in offering advantages to those using new normal development practices, so it becomes advantageous to build on best practices and create higher social and environmental returns.

The primary outstanding question for this cluster is: “How do we anchor and sustain this work?” Currently, it is sustained by an informal collaboration of those working on new normal developments, interested in improving their projects and sharing for broader impact, SI Canada, and researchers. There are also larger emerging housing research initiatives, and the cases will help clarify the role of local and regional actors in sustaining the work. This cluster will continue to do the work while building the structures to sustain it in the long term. Creating a new normal for development will require leadership. Changes in interest rates and the economy could offer a policy window to advance just and sustainable approaches to development, ones that exist in the forms of prototypes but face systemic barriers to becoming the new normal. Their next steps are to articulate what’s possible and support those who are leading it.

Innovation Lab Approach

The social innovation lab approach provides a framework for addressing a complex problem through a systems lens, understanding the constraints and imperatives for different actors. The financial system that surrounds housing affordability is a complex system. It includes renters and owners, developers, investors, financiers and policymakers. It is influenced by market forces, economic policies, and individual beliefs and behaviors. Given the layers of complexity and the nature of diverse stakeholders, our team took a different approach to the lab design for our prototyping phase.

Honing in on the learnings from the discovery phase, aided by a relational systems²² design lens; participants in the prototyping phase of the lab self-organized around the levers for change associated with the supply of, and access to, affordable housing. The activities associated with the Prototyping phase of the lab allowed for a process and venue for the varied stakeholders - including community groups, municipalities, private and non-profit housing developers, provincial and federal agencies, and governments - to develop, prototype and implement solutions through a multi-stakeholder approach in clusters. The social innovation lab environment provided a neutral ground to work together and develop solutions, supported by research and facilitation. Given its nesting in the NHS Solutions Labs program, this lab's national context and structure allowed for the individual clusters to connect and learn from each other on a wider scale.

The diagram below illustrates a typical social innovation lab process structure. It starts with problem definition and the unearthing of insights associated with its manifestations in the discovery phase. This is generally followed by an identification of levers for change within the system, and the co-creation of solution ideas and their prototyping. Prototypes that show a potential for success are then tested and roadmapped for implementation and scale.

Whereas the FoH Lab covered each of these steps in a social innovation lab's lifecycle, it did so in a relatively non-linear fashion. Instead of starting with a definition, our discovery phase entailed understanding how the Financialization of Housing manifests in different contexts and the contested nature of definitions around it. In doing so, the lab was able to bring together stakeholders who were usually found on opposite ends of the spectrum and hardly ever in the same room. It enabled participants and the wider ecosystem to understand the complexity of this topic, as well as our shared embeddedness in the problem.

22 (Goodchild et. al, 2021)



Given this framing of financialization and its impact on the housing market, the FoH lab was able to put forth a list of recommendations and levers for change at the end of its discovery phase in its first report. Continuing its nonlinear trajectory, the prototyping phase was designed on the basis of decolonial design principles which engaged the following design frameworks and cues:

1. Relational Systems framework:

- a. What are the moving parts?
- b. Who are the key players?
- c. How are the moving parts and key players in relation with one another and the Land?

2. Human (core housing need) framework:

- a. Demographic/ethnographic mapping of folks in core housing need accompanied by persona building
- b. How are those in core housing need impacted by the way the system is:
 - i. Structured
 - ii. Currently operates

3. Regenerative framework:

- a. What can we learn from Indigenous Wisdom approaches:
 - i. To land and planet
 - ii. To community
 - iii. To home
- b. What can we learn from Traditional Wisdom approaches:
 - i. To justice, inclusion, equity and charity
 - ii. To safety, shelter and security
 - iii. To income inequality and community wealth

As a result of this framing, the FoH Lab employed a pedagogy of ‘flipping’, which often appeared as taking an “upside-down”²³ approach particularly when it came to lab design. The following diagram illustrates what some of these ‘flips’ looked like in practice:

23 (Ahmed et. al., forthcoming)

“Flipping” as pedagogy: the FoH Lab design process

From house —> to home

From technical expertise —> to community expertise

From speaking —> to breathing

From “managing” —> to facilitating

From “human-centered” design —> to regenerative design

From “systems change” —> to relational systems thinking

From discussion —> to dance

From owning —> to belonging

Source: Maryam Mohiuddin Ahmed, 2022, Caneolabs Experience, Riviere du Loup, QC

Using ‘flipping’ as our pedagogical approach, the lab engaged a relational systems thinking lens to move us into a state of mind that centered the ideas of “belonging” and “enabling home” as the core guiding principles in our work together. The lab’s first plenary gathering, therefore, started with a guided meditation on “what is home”, followed by a Miro mapping exercise on how centering “home” and a framing of “belonging” can enable “housing for all”. This is what it meant to flip the conversation from ‘housing’ to ‘home’.

In line with relational systems thinking²⁴ principles, the prototyping phase of the lab encouraged cluster groups to go back to the community and those in core housing need to truly understand the problems and how they manifest instead of relying solely on technical experts. In doing so, the ‘flip’ showed up as valuing different types of knowledge

24 (Goodchild et. al., 2021)

and expertise. In line with this approach, the SI Canada team acted as facilitators and cheerleaders for the prototyping teams instead of acting as project managers. Each cluster was provided a 'Coach' who served the role of a doula that helped the cluster teams "birth" their ideas into working prototypes. With regenerative design as a core framework, the SI Canada team ensured clusters took a nested approach²⁵ which saw the economy as a subset of society, and society as a subset of the environment, therefore seeing them as inextricably linked. As a result, economic, social and environmental sustainability were core guiding principles for all the cluster groups and are reflected in their models and impact frameworks.

Owing to the national scope of the lab and the online environment, different platforms and tools were used to convene and connect participants and stakeholders. Long-form online convenings are often difficult to navigate given the myriad distractions and commitments participants have to deal with alongside the core programming. Another limitation of virtual spaces is that a sense of community is often difficult to create when compared with in-person, live events. In this vein, continuing with our pedagogy of 'flipping', the launch event and five plenary convenings for the lab used music, meditation and other land and community-based practices as tools to nurture presencing and create a sense of shared purpose amongst the participants. This led to a deeper weaving of partnerships across stakeholders and the embodiment of an "all hands on deck" approach. This manifested as each gathering starting with music, and a shared moving of shoulders and jamming of heads together, instead of going straight into discussion. It also showed up as land acknowledgments that used guided meditation and storytelling as techniques for creating spaces where people could ground themselves, breathe together and feel a shared sense of purpose and belonging.

Using a decolonial design lens, and our pedagogy of 'flipping', the FoH lab focused on providing the cluster groups with the tools they needed to move from problem statements to solution ideas, and from solution ideas to working prototypes. This entailed ensuring that the voices of equity-deserving communities, particularly those in core housing need who often identify as BIPOC or/and marginalized according to GBA+ standards, were centered. This was, in particular, addressed in the 'flip' associated with viewing the community as 'experts' and as valuable (if not more!) as technical experts in the field. It was also ensured through the co-creation process, whereby some clusters chose to partner directly with communities in core housing need and have them as co-owners or direct beneficiaries of the prototypes.

²⁵ Nested hierarchies of priorities. (Williams et. al, 2017; Griggs et al., 2013)

**Community Wealth Cluster:
Affordable Housing Social Bond**

This cluster of nonprofit leaders along with partners in government and finance, convened to reframe the opportunity. With combined decades of real estate capacity developing “Financialization and Housing: A Social Innovation Approach to a Better Housing System”, owning and operating buildings, and real equity with a combined total of over \$1 billion in real estate replacement value, their common ground is mission alignment for housing and community infrastructure inclusive of the most marginalized.

The starting point was a shared value that housing solutions need to have the nonprofit sector and the communities they serve in the driver’s seat. The cluster’s outcome has been to start the co-design of an affordable housing investment fund to address their unique needs for efficient, flexible and affordable capital.

Learn more about this cluster:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_communitywealth_cluster_2.pdf

**The Social Finance and Housing Cluster:
Mobilizing Collaborative Action on Affordable Housing in Rural Communities**

The Social Finance and Housing cluster’s focus has been on creating tools and conversations to support municipal leaders, their staff and housing advocates to understand the local dynamics of the housing crisis through financialization and systems lenses. They have amplified local data initiatives to better understand the role of financialization and translate the urban focus of the Financialization and Housing Report to our rural communities. Their work has recognized how the dearth of affordable housing is profoundly affecting local businesses – particularly in the hospitality and tourism industries, and the health care businesses that serve our large retirement population.

Learn more about this cluster:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_southerngeorgianbay_socialfinance_cluster_2.pdf

Denormalizing Development Cluster: Creating the New Normal

Purpose-driven developments, which are often driven by the nonprofit sector, show what is possible, but the problem is that these prototypes are just prototypes, and represent a small fraction of the housing stock in Canada. The goal of this cluster, led by a group of researchers and housing consultants, is to take what is considered to be a niche approach to building communities and making it mainstream, so it becomes the new normal for development.

Learn more about this cluster:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_dofd_cluster_2.pdf

REALPAC Public Investment Tool Cluster: Affordable Housing Public Investment Tool

Founded in 1970, REALPAC is the national leadership association dedicated to advancing the long-term vitality of Canada's real property sector. REALPAC decided to join SI Canada's social innovation lab and form a cluster group to find private sector solutions to the housing affordability crisis. The cluster engaged members and partners from the private and public sectors to find a way to increase the supply of affordable housing and increase affordability in Canada by creating a model for an investment tool open to retail and institutional investors.

Learn more about this cluster:

https://sicanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/sicanada_foh_roadmap_realpac_publicinvestmenttool_cluster_2-1.pdf