

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON
RECONSTRUCTION

IV. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

Final Report of the Subcommittee

March 24, 1944



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EDMOND CLOUTIER
PRINTER TO THE KING & MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
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The reports of the Advisory Committee on Reconstruction consist of a Committee Report and reports by Subcommittees under the following titles:—

- I. Agricultural Policy.
- II. Conservation and Development of Natural Resources.
- III. Publicly-Financed Construction Projects.
- IV. Housing and Community Planning.
- V. Post-war Employment Opportunities.
- VI. Post-war Problems of Women.

IV. SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Attention was first given to the subject of housing through the machinery of the Committee on Reconstruction when a special panel, under the chairmanship of Mr. F. W. Nicolls, was set up within the Subcommittee on Postwar Construction Projects.¹ This panel held three meetings, and the report which it prepared on the nature of the housing and town planning problem in Canada was used as the point of departure by the new Subcommittee on Housing and Community Planning. In January, 1943, a separate Subcommittee on Housing and Community Planning was established by the Advisory Committee on Reconstruction. The Subcommittee met on only five occasions, but the meetings were so arranged that they comprised twenty-seven sessions in all.

Membership

The membership of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Planning was as follows: C. A. Curtis (Professor of Economics, Queen's University, Kingston), Chairman; E. R. Arthur (Professor of Architecture, University of Toronto); J. S. Galbraith (Town planning specialist, York Mills); A. J. B. Gray (Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ontario); B. H. Higgins (Professor of Economics, McGill University); G. S. Mooney (Executive Director, Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities); F. W. Nicolls (Director of Housing, Department of Finance, Ottawa); M. Parizeau (Architect, Montreal); J. M. Pigott (President, Wartime Housing Limited, Hamilton); S. H. Prince (Professor of Sociology, Dalhousie University, and Chairman, Nova Scotia Housing Commission, Halifax); J. d'A. Richard (Ecole Sociale Populaire, Montreal); C. B. K. Van Norman (Architect, Vancouver); with L. C. Marsh as Research Adviser. J. E. Mackay was secretary of the Subcommittee, with Miss E. Sheldon as assistant secretary in the later stages of its work. There were two changes in membership during the Subcommittee's existence. Mr. H. F. Greenway of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics was added; and Mr. J. M. Pigott withdrew before the completion of the Subcommittee's interim report.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Planning were:—

To review the existing legislation and administrative organization relating to housing and community planning, both urban and rural, throughout Canada, and to report regarding such changes in legislation or modification of organization and procedure as may be necessary to ensure the most effective implementation of what the Subcommittee considers to be an adequate housing program for Canada during the years immediately following the war.

Nature of the Report

The task thus defined is difficult and far-reaching, and would not have been possible without much co-operative effort on the part of the committee

¹The members of the panel were F. W. Nicolls (chairman), E. R. Arthur, C. A. Curtis, J. S. Galbraith, Ralph C. Ham, G. S. Mooney, Marcel Parizeau and S. H. Prince, with L. C. Marsh as research adviser. Mr. C. B. K. Van Norman was added later. Mr. Ham died in June, 1942, and was succeeded by Mr. L. J. Green, who served until the panel was dissolved.

members. Many of them formed panels at various stages in the work to draft recommendations on particular matters. The major conclusions, brought together in the summary, are the result of extensive group and committee discussions through which agreement was obtained on all the main principles in each field. The editing of the report as a whole was then left in the hands of the Chairman and the Research Adviser. The very heavy task of preparing the final text was undertaken by the Research Adviser, and the Subcommittee is greatly indebted to Dr. Marsh for this, as well as for considerable organizational work during the course of the sessions.

As the understanding of the task grew and the need for factual material became increasingly apparent, it seemed desirable to incorporate as much of the information as possible into an organized report. In spite of the widespread interest in housing and town planning that is apparent in all quarters, there has not been available in Canada a comprehensive treatment of the subject. This is needed for adequate public discussion as well as for guidance in framing legislation, and it is hoped that the size of the present document may have some justification on this account.

It has been thought most convenient to present the report as a whole in three sections:—

1. *Section A* is the main report, incorporating the principal facts and considerations (including the summary of findings and recommendations which follows hereafter). In this, three sections have been separated—on the background of previous and comparative experience, the dimensions of the housing problem, and legislative and administrative requirements—so that the reader concerned particularly with any one of them may turn to it directly.

2. *Section B* brings together subsidiary descriptive material on a number of topics, which have influenced the work of the committee, but which it has not seemed necessary to incorporate in the main text. These memoranda may also be of informational value for readers interested in the topics dealt with.

3. *Section C* is largely a statistical appendix. A reference index to all tabular material has been added.

Acknowledgment of Assistance. Mr. J. E. Mackay gave continuous and efficient service as secretary of the Subcommittee and of the preceding panel, and Dr. O. J. Firestone contributed unremitting labours as assistant to the Research Adviser in the preparation of extensive statistical materials. Special thanks are due to other members of the staff of the Advisory Committee on Reconstruction for a series of tasks involved in the preparation of the report. It is also desired to acknowledge the valuable assistance contributed by Miss Elizabeth Sheldon to the Chairman in the examination of recent history of housing legislation in Canada, Britain and the United States.

Thanks are due to members of the staff of the National Housing Administration for assistance at a number of points; and to the staff of Wartime Housing Limited for information and a special memorandum. Separate mention must be made of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, several branches of which (including Business Statistics, Population Census and Agricultural Census) contributed ready assistance in response to our requests. In particular the report owes much to the valuable material of the 1941 Housing Census, and to the co-operation of Mr. H. F. Greenway and his staff in making available for us a number of special compilations. Other contributions from several sources are acknowledged in the text.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	4
Summary of Findings and Recommendations.....	9
Section A.—MAIN REPORT.	
PART I—EXPERIENCE	
Chapter	
1. HOUSING LEGISLATION IN CANADA.....	25
Origins of urban housing in Canada. Publicly-assisted and private housing 1919-1938. Comparison of trends with Britain and the United States. The depression in the 'thirties. The Dominion and National Housing Acts. Home Improvement. War measures: Wartime Housing; rent control.	
2. HOUSING LEGISLATION IN BRITAIN.....	41
Assistance and subsidy policy between the two wars. Provisions of principal legislation. The record of houses built. Costs: interest rates, mortgage practice, economies of large-scale building. Principles applied in low-rental projects. Rural housing. Present developments and postwar plans.	
3. HOUSING LEGISLATION IN THE UNITED STATES.....	60
Housing policy and administration since 1930. Mortgage insurance and home ownership legislation. Low-rent housing under the PWA and the Housing Act of 1937. Rural housing. Housing developments since the war.	
PART II—MEASUREMENTS	
4. DIMENSIONS OF URBAN HOUSING.....	81
Definition of urban areas, and their relative importance in Canada. The trends of urban growth. City and suburban areas in the chief metropolitan centres. Types of housing. Size of housing accommodation in relation to size of family. Amount and distribution of overcrowding. Obsolete, substandard, and slum housing.	
5. INCOMES, RENTALS AND COSTS OF OWNERSHIP.....	107
Income divisions in urban areas, and their relation to housing policy. (a) <i>Rental housing</i> : income groups among tenants in the metropolitan areas. Typical rents among the lower third; and divergencies from rents within budget capacity. Standards of accommodation. Rental situation among medium-income groups. Regional differences. (b) <i>Home ownership</i> : Real property values and mortgages, prevailing levels, and regional differences.	
6. POST-WAR HOUSING NEEDS.....	131
Elements involved in estimates. The impact of the war, 1939-1943. Normal and abnormal city growth. Urban housing supply and policy. Components of the accumulated housing deficiency: normal and abnormal shortages; elimination of overcrowding; substandard and slum dwellings; annual normal needs. A minimum immediate program. Some comparisons of long-term post-war programs. Implementation of the program. Timing. Financial aspects. Employment.	
PART III—REQUIREMENTS	
7. TOWN PLANNING.....	159
The growth of urban Canada. The effects of lack of community planning: land use, facilities and amenities, municipal finances; rural aspects. Urban economics: the nature of blighted areas; the dilemma of excess land valuation. Reconstruction requirements: a three-level program. (a) National policy: functions of a Dominion Town Planning Agency. (b) Provincial governments: town planning agencies, enabling legislation, supporting policies. (c) Cities, towns and municipalities: planning departments and town planning boards; the implementation of master plans. Needs beyond legislation: town planning personnel, public education on town planning, civic co-operation.	

Chapter	Page
8. HOME OWNERSHIP AND RELATED PROGRAMS.....	183
<p>The National Housing Act. Requirements in the post-war period. Liberalization of scope. Mortgage insurance. Financial institutions: cooperatives, building societies, trust and insurance companies. Home Improvement plans. Industrial housing. Other administrative measures.</p>	
9. LOW-RENTAL HOUSING.....	193
<p>Introduction. Method of furnishing capital costs. Rent-reduction subsidy. Municipal housing authorities. Local taxation policy. Development costs and current costs. Community facilities. Powers of condemnation; land acquisition. Federal government requirements. Income groups eligible. Graded rents.</p>	
10. FARM HOUSING.....	205
<p>The housing situation in farm areas. Replacement needs and overcrowding. Household facilities. Improvement programs. Principles applicable to farm housing. Assisted home building. Houses for tenants and labourers. Farm improvement. Equipment and supplies at subsidized rates.</p>	
11. REDUCTION OF HOUSING COSTS.....	223
<p>Reasons for urgency. Income and rental levels; post-war competition for private housing markets; the efficiency of the industry. Components of housing costs. Methods of cost reduction. Interest charges. Wages and labour costs. Materials and equipment. Building practice. Organization of the housebuilding industry. The role of the architect.</p>	

Section B.—SUPPLEMENTARY MEMORANDA

APPENDICES:

A. Housing Trends, 1931-1941.....	237
B. Housing Costs: Regional Variations, and Trends during 1919-1942.....	248
C. Rent Control in Canada.....	255
D. Wartime Housing Limited.....	262
E. Co-operative Housing.....	266
F. Building Societies in Britain.....	272
G. The Farm Population.....	274
H. Farm Electrification Requirements.....	279
J. Scott and Uthwatt Reports (Britain): Summaries.....	283
K. Prefabrication and Building Techniques.....	297

Section C.—STATISTICAL APPENDIX

STATISTICAL NOTES:

A. Statistics of Housing Supply.....	305
B. Age of Urban Housing.....	309
C. Definition of Urban and Rural Areas.....	311
D. Income Statistics Relating to Tenant Families.....	312
E. Application of "Block Method" to Replacement Program.....	314
SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES.....	317
Classified Index to Statistical Tables.....	132
List of Charts and Tables.....	336

LIST OF CHARTS AND TABLES

1. *Charts.*

FIGURE	PAGE
1 Trends of National Income and Residential Construction Contracts Awarded 1919-1942.....	31
2 The Twelve "Greater Cities" of Canada with their Constituent Satellite Communities, Census of 1941.....	87
3 Proportionate Population Growth in Metropolitan Areas, 1931-1941.....	88
4 Overcrowding in Major Cities, 1941.....	97
5 Annual Average Earnings of Tenant Families, by Income Groups, Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	114
6 Families Paying Disproportionate Rent, and Actual and Proportionate Average Rent, Low Income Tenant Group, Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	116
7 Families Paying Disproportionate Rent, and Actual and Proportionate Average Rent, Medium Income Tenant Group, Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	117
8 Trends of Real Earnings and Wage Rates, 1919-1942.....	251
9 Trends of Wholesale Prices of Lumber and Cement, 1919-1942.....	252

2. *Tables in Text.*

1 Estimated Age of Dwellings in Urban Canada (as at 1941).....	29
2 National Income and Residential Construction Contracts Awarded, 1919-1942.	30
3 Residential Construction in Canada, England and Wales, and the United States, 1921-1939.....	32
4 Estimated Housing Requirements for Great Britain, 1931-1951.....	41
5 Housing Units Built with Public Assistance by Local Authorities and Private Agencies, England and Wales, 1919-1938.....	43
6 Average Public Housing Costs (Non-Parlour Houses), Great Britain, 1927-1935.	50
7 Description and Cost of Typical Units.....	50
8 Outstanding Funds Advanced by the FPHA to Local Authorities for FPHA-aided Projects.....	71
9 Principal Urban and Rural Areas, as Defined for Census Purposes and for the Present Report, Canada, 1941.....	82
10 Distribution of Urban Units in Canada, 1941.....	84
11 Relative Population Growth in Cities with Population of 30,000 and over, 1921-1941.....	85
12 Distribution of Population between City and Fringe Areas, Principal Metropolitan Communities, 1941.....	87
13 Population Growth in Selected Metropolitan Communities and Cities Proper, 1931-1941.....	89
14 Expenditures for New Construction on One-Family Homes and Apartment Houses, 1938-1941.....	91
15 Number of Rooms per Dwelling: Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and all Cities with Population of 30,000 and over, 1941.....	91
16 Size of Households in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and all Cities with Population of 30,000 and over, 1931 and 1941.....	92
17 Distribution of Crowded Dwellings at Different Family Earnings Levels, Major Cities, 1941.....	93
18 Average Number of Rooms per Person in Wage-earner Private Families without Lodgers, Grouped According to Average Earnings per Person, Major Cities, 1941.....	94
19 Overcrowded Dwellings in the Major Canadian Cities (Population over 30,000), 1941.....	96

TABLE	PAGE
20 Comparative Size and Accommodation of Dwellings Occupied by Wage-earner Families, Greater Montreal, 1941.....	98
21 Percentage Distribution, According to Comparative Size and Accommodation, of Dwellings Occupied by Wage-earner Families, Greater Montreal, 1941.....	98
22 Distribution of Households by Accommodation and Size of Family, and Comparative Prevalence of Overcrowding, Greater Montreal, 1941.....	99
23 Dwellings in Need of External Repairs, or Lacking Plumbing Facilities in the Major Canadian Cities (Population over 30,000) and in Urban Canada, 1941.....	102
24 Substandard Dwellings in the Major Canadian Cities (Population over 30,000), 1941.....	105
25 Income Boundaries and Average Annual Earnings of Wage-earner Tenant Families in the Low-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	111
26 Family Earnings Distribution of Wage-earner Tenants in the Low-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	111
27 Earning Boundaries and Average Annual Earnings of Wage-earner Tenant Families in the Medium-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	112
28 Family Earnings Distribution of Wage-earner Tenants in the Medium-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	112
29 Proportionate Rent and Actual Rent Paid by Wage-earner Tenant Families in the Low-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	115
30 Distribution of Rent Classes, and Percentage of Families Paying Disproportionate Rent, Low-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	116
31 Accommodation Conditions of Wage-earner Tenant Families in the Low-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	118
32 Comparison of Families Paying Proportionate and Disproportionate Rents, Low-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	119
33 Proportionate Rent and Actual Rent Paid by Wage-earner Tenant Families in the Medium-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	120
34 Distribution of Rent Classes and Percentage of Families Paying Disproportionate Rent, Medium-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	121
35 Accommodation Conditions of Wage-earner Tenant Families in the Medium-Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	121
36 Comparison of Families Paying Proportionate and Disproportionate Rents, Medium Income Group, Principal Metropolitan Areas, 1941.....	122
37 Average Annual Earnings of Wage-earner Tenant Families (Low-income Group) and Percentage Paying Disproportionate Rent, Principal Cities Proper and Fringe Areas, 1941.....	123
38 Tenant Distribution in Principal Metropolitan Areas by Cities Proper and Fringe Areas, 1941.....	124
39 Distribution of Dwellings by Tenure in Major Cities and Urban Canada, 1941... ..	125
40 Distribution of Owned Homes According to Value, Major Cities, 1941.....	126
41 Average Value of Owned Homes and Average Mortgage in 27 Cities with Population of 30,000 and Over, 1941.....	128
42 Increase in Employment of Salaried and Wage Workers, Metropolitan Areas, September 1, 1939 to June 1, 1942.....	132
43 Comparison of Peacetime and Wartime Annual Population Growth of the Major Cities, 1931-1942.....	134
44 Estimates of Public and Private Residential Construction, 1941 and 1942.....	135
45 Dimensions of Accumulated Urban Building Needs, as of 1946 (Actual Building Need and Minimum Program).....	140
46 Estimated Canadian Housing Requirements during the First Post-war Decade... ..	148
47 Dimensions of Canadian Housing Programme during the First Post-war Decade, Compared with those Contemplated by Great Britain, New Zealand and the United States.....	149
48 Some Comparative Distribution of Housing Programmes during the First Post-war Decade.....	151
49 Value of Farm Property, Classified According to Type, Canada, 1901-1941.....	208
50 Farm Dwellings Classified According to Need of External Repairs and Type of Exterior Material, for the Provinces, 1941.....	209
51 Farm Dwellings Classified According to Use of Electricity and Bathing and Toilet Facilities, for the Provinces, 1941.....	209

TABLE	PAGE
52 Distribution of Construction Costs of Average Housing Unit (Type Built under National Housing Legislation).....	227
53 Distribution of Tenant Households According to Rent Paid, Major Cities, 1931-1941.....	240
54 Comparison of Changes in the Rent Level and Income for Selected Cities, 1931-1941.....	241
55 Average Family Earnings in Major Cities, 1931-1941.....	242
56 Decline in the Value of Owned Homes in Major Cities, 1931-1941.....	243
57 Changes in the Proportion of Owned Homes, Provinces and Major Cities, 1931-1941.....	244
58 Hourly Wage Rates of Construction Trades and Common Labour for Ten Representative Cities, 1939.....	248
59 Mileage Rates on Lumber, Carloads, per Hundred Pounds, by Regions, 1943....	249
60 Indices of Real Earnings and Hourly Rates of Wage-earners in the Construction Industry and Common Factory Labour, Costs and Physical Volume of Building Materials, Canada, 1919-1942.....	253
61 Indices of Wholesale Prices of Four Classes of Building Materials, -Canada, 1919-1942.....	254
62 Rentals Previously Paid by Tenants of Wartime Housing Units in Five Selected Cities.....	263
63 Summary Statistics of Farm Areas, 1931-1941.....	276
64 Farms Supplied with Central-Station Electricity and Percentage of Dwellings in Farm Areas with Electricity, 1941.....	280
65 Possible Range of Dimensions of a Post-war Farm Electrification Programme for Canada.....	281
66 Estimate of Annual Expenditures of an Ontario Rural Electrification Program in the Immediate Post-war Period.....	282
67 Estimate of Capital Expenditure of a Farm Electrification Program in Manitoba for the First Post-war Decade.....	282
68 Net Increase of Dwellings, 1911-1941.....	307
69 Estimates of the Size of a Re-development Housing Program through the Use of Block Data for 22 Selected Cities, United States, 1940.....	315
 3. Supplementary Tables.	
70 Some Indications of Urban Growth in Canada, 1871-1941.....	317
71 Comparative Rates of Increase of Principal Urban Aggregates, 1931-1941.....	317
72 Increase in Urban Population, Absolute and Relative, Showing the Percentage Deviations from the Total Urban Increase for Canada, for the Provinces, 1931-1941.....	318
73 Urban Disaggregation Expressed in Terms of Communities and Urban Population.....	318
74 Urban Disaggregation in Terms of the Cities, Towns, and Villages which Declined during 1931-1941.....	318
75 Absolute Growth in Population and Dwellings, Major Canadian Cities (Population over 30,000), 1921-1941.....	319
76 Some Indications of Relative Importance of Adjoining Urban Areas of the Main Cities of Canada, 1941.....	319
77 Some Comparisons of Dwellings and Households in City and Fringe Areas, 1941..	320
78 Percentage Distribution of Dwellings Classified According to Tenure, for the 12 Metropolitan Areas of Canada, 1941.....	320
79 Percentage Distribution of Dwellings, Classified According to Need of External Repairs, for the 12 Metropolitan Areas of Canada, 1941.....	321
80 Percentage Distribution of Dwellings Classified by Dwellings per Building, Type, Rooms per Dwelling, Principal Exterior Material and State of Repairs for the Cities Proper, Fringe Areas and Metropolitan Areas of Montreal and Toronto, 1941.....	321
81 Percentage Distribution of Dwellings Classified According to Type of Facilities in Use, for the Cities Proper, Fringe Areas and Metropolitan Areas of Montreal and Toronto, 1941.....	322
82 Owned and Tenant Dwellings Classified According to Value and Monthly Rent, Owned Dwellings According to Taxes Paid, Mortgages and Terms Thereof, Tenant Dwellings According to Household Furnishings Covered by the Rent Paid for the Cities Proper, Fringe and Metropolitan Areas of Montreal and Toronto, 1941.....	323

TABLE

	PAGE
83 Percentage Distribution of Dwellings Classified According to Tenure and Value and Rent, for the Cities Proper, Fringe Areas and Metropolitan Areas of Montreal and Toronto, 1941.....	323
84 Dwellings Classified According to Facilities and Conveniences, Major Canadian Cities, (Population over 30,000), 1941.....	324
85 Dwellings with and without Electricity, in Need of External Repairs, Lacking or with only shared Use of Plumbing Facilities, Rural Non-Farm Areas, Canada, 1941.....	325
86 Farm Homes Classified According to Condition in Representative Areas of Saskatchewan, 1942.....	325
87 Farm Homes Classified According to Present Age in Representative Areas of Saskatchewan, 1942.....	326
88 Farm Homes Classified According to Condition in Representative Areas in Alberta, 1942.....	326
89 Farm Homes Classified According to Present Age in Representative Areas in Alberta, 1942.....	327
90 Nature of Housing Accommodation Provided by Dwellings Built under Part I of National Housing Act, Canada, 1938-1941:—	
a. Value of Property.....	327
b. Income of Head.....	327
c. Cross-Classification of Value of Property and Income of Head of Household..	328
d. Family Size.....	328
e. Size of Dwelling.....	328
f. Previous Rent Paid.....	329
91 Property Improvement Loans under the Federal Housing Administration, United States, 1935-1942:—	
a. Classifications by Types, 1935-1942.....	329
b. Proportion of Types (1942).....	330
92 Average Construction Costs for Housing Developments under the Federal Public Housing Authority, United States, 1938-1942.....	330
93 Dimensions of the United States Public War Housing Program by Acts, Administrative Agencies and Types of Accommodation, as of June 30, 1943.....	331