
The Viability of Converting Public Housing Projects to Tenant-Managed Housing in Spryfield



Jeremy Murphy
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Dalhousie University

Executive Summary



The Greystone public housing project in Spryfield, Nova Scotia was constructed in the 1970s in response to homelessness and lack of affordable housing. During the 1980s and 1990s it increasingly became the housing of last resort for low-income households. Although Greystone has a strong sense of community, issues of vandalism, crime, alcohol abuse and drug use persist. Such problems are common to many public housing projects in Canada, the United States and Britain. In an attempt to mitigate these issues, I propose tenant management as a possible solution over privately owned housing, privately rented housing and mixed-income housing alternatives.

Case studies on conversion of public housing projects to tenant-managed housing indicate that empowering residents through appropriation of housing management responsibilities can be an effective means of addressing socially undesirable behaviour in a community. Several prerequisites must be fulfilled before attempting conversion: the conversion must be needed, there must be sufficient tenant support, there must be adequate housing authority support, funding must be available, training must be available and the stakeholders involved in the conversion must be sufficiently capable of overcoming obstacles. Numerous obstacles are known, some of which can be addressed through stakeholder capacity building. Other obstacles are more difficult to address and require a focused and dedicated approach to overcome. Many of the obstacles to conversion can be overcome during the conversion phases, the steps of which are infused with capacity building opportunities. Greystone currently displays several indications of community leadership, competency and the desire for change. These are encouraging factors for employing a tenant management-based approach to addressing social issues in the community.

After appraising the social circumstances in Greystone, assessing the degree of fulfillment of conversion requirements and researching the processes for conversion from public housing project to tenant-managed housing, I make the following recommendations:

Primary Recommendations: 1) Conduct further research, 2) Build capacity for tenants and the housing authority, and 3) Raise funds to cover conversion costs. *Secondary Recommendations:* 4) Perform the conversion to tenant management, 5) Continue community group partnership, 6) Transfer management responsibilities gradually, 7) Perform semiannual evaluations, and 8) Renegotiate the management responsibilities contract annually. These recommendations aim to avoid shortcomings of other public housing issue mitigation attempts such as failure to replace affordable housing units one-for-one, dispersal of community members and introduction of middle- or upper-income households to the community. Although I recommend that tenant management is probably viable for Greystone, I also caution that tenant management cannot solve all the problems present in public housing. It may, however, sufficiently empower residents to have more control over their own lives, housing conditions and neighbourhood, thus ameliorating their future outlook and the health of their community.

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For many people the notions of ‘home’ and ‘community’ embody the place where they choose to live, the enjoyable environment surrounding their dwelling and the people with whom they choose to share those spaces. These are notions not merely of shelter but of a collection of physical, economic and social elements. Many people have a great degree of control over these elements: they can choose a comfortable place to live, with whom to socialize, the form their home takes, the means by which they choose to meet their basic needs, the amount they are willing to spend on home ownership or tenure and the area in which they wish to live.

Of course, many households do not have such control. A multitude of public housing projects throughout the world are examples of communities that accommodate disempowered households and socio-economically compromised communities. The Greystone Public Housing Project in the Spryfield area of the Halifax Regional Municipality is one such community.

In this report, I explore how tenant management strategies might empower residents to address the socio-economic problems present in the Greystone public housing project (Figure 1.1). I examine themes of healthy communities, resident empowerment and community development in order to recommend how the housing project might be

converted to a tenant-managed system so that present and future tenants have increased control over their living situations and are thus better able to ameliorate their communities.

1.1 Impetus for this Project

Although home to a strong community, Spryfield is often viewed as a disadvantaged neighbourhood. The United Way of Halifax has been working for over a year as part of the Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC) project with the aim of exploring and assessing approaches to locally-driven neighbourhood revitalization that enhance the capacity of individuals and families to build and sustain strong, healthy communities. It is hoped that by applying a variety of such approaches the Spryfield community will be able to rebound from its current socio-economic disparity.

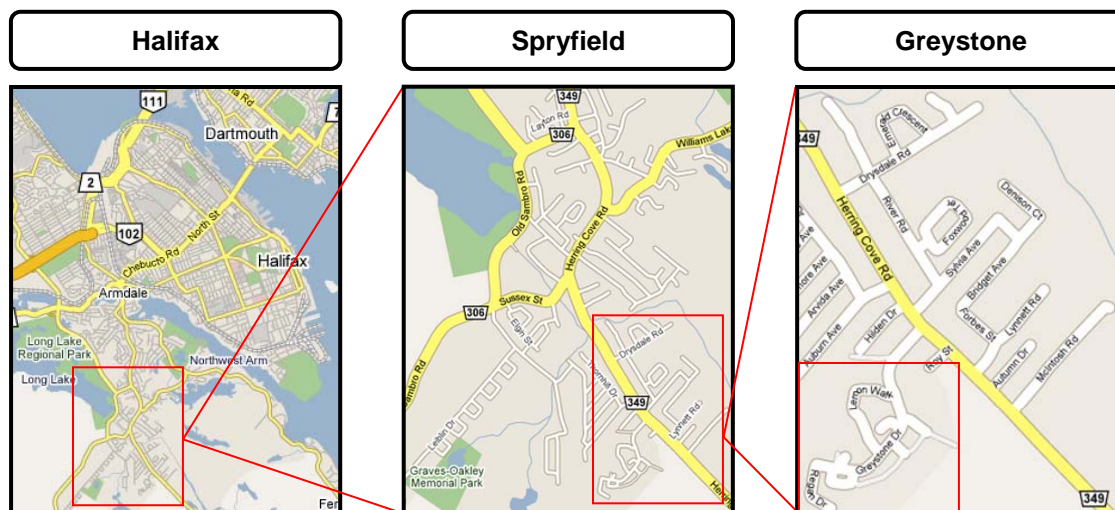


Figure 1.1: Location of Greystone Public Housing Project

ANC has held information and visioning sessions in Spryfield to gather resident input on characteristics of the area. These sessions have focused on polling people for their opinions on the current socio-economic status of the Spryfield community as well as on their vision for the area's future. A Residents' Coalition has formed to assess and act upon the outcomes of these sessions.

The ANC project has identified the state of the area's housing as a major concern. Rundown housing units and properties, tenants with compromised ability to choose their living conditions and insufficient housing options for low-income families are a few pressing issues in the community (Teplitsky et al. 2006). Residents associate these elements with negative social outcomes; there is thus a desire to create housing options that contribute to mitigating these social ills. Community groups speculate that were the housing conditions to be improved for those in greatest need, the entire Spryfield community would benefit (Teplitsky et al. 2006).



My research aims to complement the objectives of The United Way of Halifax and Action for Neighbourhood Change in Spryfield by assessing the viability of converting the Greystone public housing project to tenant-managed housing. Greystone is host to a concentration of socially undesirable behaviour and many housing units are in various states of disrepair, inside and out. My recommendations seek to mitigate housing-related shortcomings in this community via tenant management solutions that empower residents. It is hoped that if the recommendations are implemented the socio-economic situation in the project will improve. This would benefit not only tenants of Greystone but also greater Spryfield; an area well-known for its stigma of destitution and criminal activity.

1.2 Research and Analysis Method

I have performed a literature review of public housing history, tenant management models, requirements for healthy communities and practices in converting public housing to tenant-managed housing. Visits to Spryfield and the Greystone public housing project have supplied me with much of my background materials. Interviews with representatives of community groups working in Spryfield provided me with crucial

background information as well as input for my recommendations. By synthesizing these streams of information, I evaluated whether the Greystone public housing project is suitable for transformation to a tenant-managed project. My recommendations for such a transformation stem from this evaluation. My research and recommendations formulation method is summarized in Figure 1.2.

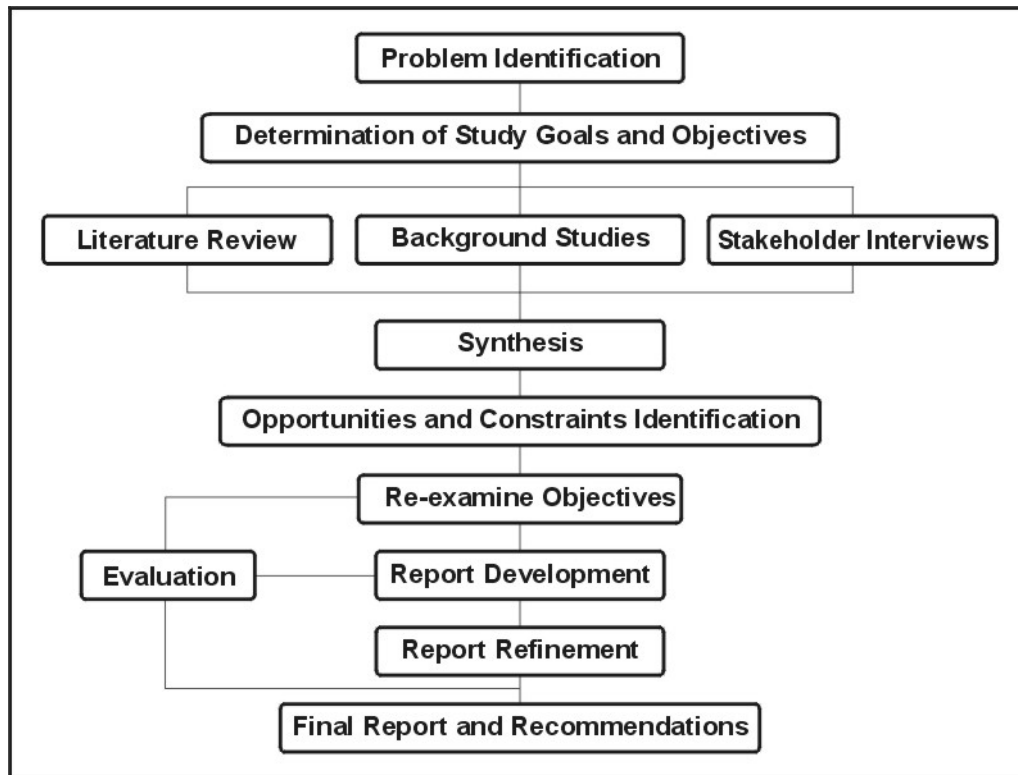


Figure 1.2: Research and Analysis Method

The project outputs are series of 8 recommendations on what Greystone must accomplish in order to consider tenant-managed housing solutions and on how the conversion process should proceed if Greystone is adequately prepared for such a conversion.

1.3 Healthy Communities

Individuals and families with control over their living conditions have the power to create healthy communities. Such communities have low instances of violence and crime, easy access to services and amenities and access to a variety of experiences and resources; the community is thus generally supportive of its inhabitants. The relationship between a

community and its residents is symbiotic: a healthy community encourages healthy individuals and families and vice versa.

When residents lack the power of choice in their lifestyles and living arrangements, their ability to affect their future and the future of their community is compromised (Brown and King 2005). When many members of a community lack influence over the elements that shape living conditions in a neighbourhood, detrimental social outcomes such as violence, crime, drug abuse, isolation and prostitution can result. Where these problems already exist, it is useful to determine what constitutes a healthy community and which mechanisms are required to achieve one given the local context.

Hancock and Duhl (1986) identify the following factors as among those essential to healthy communities:

- A clean, safe, high quality physical environment;
- A strong, mutually-supportive and non-exploitative community;
- A high degree of public participation in, and control over, the decisions affecting one's life, health and well-being.

If a community is deficient in one of these areas it does not support an entirely healthy living arrangement for its residents. In such instances mitigation strategies should be developed and employed to correct any deficiencies so as to prevent further community degradation.

1.4 Resident Empowerment

One measure of the health of a community is resident satisfaction. People experience increasing satisfaction as their ability to choose, their ability to effect change and their experience of positive outcomes from their decisions increase (Brown and King 2005). Having the ability to choose or affect where one lives, how one lives and the community in which one lives is an indication of



resident empowerment. Living in a healthy community with the power to affect one's future is highly satisfying.

Many communities exist in which residents have little power to affect their own current circumstances, let alone the future of their community. In these communities, dissatisfied residents require mechanisms by which they may become empowered to choose and affect their living conditions



Spryfield Background

Spryfield is a suburb of Halifax, located on the Herring Cove Road (Figure 1.1). Established in 1769 and annexed by the city of Halifax in 1969, it has a proud history and a strong sense of community. Until recently, housing in Spryfield was relatively homogeneous with people of various socio-economic classes as neighbours (Teplitsky et al. 2006). This changed in the early 1970s when low-income rental housing and the Greystone public housing development were introduced. Over the past three decades there has been increased separation between low-income housing and affluent areas in Spryfield (Spryfield Community Action Coalition -SCAC, pers.comm.).

2.1 Spryfield Demographics

Although it is difficult to determine demographic statistics for Greystone specifically (SCAC, Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority - MRHA, Greystone Tenants' Association - GTA, pers. comm.), it is useful to consider an overview of such statistics for Spryfield to appreciate the broader community context. I used Nova Scotia Community Counts Program (CCP) data to compile a synopsis of demographic characteristics for Spryfield. I used census data collected by Statistics Canada (also provided by CCP) to compile information on the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and Nova Scotia. The CCP information is more accurate than Statistics Canada census data as it focuses on specific Nova Scotia neighbourhoods as opposed to federally defined census tracts which may include portions of different neighbourhoods in the same

tract. Finally, I compared my findings with those of the Spryfield Community Profile (Teplitsky et al. 2006) for agreement.

Family Structure

Compared to HRM and greater Nova Scotia, a very high percentage of families in Spryfield are headed by a single parent (Figure 2.1). Spryfield has a young population and large families are common (SCAC, pers. comm.). The population of the area has been decreasing over the past two decades to the point where it is about half of what it was in 1986 (Teplitsky et al. 2006).

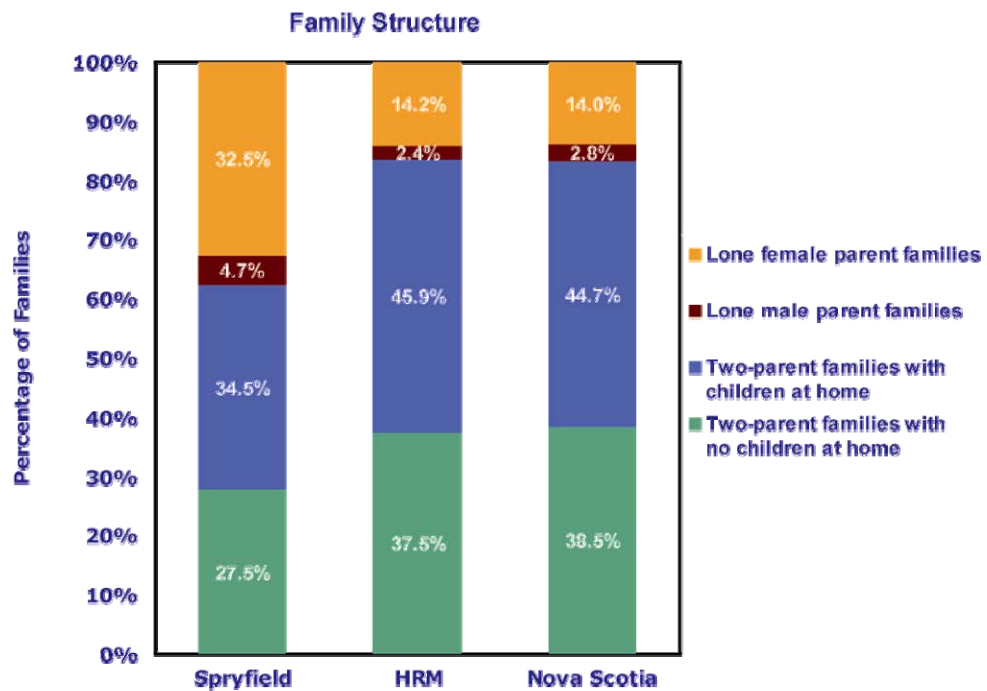


Figure 2.1: Community Counts Project Data

Adult Labour Force

The percentage of population not in the labour force is quite high in Spryfield (Figure 2.2). As the population of the area is young, the majority of this segment is not made up of retired people, as may be the case in urban HRM and greater Nova Scotia.

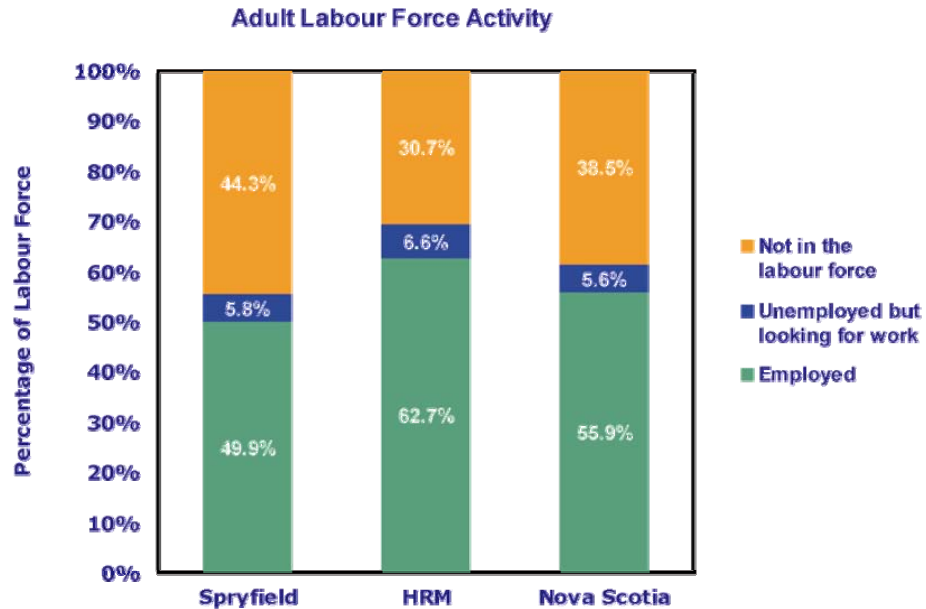


Figure 2.2: Community Counts Project

Visible Minorities

About one-eighth of Spryfield’s residents are visible minorities (Figure 2.3). More immigrants choose to live in Spryfield than in the rest of HRM or the province.

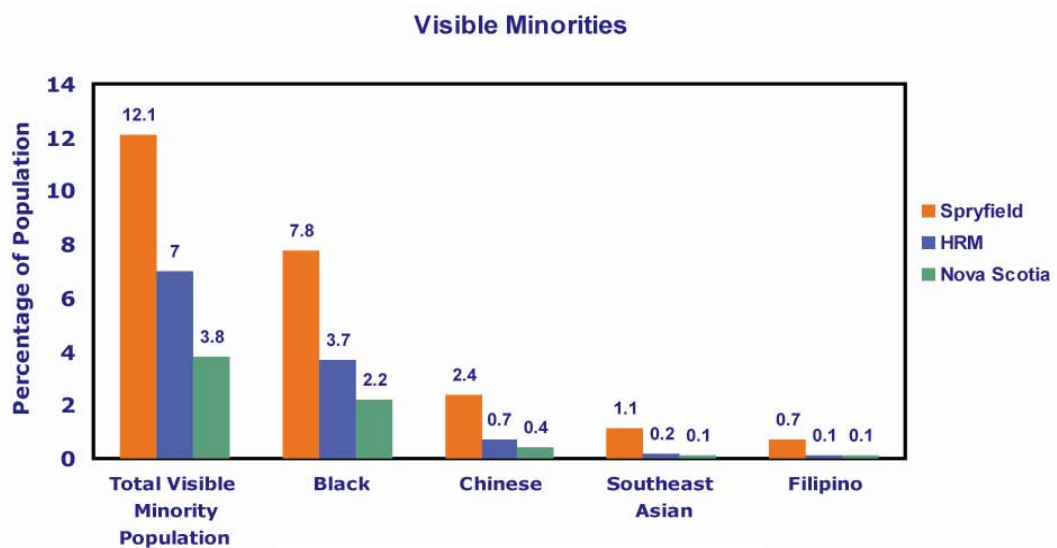


Figure 2.3: Community Counts Project Data

Educational Attainment

The proportion of university graduates from Spryfield has barely increased over the past twenty-five years (CCP 2006). A far greater proportion of Spryfield residents have not completed high school as compared to the rest of HRM and the province (Table 2.1). Although more people are completing high school than in the past, this trend is not keeping up with an increased trend in high school graduates seen in HRM and the province (Teplitsky et al. 2006). Spryfield residents are less employed and may have lower-paying jobs and/or less income in part because the population is less educated.

Education Level	Spryfield	HRM	Nova Scotia
With university bachelor's degree or higher	5.6%	22.9%	15.3%
With university certificate or diploma	1.3%	2.7%	2.7%
With other non-university certificate or diploma	9.1%	17.5%	15.9%
Trades certificate or Diploma	15.6%	13.8%	15.3%
With secondary school graduation certificate	14.1%	9.4%	9.8%
Without secondary school graduation certificate	32.9%	17.0%	22.2%
Less than grade 9	13.9%	5.3%	9.5%

Table 2.1: Community Counts Program Data

Household Income

Average household and individual incomes in Spryfield are lower than those of HRM and the province (Figure 2.4). The gap between Spryfield incomes and those of HRM and the province continue to widen. Employment insurance income is less on average in Spryfield than elsewhere and family social assistance payments are lower than in HRM (Teplitsky et al. 2006).

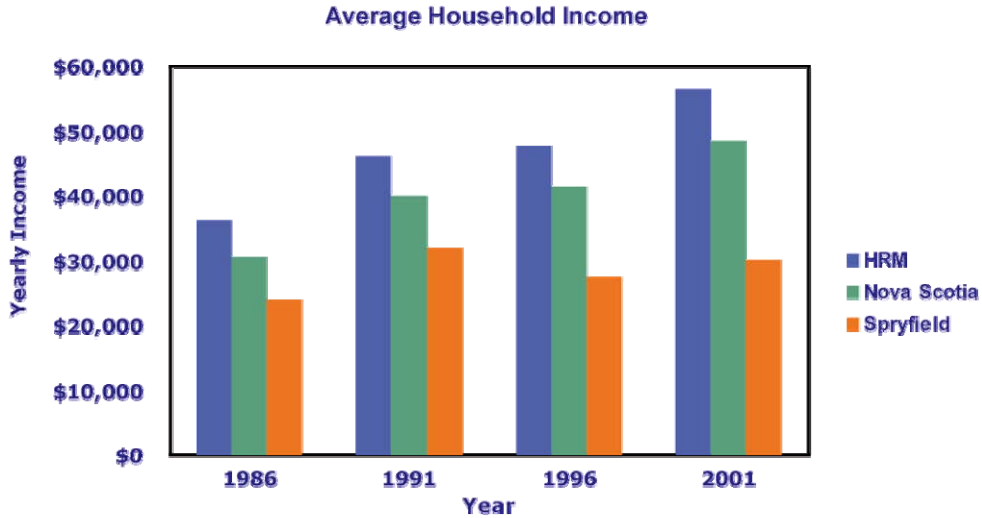


Figure 2.4: Community Counts Project Data

Housing

Spryfield residents inhabit more apartment-style units and less single-detached housing units than residents in the rest of HRM and the province (Figure 2.5). There are also more instances of row and townhouses. Concurrent with this is the large proportion of renters in the area compared to the rest of HRM and the province (Figure 2.6).

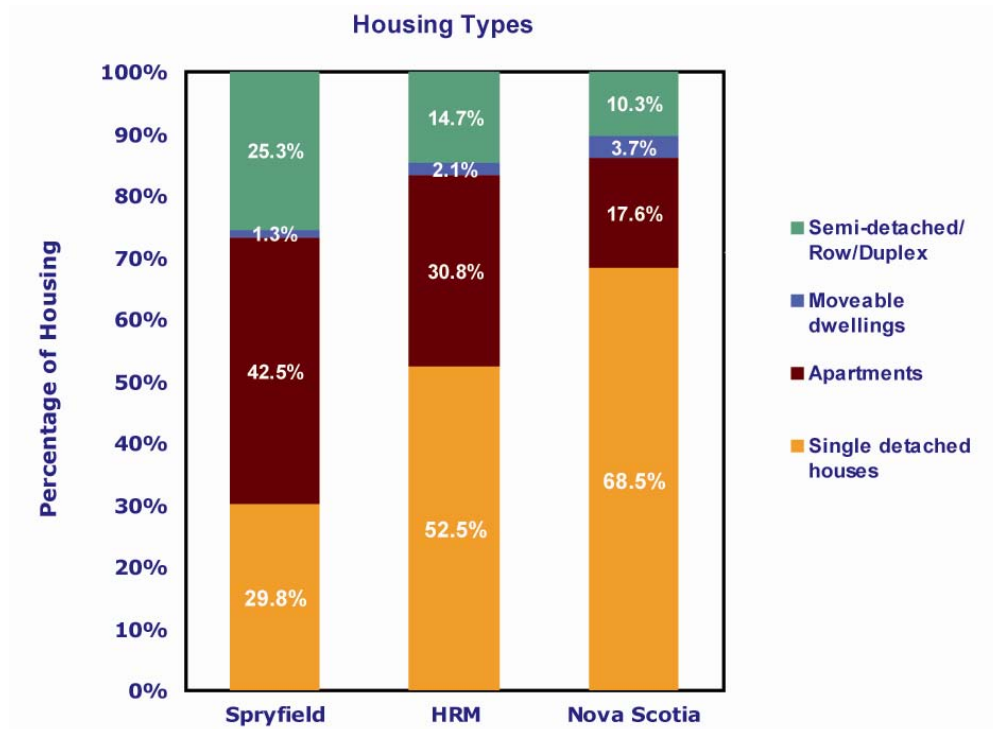


Figure 2.5: Community Counts Project Data

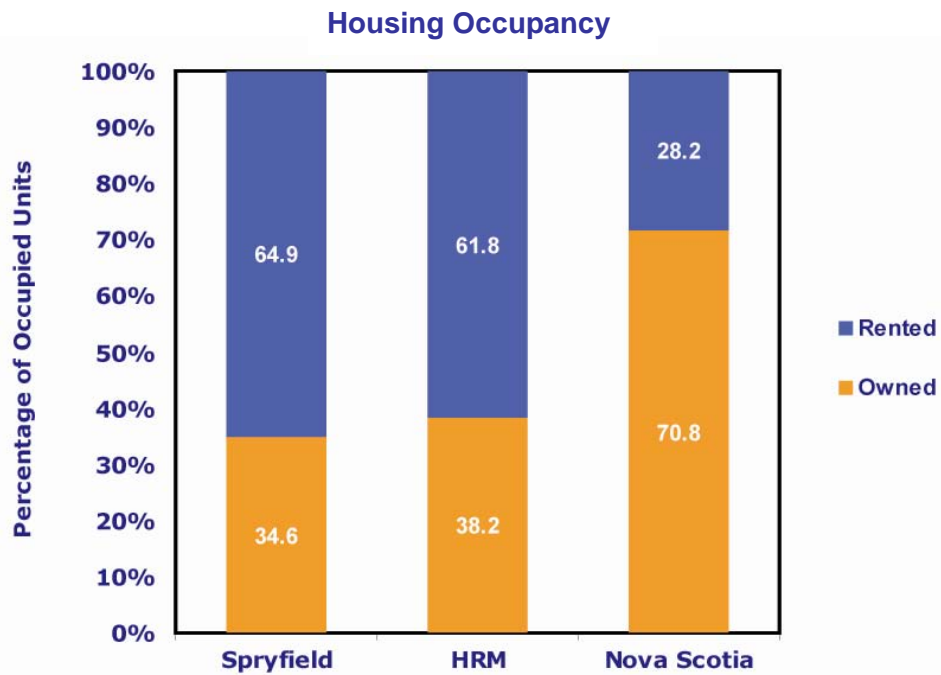


Figure 2.6: Community Counts Project Data

Summary

The brief analysis of census data for the Spryfield area indicates that overall, Spryfield residents are faring less well than their counterparts in the rest of HRM and the province. Less education, lower income, lower employment and poor housing choices are characteristic of the area. Accompanying these features are higher instances of crime and poverty (Teplitsky et al. 2006).

2.2 Greystone Background

The Greystone public housing project was constructed over several years in the early 1970s. It is served by a single entrance from Herring Cove Road, Greystone Drive, and is situated atop a steep hill overlooking the Halifax peninsula. Its lack of through-roads and geographical location effectively isolate the project from the surrounding community. The project consists of 252 units of three and four bedroom rowhouses. Rockingstone Heights School, serving grades primary to nine, is adjacent to the project and is also singularly serviced by Greystone Drive.

Although Greystone residents have a strong sense of community, the project follows trends similar to those in the rest of Spryfield. It is home exclusively to low-income individuals and families, and a prevalence of single-mother households with children characterize the housing project (GTA, pers. comm.). With high tenant turnover and uncertain tenant-per-unit reporting, census and personal sources were unable to provide an accurate population for the project. The best estimate is given by the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority by averaging three people per unit over 252 units – roughly 750 people (MRHA, pers. comm.).

Several programs catering to Greystone residents are run by the Greystone Tenants' Association in collaboration with community groups operating in Spryfield. The Healthy Kids education and daycare program, the Metro Food Bank, the Salvation Army and evening youth tutorial programs provide essential services to the community. A Community Access Point provides computer use and Internet access. Rockingstone Heights School sits at the highest point in Greystone and caters to the local Spryfield area youth in grades primary to nine. Strong community efforts in 2001 prevented the proposed closing of the school by the regional school board (CBC 2001; GTA, pers. comm.).



Efforts from MRHA and help from community organizations have improved the health of the community by fostering community programs, repairing dilapidated infrastructure,

providing food and even operating a community garden. Metro Transit provides bus services to two stops within the project and consistent police patrols help to keep the streets safe at night. Despite these beneficial programs, services and healthy community indicators, high incidences of vandalism, crime, alcohol abuse and drug use persist, indicating that Greystone is a community in need of rehabilitation (GTA, pers. comm.).

Residents, members of the Greystone Tenants' Association and community groups all show great concern for the children of the project. They worry that youth growing up in Greystone lack positive role models, learning opportunities and after school activities. As a result, teens and youth are performing petty crime and vandalizing houses and common structures. Perhaps more alarming is the lack of future outlook among Greystone youth. Parents report that their children express few long-term aspirations or major goals (GTA, pers. comm.).

2.3 Public Housing Overview

Government housing assistance was once the central approach to mitigating the affordable housing dilemma. 'Public housing' was first supplied by governments in the 1930's during the economic depression as a public works program that created employment for the out-of-work while providing temporary shelter for those unable to afford private housing (Diaz 1979). By the 1960s it was apparent that public housing had become a permanent home for generations of families with severe economic and social challenges (Joseph 2006).

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the federal governments of the United States and Canada attempted to address this issue through a range of housing programs addressing neighbourhood improvement, housing rehabilitation, native housing, non-profit and co-op housing (Silver 2006; HRM 2005A). These programs came after a period of 'urban renewal' during which societal ills were perceived to be the product of concentrated poverty in urban slums (Silver 2006). Urban renewal was essentially a slum clearance program that uprooted the poor and dispersed or attempted to place them in

public (social) housing projects constructed by the federal government in conjunction with provincial (state) and municipal governments. Housing stock was created at an unprecedented rate to house the homeless and low-income families. In Halifax, Greystone, Mulgrave Park, Regent Park and Uniacke Square were created under these programs.

At first many of the public housing projects were successful. The units were new and functional and housed families that were formerly living under much worse conditions; many residents enjoyed their new homes. The success of the projects quickly

degenerated, however. Constructed as entities isolated socially and physically from surrounding communities, many public housing projects were destined to fail. The projects were intended as a temporary shelter for low-income families to get on their feet and move on to home ownership, not as stable communities that



could grow and prosper (Silver 2006). This paradigm assumed that low-income private housing would be available in sufficient stock to accommodate graduates of public housing, which was not the case (and continues not to be the case). Some households did earn incomes allowing them to relocate to non-public housing while at the same time certain housing authorities mandated that families earning above a certain income were required to leave the projects (Silver 2006). This left the poorest of the poor to inherit the housing projects. Over time government funding decreased, leaving homes and infrastructure in an increasing state of dilapidation as public housing authorities had to choose between raising rents and cutting costs (Diaz 1979). Since raising the rents of low-income families was unrealistic, housing authorities cut back on essential maintenance and repairs.

The cutbacks made a tenuous situation even worse, as a cycle of tenant dissatisfaction began. Increased rent delinquencies, vacancies, vandalism and socially undesirable

behaviour ensued. This resulted in an even greater gap between income and expenses, and rapidly deteriorating living conditions for the tenants (Diaz 1979). Beginning in 1994 the Canadian government divested itself of managing public housing and downloaded the responsibility to the provinces when it ceased its new affordable housing production funding programs (HRM 2005A). Although a handful of federal affordable housing programs have been initiated since, such as the Supporting Community Partnership Initiative (1999) and the Affordable Housing Program (2001), the level of federal support for affordable housing has not been sufficient to house all those in need (Terashima and Vanwart 2005).



In 1997 Nova Scotia assumed responsibility for the province's 22 000 social housing units. In 2000 Nova Scotia social housing became the responsibility of the Department of Community Services which oversees management through Housing Authorities. Housing Authority boards now deal with tenant issues (HRM 2005A). The Nova Scotia provincial government has mandated municipalities to address issues of affordable housing through the Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Housing in the Municipal Government Act, although this statement is weak in its resolution and lacking in detail. The province continues to subsidize public housing while the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority manages it. Government subsidy and management efforts have dwindled across almost the entire country, however, leaving insufficient resources and housing opportunities for low-income households (Silver 2006). Unfortunately, many public housing projects are currently under-funded, poorly managed, dilapidated and in need of social rehabilitation (Silver 2006).

Throughout the 1980's and 1990's social problems in most public housing projects increased. Drug trafficking, prostitution, violence and crime rose considerably while gang activity became prominent, especially in the United States (Silver 2006). In an

attempt to mitigate these problems, the HOPE (Home Ownership for People Everywhere) initiative was implemented by the National Commission on Severely Distressed Housing program of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) department of the U.S. government. Intended to disperse concentrations of poverty by physically replacing public housing projects with mixed developments, the recent HOPE VI program, started in 1992, has had mixed results (Goetz 2003), as discussed below. Similar projects have been initiated in Canada as well.

Tenure Strategies

Spryfield residents have indicated the state of housing in the community as a factor contributing to social delinquency (Teplitsky et al. 2006). It is speculated that by ameliorating the housing stock and housing options in the area that negative social behaviours will improve. In this section, I give a brief overview of a few different tenure strategies and their viability for Greystone residents.

3.1 Private Home Ownership

Many residents believe that home ownership, as opposed to renting or occupying a public housing unit, is the most desirable housing situation. In the United States in 1998 a national survey found that 86 percent of respondents felt that people are better off owning a home rather than renting; 65 percent of renters surveyed reported that they rent because they cannot afford to own their own home; 27 percent said that they choose to rent; 60 percent of renters rank owning a home as a very important priority to the number one priority in their lives; and less than a quarter of renters report that home ownership is not a priority at all (Rohe, Van Zandt and McCarthy 2001).

It has been argued that home ownership provides individuals with feelings of self-worth, a sense of security and economic stability (Lee 1999). It provides security of tenure, the ability to accumulate wealth, the ability to control housing costs, control over one's

residential environment, increased savings and investment behaviour, reliable maintenance and upkeep, and the ability to use housing as an income source (Habitat for Humanity Canada 2003). Communities also benefit from home ownership: it encourages increased civic involvement and community responsibility as well as community and social stability (Habitat for Humanity Canada 2003).

For many, however, home ownership is not a realistic goal, especially in the short-term. The functioning of the real estate market is such that property owners and real estate agents net the maximum market rate for a property or housing unit sale. This ensures that in areas of stable and increasing population, there will always be a bare minimum of housing available that is affordable to low-income households. Thus, alternatives that fulfill the same benefits as home ownership must be found for those unable to purchase a home.

Public housing was initially intended to help tenants realize the goal of home ownership. Social programs, educational opportunities and labour market skills enhancement services were designed to give low-income households the means to achieve greater income and purchase or rent a home. However, in studies conducted by Rohe (1995), these programs do not guarantee success. Rohe found that in one program offering labour market skills training so that public housing tenants could afford their own homes, success was limited by several factors. It was difficult to attract qualified applicants, the program had a high drop out rate, remedial skills took longer to develop than anticipated and residents preferred to be clustered in homes near each other rather than dispersed in a mixed-income community. Rohe concluded that home ownership should not be a primary goal for most public housing tenants.

3.2 Private Low-Income Rental Housing

Rental housing is an alternative to home ownership and can offer the same features and benefits sought by tenants, especially in long-term rental accommodations. It suffers the same shortcomings as privately-owned housing, however, as landlords seek to maximize their profits in the current housing market; the higher the rate for which they can rent

apartments, the better. This ensures that there will always be a minimum, not adequate, number of affordable rental units available.

The 500 block on the Herring Cove Road is an example of low-income, privately-rented apartment units in the area. As rents and tenant-landlord relations fluctuate, these apartments see a high turnover of occupants (SCAC, pers.comm.). Occupants exchange back and forth between this block and the Greystone project, indicating that residents are rarely satisfied with living conditions in either project and that neither development is adequate for the needs of low-income families. This transience encourages problems in both developments as often people do not reside in one place long enough to become a stable member of the community. In fact, much of the social delinquency found in Greystone is also present in this block of apartment units including drug trafficking, alcohol abuse, crime and vandalism (SCAC, pers. comm.). These circumstances indicate that options more effective than private low-income rental housing are required to address the social problems present in the area.

3.3 Mixed-Income Housing

A prevalent strategy in addressing low-income housing under the HOPE VI initiative, mixed-income housing is replacing public housing developments across the United States. HOPE VI has implemented mixed-income housing strategies in many U.S. cities such as Boston, Hartford (Connecticut), Pittsburg, Louisville (Kentucky), Cincinnati and Chicago, to name a few (HUD 2006). In Canada, this strategy is being used in public housing areas under redevelopment as well, such as in Regent Park in Toronto. These programs physically eradicate public housing projects, restructure the land use and build new housing units to be occupied by multi-family, mixed-income tenancy. The physical reformatting is often, but not always, accompanied by new or strengthened social programs (HUD 2006).

Some units in these new developments will have higher rents or be sold at a higher market rate than others. The idea is that well-built, well-situated housing is attractive to people of all income levels allowing people of varied income levels to own similar units

while developers and landlords maintain an acceptable project income that is reflective of the current housing market. It is becoming more common in North American cities for municipalities to require new housing construction to include arrays of mixed-income units, with a minimum percentage of units geared toward low-income tenants (e.g.: Vancouver; City of Vancouver 2006). Mixing tenants of differing incomes addresses concentrations of very poor families by increasing economic diversity and by offering several presumed benefits to residents (Epp 1996):

- 1) Employed persons will provide role models for children and the unemployed.
- 2) Communities will likely be more stable because a family can remain in the unit even if the head loses a job, becomes employed or gets a raise (rents can be adjusted).
- 3) Resident services and programs are more likely to be acknowledged as critical components of successful communities, and therefore their funding is built into the development's operating budget.
- 4) Institutions, public agencies and commercial businesses are more likely to invest in, rather than abandon, a mixed-income neighbourhood.

Although these are laudable goals, there are criticisms of mixed-income housing developments replacing public housing. Analyses of the first of these replacement programs, especially HOPE VI, are being reported currently. The results are mixed, with some programs seeing increases in employment, education and tenancy stability among low-income families (Salama 1999) and other programs seeing no improvement in these domains (Popkin et al. 2000). A general concern is that unit replacement is not at par with existing public housing units, creating a deficit of affordable units (Popkin et al. 2004). Other criticisms include delays in the delivery of replacement units and insufficient strategies supporting residents during the relocation process (Popkin et al. 2004). As a result, HOPE VI is criticized as focusing primarily on solving public housing issues via physical redesign and introducing higher-income tenants, while essential social programs are under-represented (Silver 2006).

It is well documented that areas of concentrated poverty have increased incidences of teen parenthood, delinquency, drug and alcohol use, and weak labor force attachment (Ellen and Turner 1997; Wilson 1987). One intent of today's housing policies is to overcome the problems of concentrated poverty by exposing low-income public housing residents to working and middle-class role models and neighbourhoods offering greater opportunity (Popkin et al. 2000). However, the notion of exposing the poor to middle- and upper-class families so that they might emulate 'successful' behaviour is an elitist one. Popkin et al. (2000) point out that proponents of mixed-income models make a number of assumptions about the mechanisms involved, among them the following: There is a difference in values and behavior between lower- and higher-income residents, higher-income residents will provide good role models for their lower income neighbors, and any bad behavior that lower-income tenants might exhibit will not influence the behavior of other tenants. A further criticism of mixed-income housing projects is that they do not guarantee that those with higher incomes will remain in the new developments, creating instability in the community and encouraging a growing concentration of poverty, the situation blamed for social ills in the first place (Popkin et al 2000).

Although perhaps an important factor in public housing redevelopment, it is obvious that the creation of mixed-income communities as a stand-alone strategy for housing low-income households is insufficient. A form of greater tenant empowerment is needed.

3.4 Tenant Management Cooperatives

As their name suggests, Tenant Management Cooperatives (TMCs or 'co-ops') offer the opportunity for tenants to cooperatively manage their own housing, as opposed to Public Housing Authority (PHA) or private landlord management. Co-ops are intended to provide people of all incomes a home, not necessarily an investment. They operate as close to cost as possible and monthly housing charges rise only as the co-op's costs increase. Since 1973, 90 566 co-operative housing units have been built in Canada (Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada 2002). This model has become one of the more

successful ways of providing affordable housing for low-income households (Dreier & Hulchanski 1993).

A variety of tenant management models exist ranging from completely tenant funded to government subsidized, and from completely tenant managed to government/tenant managed or non-profit group/tenant managed (Diaz 1979). The predominant form of housing co-operative in Canada is non-equity; the dwellings are not sold on the private market and there is a collective ownership of the housing property (CFHC 2006).

Converting public housing to tenant-managed housing has been an effective means of mitigating socially undesirable behaviour in various public housing projects in the United States and Britain during the past three decades, as discussed below.

3.4.1 Promises of Tenant Management

The prospect of tenant-managed housing projects arose out of a crisis situation in St. Louis, Missouri when tenants held a rent strike in 1969. With a bankrupt public housing authority, tenants were left to manage their own dwellings and were able to negotiate settlements with a number of public bodies (CMHC, 1988). By 1973, the St. Louis Housing Authority and the residents of two major public housing projects worked out an operating contact. The housing authority continued to have fiscal authority over the projects, but the management of the projects was entirely handed over to the co-op. The St. Louis co-ops were successful in preventing the demise of public housing projects suffering from increased neglect through their conversion to tenant management. The success of these projects led to other experiments with co-ops throughout the United States, Britain and Canada (Diaz 1979; CMHC 1987; HMSO 1995).

Co-ops may be able to rescue public housing in crises, as indicated by the story above. Other promises of co-ops include (CMHC 1988):

1. *Improving management.* Tenant priorities are well reflected when managers are themselves tenants. Managers and staff who are tenants are more accessible (due mostly to their consistent presence) to other tenants and are better able to identify

- and respond to tenants' concerns. Tenant managers are more knowledgeable of their peers and are thus less likely to be misled. Conversely, tenant managers are held more accountable by tenants. Finally, tenant managers will themselves benefit from good management, thus encouraging them to perform well.
2. *Providing Residents with Employment and Training.* The co-op can employ staff for management, administration, maintenance, construction work and in social service and community development programs. Training for board members is usually a central component of the establishment of a co-op.
 3. *Increasing Self-Determination and Self-Respect.* Although difficult to measure, it has been qualitatively documented (Kolodny 1983) that self-management encourages a better self image which in turn leads to tenants taking more control over their lives and their broader environment.
 4. *Providing the basis for broader community development initiatives.*

Co-ops promise that through resident empowerment (i.e.: by having management power over their own housing) communities are made stronger, safer and healthier. A driving ideology behind co-ops is that residents will have more incentive to maintain their dwellings, build strong communities and make their house a home as they have greater financial and emotional attachment to their dwelling (Rohe 1995). Other benefits include resident empowerment, the encouragement of democracy, an increase in community pride, increased education opportunities, fewer vacancies and minimal resident turnover.

3.4.2 Functioning of Tenant-Managed Cooperatives

Governance

Tenant-Managed Cooperatives are democratic communities where the residents make decisions on how the co-op operates (CMHC 2006). Most co-ops are incorporated at the federal level as not-for-profit corporations and are provincially registered. Although private housing landlords and tenants are governed by provincial tenancy legislation, this is rarely so for co-ops. In most co-ops members are free to determine the rights and obligations of members as long as they comply with applicable legislation (CMHC 2006).

As a corporation, housing co-ops are required to:

- file an annual return to their Province/Territory;
- have meetings; and
- elect a board of directors.

Decisions are made democratically by the co-op members. A majority of members must support a decision for it to be approved.

Co-ops are governed by three components of legislation (CMHC 2006):

- The co-op act for their province or territory;
- The human rights legislation for their province or territory; and
- The principals of natural justice.

Co-op bylaws are established by a tenant-elected board of directors (BOD or ‘board’) and are voted on by members if they are ever slated to be altered. In most provinces, co-ops must follow a specific procedure to change their bylaws. Bylaws are unique to each co-op and outline the purpose of the co-op and dictate how it is run. Typical issues addressed by co-op bylaws are (CMHC 2006):

- The process for electing a board of directors;
- The process for admitting new members;
- Timing of annual meetings and elections;
- The process for calling meetings and special meetings;
- Notice requirements for meetings and other items;
- The process for determining the housing charge and dealing with problems of non-payment;
- The process for managing a reserve fund for anticipated capital repairs.

Decision-Making and Funding

The co-op membership makes decisions about broad-based issues while the board takes care of more detailed management issues. Board members are elected to serve for a set period of time and are accountable to co-op members. Co-ops usually employ staff responsible for maintenance and repairs;



staff reports to the board of directors. Examples of staff positions include housing manager, building managers, secretary, security officers, mailroom clerk, social services coordinator, senior citizen's helper, desk clerk, typist clerk, assistant managers and laundry attendant.

The board addresses member complaints, deals with non-payment of housing charges, and is responsible for overseeing the annual budget (CHMC 2006). Each co-op must have an annual general meeting (AGM) which members are expected to attend. Decisions made at AGMs must have quorum (usually 50% plus one).

Co-ops often maintain a reserve fund, set aside to cover building maintenance and repairs. The reserve fund is accumulated through initial start-up grants and rent payments and it must be invested in accordance with the co-op's bylaws, the co-op act regulations, and any operating agreement the co-op may have with the government (CMHC 2006).

Co-op boards decide who becomes a member, in compliance with human rights legislation. In addition, co-ops must adhere to any government funding agreements in place (CMHC 2006). Co-ops can receive money from the government (federal and/or provincial/territorial) to help subsidize housing units. Co-ops in receipt of government funding must follow the terms of the operating agreement between the co-op and the government. For example, the co-op may be required to offer a certain number or percentage of units as subsidized housing (CMHC 2006). Members who live in subsidized units only pay a part of the housing charge. This payment is adjusted to household income and is referred to as "rent geared to income". Households receiving subsidies usually pay a housing fee that is less than 30% of household income. Overall, co-ops incur low operating costs - about 14 percent less than municipal or private non-profit housing (CMHC 2003) on average.

Co-op Membership

The board is responsible for ensuring that membership policies exist and are applied properly. The bylaws dictate how the board approves new members. Generally, a co-op (CMHC 2006):

- Accepts applications in accordance with their application process;
- Conducts a meeting or interview with the applicant(s);
- Puts the applicant on a waiting list (if no units are available);
- Approves the application for membership.

New members usually sign an occupancy agreement with the co-op. The occupancy agreement sets out the rules of the co-op that members accept and agree to follow, similar to a standard lease. The occupancy agreement specifies (CMHC 2006):

- What the new member agrees to do in exchange for the right to live in the unit. Typically the main stipulations are that the member will pay his or her housing charge on time and follow the rules or bylaws of the co-op;
- What the co-op agrees to do for the member as a resident (e.g.: maintain the building in good repair, ensure the proper management of the co-op, adequately maintain the reserve fund);
- The notice a member is required to provide when he or she withdraws from the co-op.

Co-ops also have obligations to its members. These typically relate to (CMHC 2006):

- Property upkeep;
- Payment of all fees and expenses needed to provide for the ongoing operation of the co-op; and
- The supply of basic services such as heat, hot water and electricity.

Summary

Canadian housing co-ops have agreed to follow these co-operative principles, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance in 1995, which summarize the functions and objectives of co-operative housing (CMHC 2006):

Principle	Description
Voluntary and Open Membership	Co-ops are open to all people who are a) able to use their services and b) willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.
Member Control	Co-ops are controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting co-op policies and making decisions. Co-ops are run democratically, with each member having one vote, and the elected representatives being accountable to the membership.
Economic Participation	Each member contributes equally to the capital of their co-operative. Surpluses are allocated to activities that will benefit the co-op and its members. Surpluses are often put into a reserve for further development of the co-op.
Independence	While co-ops may enter into agreements with outside organizations, such as government funders, the terms of these agreements must ensure the members retain control of the co-op.
Education & Training	To enable effective development of the co-op, education and training is provided to members, elected representatives, managers and employees. The co-op will also educate the general public about the nature of co-ops and benefits of participation.
Co-operation Among Co-operatives	Co-ops work together through local, national and international structures in order to effectively serve their members and to strengthen the co-operative movement.
Concern for the Community	Co-ops work to strengthen local communities by passing policies supported by their members.

Table 3.1: Co-operative Housing Principles

Tenant engagement is at the core of tenant-managed co-operatives. Co-ops are able to effectively provide housing opportunities to low-income households while generating a positively reinforcing sense of community and many of the benefits of ownership. Co-ops have the ability to create healthy communities while empowering their residents, ensuring a productive cycle of resident support and community development.

Converting Public Housing

The goal of many public housing tenants is to improve their economic circumstance such that they can move out of the housing project as quickly as possible. Public housing is thus rarely a stable, encouraging community. The overview of housing schemes illustrated above points to tenant management as being a potentially effective means of addressing the socio-economic problems faced by Greystone. The conversion of public housing to tenant-managed housing attempts to turn projects into communities, units into homes and tensions into improved relationships between public housing and surrounding communities (OHC 1974). Successful conversion is gauged on the decrease in social ills present in the project (e.g.: decreased vandalism, crime, drug trafficking, prostitution, poverty), lower vacancy rates, improved unit conditions, improved rental collections, improved security, socio-economic development of tenants, and improvement in tenant morale and self-confidence (Queeley et al. 1981; Vale 1996).

4.1 Case Studies

Conversion of public and other forms of housing to tenant-managed cooperatives has been studied extensively in Britain and the United States. Although a few attempted conversions have failed, many have been quite successful. The case studies below

demonstrate the outcomes of several conversions, making a positive case for tenant management of different types of housing development.

4.1.1 Nine Tenant-Managed Organizations in London, England

Three forms of tenant-managed co-operatives are possible in Britain: simple co-ops, in which residents have responsibility for some housing management functions; estate management boards, in which some management functions are delegated to a board whose majority is elected by tenants; and par value cooperatives, in which tenants collectively own or lease and manage the property but have no individual financial stake in the equity (HMSO 1995). Canadian co-ops can take a similar form to any of these co-op types, depending on the members' objectives and level of desired responsibility, but are all grouped under the same label: co-operative housing.

A comprehensive study performed by England's Department of the Environment in the early 1990s reports the following findings from four tenant management cooperatives (HMSO 1995). Residents of the tenant-managed projects reported their level of satisfaction with co-op, estate management board or par-value co-op living conditions. This data was compared with the satisfaction expressed by residents of privately-managed estates of similar size, form and neighbourhood. The simple co-ops were conversions from privately managed housing. Tenant satisfaction in these projects was compared before and after conversion.

In four housing developments converted to simple co-ops, residents overall (HMSO 1995):

- Were more satisfied with individual aspects of housing services (especially with the speed and quality of repair services);
- Were less concerned about crime in their neighbourhoods;
- Were less likely to mention other problems (e.g.: graffiti, disturbances);
- Had mixed views about the benefits of co-ops compared to mainstream housing;
- Were marginally less satisfied with their homes and with the quality of housing management services;
- Were often dissatisfied with the level of consultation with, and information on housing management issues from, the board of directors.

In the estate management boards studied, residents overall (HMSO 1995):

- Were more satisfied with the speed and repairs of service, and the quality of repairs in two of the three case studies;
- Were more satisfied with the way disputes were handled;
- Felt that there were lower incidences of burglary;
- Were more satisfied with the way residents received information from the EMB;
- Were less satisfied with the housing management service provided;
- Were less satisfied with the friendliness and accessibility of the housing management service;
- Felt that there were more instances of muggings and assaults;
- Were less satisfied with the incidence of squatting and the cleanliness of communal spaces.

Residents of the par-value co-operatives overall (HMSO 1995):

- Were more satisfied with the speed and quality of repairs and external maintenance works;
- Were more satisfied with the way residents were consulted and information provided and received;
- Felt that most types of crime were lessened.

These studies indicate that overall all three forms of tenant management outperformed their comparators, despite tenant dissatisfaction with a few elements. In general, they were less costly to operate, management services were superior, community development and spirit were increased, and resident skills, experience and employability were



increased (HMSO 1995). Estate management boards were found to perform equally as well as their comparators but community spirit and satisfaction with the management were not necessarily superior. Par-value co-ops performed as well as or better than their comparators, which were generally better funded and professionally

run. Par-value co-ops were found to be the most effective type of tenant-managed organization, although it was also the most demanding. All three co-op types were very effective at securing improved management services, increasing resident satisfaction and decreasing operational costs (HMSO 1995).

Other findings from these studies determined that tenant-managed developments are most successful when they (HMSO 1995):

- Are small-scale (less than 1200);
- Are driven by residents' desires to improve and be involved in management;
- Have continuing resident involvement;
- Have resident control over budgets and operating procedures;
- Have help from outside experts and agencies; and
- Have supportive local housing authorities.

4.1.2 Four Public Housing Conversions to Tenant-Managed Cooperatives in the United States

Four co-ops were the focus of a tenant management study conducted in the United States in the mid-1980s. Three out of the four projects (Kenilworth Parkside, Cochran Gardens and Bromley-Heath) were very successful while the remaining project (Currie Woods) failed (CMHC 1987).

The successful projects had the following results:

- Two of the projects were saved from their rapid states of decline;
- Occupancy increased;
- Real estate management was improved;
- Maintenance workers were more productive;
- Delinquent rents diminished;
- Tenant employment increased;
- Communal pride increased;
- Instances of crime decreased; and
- Community organizations and social services were fostered.

Although there were considerable up-front costs to the conversions in these developments, the study determined that they were offset by the continued viability of the development. If public housing projects are deteriorated to the point of abandonment, a large public investment is lost while crime, poverty and tenant frustration increase. This is coupled with the cost of re-housing all of the low-income families associated with the project if the project is closed (CMHC 1987).

The Currie Woods Project failed due largely to unanticipated occurrences, including

- Leadership turnover;
- Lack of leadership skills;
- Unstable households;
- A weak tenant organization;
- A rapidly shifting racial composition;
- Tenants' expectations had been raised beyond the capacity of the public housing authority rehabilitation capacity; and
- Tenants did not perceive their situation to be in dire need of improvement.

Currie Woods presents case study results indicating what can go wrong with attempts to convert public housing to tenant-managed housing. This instance encourages thorough assessment of prerequisite conditions to be present before conversion.

4.2 Appropriateness of Conversion

The National Tenant Management Demonstration initiative in the United States during the late 1970s consisted of six projects exploring tenant management of public housing developments, as inspired by the successes in conversions in St. Louis that began in 1969. Four out of the six projects were successful. Of the successes, two were said to have been 'rescued' from complete poverty. All of the successful projects benefited from improved real estate management, job creation, communal pride and community development (CMHC 1987). The remaining two, however, were unable to overcome the challenges associated with conversion.

Before considering conversion, an assessment of prerequisites must be performed. Fulfillment does not guarantee success, but it does gauge the appropriateness for conversion. Each prerequisite must be fulfilled in some detail, although it is difficult to determine to what level. This reflects that requirements will vary between projects, there is interdependency between factors, the level of need for the prerequisite elements will vary over time, and many of the prerequisites are not easily measured (CMHC 1987).

The prerequisites are (CMHC 1987; Queely et al. 1981; Rohe, 1995):

1. *Need*. Conversion must be driven by a significant need, for example by tenants trying to save their communities from destitution or by a housing authority attempting to compensate for loss of government funding. Need ensures tenant commitment and sustainability of the endeavour.
2. *Tenant support*. The outcomes of the conversion must have outcomes that appeal to both individuals and the community as a whole. Some tenants may be apathetic or even opposed to conversion. If a critical mass of supportive tenants is not present, the conversion is unlikely to succeed.
3. *Agency support*. Bureaucracies often find change difficult, especially when associated with loss of power and authority (Diaz 1979). Public housing authority staff must be able to overcome this obstacle and provide the necessary support for the public housing authority and tenants to cooperate in the conversion.
4. *Funding*. Conversion requires an up-front investment to cover administration, board of director and staff training, and capital improvement costs.
5. *Training and technical assistance*. Consistent access to professionals, social services, trainers and technical experts to provide the necessary training to board members and staff is crucial.
6. *Flexibility*. Each conversion project is a unique venture with its own challenges and unexpected complications. Once a course is set for the conversion, it must not be set in stone, but rather be open to change so that unexpected obstacles may be overcome.

Low levels in one of the prerequisites can be compensated by higher levels in others. The housing authority, tenants and any community groups providing services in the project assess the presence and fulfillment of these prerequisites before making a collective decision as to whether or not to proceed with conversion. Assessment is performed via visioning sessions with all stakeholders via surveys or another form of dialogue.

4.3 Challenges to Conversion

Successful co-ops are testaments to the ability of the board of directors, the tenants, the housing authority and involved community groups to creatively overcome obstacles in achieving their goals. Awareness of what challenges may occur along the implementation process is of great value to emerging co-ops.

Examples of possible challenges include (CMHC 1987; Queely et al. 1981; Rohe, 1995):

- The time involved in the renovations and repairs of units;
- Recruiting tenants for staff and board positions;
- Lack of tenant education on the value of co-ops;
- Inadequate board or staff training;
- Lack of communication between co-op boards and residents;
- High turnover of board members;
- Rapid shifts in demographics;
- Raising tenants' expectations of rehabilitation capacity beyond the ability of the co-op;
- Tenants believe that it is not their responsibility to solve their housing problems;
- Tenants are too busy with day-to-day family life to participate;
- The housing authority's lack of experience in assisting tenant-managed projects;
- Lack of funding; and
- Non-participating tenants.

Rohe (1995) has argued that housing authorities do not have experience in converting public housing projects to co-ops, so they should not be solely responsible for such initiatives. An organization with experience in public housing conversion should manage the program so that there is increased chance of success. Unfortunately, there are few organizations with such experience.

4.4 Conversion Implementation

If the prerequisites are present to a sufficient degree, conversion may be seriously considered. Public housing projects that have been converted to co-ops in the United States, Britain and Canada have followed a similar process consisting of about nine elements (CMHC 1987; Queely et al. 1981). If carried out thoroughly and properly, these steps can address most of the obstacles listed above:

1. *Planning*: Implementation starts with the fashioning by residents of goals and a vision along with an approach to achieve them. Management functions of the public housing authority and the co-op are then determined. The amount and kind of training and technical assistance needed is assessed and the scope and length of co-op training is estimated.
2. *Electing a board of directors*: The board is usually made up of leaders in the public housing project; implementation should reflect previous patterns of leadership. A slate of candidates is formed by fair and open means and election criteria and mechanics are developed. It is useful for legitimacy if monitoring of elections and certification of their results is performed by an authorized body (e.g.: a voters association).



3. *Incorporating the co-op*: The board takes the legal steps to make the board a non-profit corporation so that it can receive funds and carry out business.
4. *Training the Board*: All board members require orientation to tenant management and public housing as well as familiarization of policies and practices of housing authorities. Training includes organizational skills, real estate management, formulating policy, determining rules and regulations, and governing the development. This training allows the board to develop corporate bylaws and rules and regulations for the community. The establishment of procedures for recruitment and hiring of co-op staff is also covered under this training.
5. *Recruiting and hiring co-op staff*: The board develops job descriptions and qualifications as one of its earliest tasks. A project manager is usually hired as well as maintenance and repair staff, as the board sees fit. Staff members are hired from the co-op tenants.

6. *Training staff on the job:* The new staff works alongside their housing authority counterparts or under the supervision of a housing authority manager to acquire competencies associated with those roles.
7. *Training staff in the classroom:* Classroom training is often a one-time occurrence, although other forms of staff training can endure for long periods. This education is usually provided by housing authority staff and outside consultants.
8. *Negotiating and signing of management contract and developing a budget:* Once the board has been established and staff is sufficiently trained the co-op is ready for gradual assumption of housing authority responsibilities. Generally, the housing authority retains some of its functions, thus the sharing of responsibilities must be established and laid out in a contract agreed to by both parties. An operating budget is also agreed upon.
9. *Assuming management responsibility by the co-op:* Once the contract is agreeable, the co-op manager succeeds the housing authority manager. Co-op staff assume full assumption of responsibility under supervision of the co-op board.
10. *Monitoring:* The co-op board, the housing authority (if it retains partial responsibility) and provincial departments monitor the success of conversion through tenant surveys and board assessment.

Once the contract is complete and the management responsibilities are determined, the housing authority generally retains the role of providing the overall direction for the development and sets board performance criteria, while the co-op exercises direct control over day-to-day management. Ownership of the property and dwellings may remain with the housing authority or be transferred to the co-op via a real estate transaction (sale). If the property and dwellings are sold to the co-op, the co-op holds ownership as an incorporated land owner.

4.5 Membership Concerns

It is possible that once conversion from public housing to tenant-managed housing occurs, membership in the co-op may be more exclusive than that of the public housing project. Table 4.1 shows what is required for tenancy in public housing in Nova Scotia while Table 4.2 shows what is required for tenancy in co-op housing in Nova Scotia (MISA 2006).

Public Housing
Eligibility Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One year residency (exceptions allowed);• Must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident;• Household income to be within specific guidelines.
Documents required: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proof of income - pay stub, or verification of income from the income source;• Copy of current lease;• Landed papers for permanent residents.

Table 4.1: Public Housing Membership Requirements

Co-op Housing
Documents required: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current address and address of current landlord;• Employment information;• Proof of income:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 consecutive pay stubs or if no stub,• A letter from employer stating your position and gross monthly income.

Table 4.2: Co-op Housing Membership Requirements

A substantial amount of information is required for each housing arrangement. From this information it is difficult to tell whether or not co-op housing is more exclusive. One concern is that a co-op board of directors could be more discriminatory than the public housing authority of a public housing project.

4.6 Summary

The brief overview of different housing types and mitigation approaches given here leaves several conclusions as to public housing and its reformation (CMHC 1987; Queely et al. 1981; Silver 2006):

1. The history of public housing indicates that as the working class has largely left public housing projects, public housing has become concentrations of the poorest of the poor; it is the housing of last resort.
2. The successes and failures of the case studies indicate that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Although many public housing projects experience similar social problems and are rooted in similar contexts, residents' culture and attitudes vary from project to project, as does the greater context of each project's region. Although some housing models may be more successful than others in mitigating negative social circumstances, they should always be modified for the specific context. For example, in some communities HOPE VI has been effective while the same approach has not been successful for other communities.
3. Lessons from redevelopment projects such as HOPE VI indicate that reforming public housing through demolition and rebuilding is costly and does not always achieve the desired goals. Physically redesigning housing units and communities without concurrently implementing social programs and providing adequate affordable housing does not sufficiently intervene in the social problems of a public housing project. Under redevelopment, public housing units must be replaced one-for-one to ensure sufficient affordable housing stock.
4. Increasing socially undesirable behaviour in public housing projects under the same management regime for long periods of time indicates that public housing tenants need new opportunities to break out of routines that encourage negative social outcomes. These opportunities may be in the form of education, learning skills, tenant management, etc.
5. Tenant management can be a successful tool in overcoming the problems associated with public housing, if the appropriate model is adapted for use in the local circumstance.

6. Tenant admission to public or tenant-managed housing should not be based exclusively on need or income. Instead, tenants should be screened based on willingness and perceived ability to take advantage of opportunities in a developing community (Silver, 2006).
7. Co-op housing should provide subsidies for those in need of them. This encourages mixed-income housing and is non-exclusive to low-income families.

When successful, co-ops offer tenants the opportunity to be more engaged in their dwellings and communities than the average public housing tenant, private rental housing tenant and even many private home owners. The case studies of public housing conversion to tenant management demonstrate that overall, tenants are more satisfied with co-op living conditions and are more engaged in their community, thus empowering them to mitigate socially undesirable conditions in their neighbourhood (Peterman 1996). Conversion is appropriate under certain conditions and stakeholders in the process must prepare for common obstacles to conversion. If conversion is successful, co-ops have been found to function equally as well as public housing managed by housing authorities. Establishing co-ops requires up-front investment but costs stabilize over the long-term. Financial costs of managing the co-op may increase compared to those present when operating under a housing authority, but new management and staff positions employ tenants who may have been in receipt of social assistance funding, thus making it difficult to assess the overall costs/savings of the project.

Although management may not be significantly superior to that of housing authorities in the case study projects, tenants have a higher rate of satisfaction with management, even though it is usually stricter (MDRC 1981). Tenants appreciate increased employment, personal development, community involvement, greater patience and ability to get along with people. They also benefit from new confidence in the future, pride and power over their own lives.

Evaluating Converting Greystone

The case studies outlined above and the resultant indicators for the appropriateness of, and common obstacles to, conversion of public housing to tenant-managed housing provide the basis for evaluation of a similar conversion of the Greystone public housing project in Spryfield. To begin this evaluation, I consulted representatives from four organizations: the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority, the Spryfield Community Action Coalition, the Spryfield Residents' Association and the Greystone Tenants' Association. Attempts to consult with other representatives of the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority and the Spryfield Residents' Association were recommended but proved unsuccessful. I gathered opinions on the state of the Greystone community and the appropriateness of conversion to tenant management. I formed recommendations based on the input of these organizations coupled with information from my literature review and case studies review.

5.1 Appropriateness of Converting Greystone

The four organizations I consulted had varying opinions as to whether Greystone met the prerequisites for conversion to tenant-managed housing. The opinions of the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority (MRHA or 'housing authority'), the newly-formed Spryfield Community Action Coalition (SCAC or 'coalition'), the Spryfield Residents' Association (SRA or 'residents' association') and the Greystone Tenants'

Association (GTA or ‘tenants’ association’) are summarized in Table 5.1. The information compiled below is based on personal communications I had with representatives of each organization.

Prerequisite Is there sufficient ...	MRHA	SCAC	SRA	GTA
Need?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tenant support?	Yes/No	Yes/No	No	Yes
PHA support?	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe
Funding?	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Maybe
Training?	Yes	Yes	Maybe	Yes
Flexibility?	Yes	Maybe	No	Yes

Table 5.1: Stakeholder opinions on whether Greystone fulfills co-op conversion prerequisites

Need

All parties agree that some action should be taken in order to address the poor socio-economic situation present in Greystone. They also all agree that co-ops could be one manner of addressing the situation.

Tenant Support

There are a range of opinions on whether or not tenants would support taking on the responsibilities of tenant management. The housing authority believes that leaders are present within the community but that many tenants want to be left alone to work, save money and leave when they can afford to. This attitude is reflected by the coalition who reported that there are strong characters in the community who could step forth as leaders but that many tenants see Greystone as being their ‘turf’ and want to keep it as a haven for possible illegal activity. The residents’ association is of the opinion that tenants are not particularly interested in taking on more responsibility in their housing circumstance and that some would be chiefly interested in exerting power over their neighbours as board members were the conversion to occur. The tenants’ association is positive that

there would be sufficient support from the Greystone community if such a conversion were proposed.

Housing Authority Support

The housing authority indicated that it is interested in any form of action that would improve the quality of life in Greystone, although it admits that there have been several proposals over the years to do so which never materialized into action. These proposals were developed by housing authority staff and were never introduced to the Greystone community. Ultimately, MRHA is confident in the positive relations that exist between it and the tenants and is supportive of the idea of a conversion initiative, although cautious.



The coalition, the residents' association and the tenants' association are all sceptical as to the support the housing authority is willing or able to provide, especially in view of declining government support over the years and the social ills that persist in Greystone.

Funding

All four organizations are uncertain about the availability of funding for a conversion. The housing authority suspects there might be limited government funding while the other three organizations are sceptical as to whether there would be any availability of government funds. The two community groups and the tenants' association are optimistic that community groups and tenants will donate their time and efforts to any worthwhile cause in the Greystone community.

Training

All four organizations are confident (although the residents' association is less confident) that the greater community has sufficient resources to train potential board members and staff. Already several programs and organizations are present in the community aiding in a variety of capacities.

Flexibility

The widest variety of opinion among the four organizations was expressed when asked about the ability of Greystone stakeholders (i.e.: tenants, the housing authority and community groups) to overcome the challenges associated with conversion. The housing authority is chiefly confident in its own ability to overcome obstacles and be flexible in its approach and with problem solving. The coalition is hopeful but sceptical of stakeholder ability to overcome obstacles based on its perception of housing authority support and the view that some tenants would not be actively supportive to a sufficient degree. The residents' association is very sceptical as to the success of conversion. They have the view that Greystone tenants are not interested, active or competent to a sufficient degree to see such a project through to its realization. Conversely, the tenants' association is optimistic and confident that with the participation of all stakeholders and with expertise and volunteerism injections from outside the Greystone community ameliorating the lives of Greystone tenants is possible.

Although each organization has a different opinion as to the viability of the conversion of Greystone from public housing to tenant-managed housing, it is the opinions of the housing authority and especially the tenants' association that are the most pertinent, as they are the key stakeholders.

Addressing Obstacles to Conversion

I evaluated the viability of overcoming the obstacles mentioned in Section 4.3 through analysis of my consultations with the four organizations coupled with information on support services and programs provided by community groups and co-operative housing agencies. Although it is difficult to accurately assess the effectiveness of these services

and programs, it seems realistic that the following obstacles can be overcome through training, education, capacity building and genuine efforts from the housing authority, the tenants and organizations external to Greystone:

The time involved in the renovations and repairs of units

Tenants constantly demand better housing and repairs. As long as the repairs and renovations are actually occurring, not just promised, tenants will support the conversion project.

Recruiting tenants for staff and board positions

The women running the Greystone Tenants Association are both keen and competent. Upon preliminary assessment, there seems to be adequate leadership potential there to start capacity building.

Lack of tenant education on the value of co-ops

This can easily be ameliorated through Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada programming and community group-led education programs.

Inadequate board or staff training

A variety of programs exist for board or staff training, from professional services to community group programs. Capacity building on this subject is readily available through some of the community organizations in HRM.

Lack of communication between co-op boards and residents

This issue can be common in co-ops with many units. In other conversion projects it has been addressed through the assignment of block representatives - individuals that report between a group of tenants and the co-op board of directors (A.R.A Consultants 1978).

High turnover of board members

The Greystone Tenants' Association indicates that some people currently on the tenants' association board have been serving for years, some tenants have lived in Greystone for decades and other tenants are new to the project but are educated and skilled (GTA, pers. comm.). Additionally, past GTA members are still actively involved in the community. Hopefully tenant longevity, community support and tenants bringing new aptitudes to the project will ensure that board members are capable and well-supported.

Rapid shifts in demographics

It is doubtful that the demographic composition of Greystone will change during the conversion process. As long as rental fees do not substantially increase, this should be a stable factor.

Raising tenants' expectations of rehabilitation capacity beyond the ability of the co-op

The key to addressing this issue is for those involved in driving the conversion process not to raise tenants' hopes beyond what is realistically achievable. Messaging and communication skills are important in this task and can be readily learned from community groups.

I believe the following four obstacles are more challenging to overcome than those above. Although I suggest how they may be approached, solutions to these problems are complex and must be further developed. They pertain to tenant attitudes, competence of the housing authority and financing:

Tenants believe that it is not their responsibility to solve their housing problems, tenants are too busy with day-to-day family life to participate, and tenants are non-participatory in conversion

It is inevitable that not all tenants will be supportive of a conversion (for example, those who would retain Greystone as their 'turf', SCAC, pers. comm.), that not all tenants who are supportive will have time to contribute and that some tenants will be apathetic.

The housing authority and tenants' association must be willful and determined. It is their responsibility to educate and engage tenants. Communication and messaging is important. Educating tenants on their roles and responsibilities as well as on the potential benefits of conversion is required. Legitimate concerns of residents opposed to conversion must be adequately addressed.

The housing authority's lack of experience in assisting tenant-managed projects

Housing authorities are familiar with the operation of public housing; they are generally unfamiliar with the processes and resources required for conversion of a public housing project to tenant management. They are accustomed to being at the top of the public housing hierarchy, thus it may be difficult for them to work with tenants on a new approach to addressing housing problems. The housing authority must believe that the conversion is possible and that it will have positive outcomes; this is not a token attempt at mitigating social ills but full-scale tenant empowerment. The housing authority must also be accepting of relinquishing its responsibilities to tenants and commencing a new dialogue with stakeholders. An open, realistic dialogue about public housing, its problems, management, tenant empowerment and new approaches to addressing socially undesirable behaviour must be held.

Lack of funding

Funding is required for conversion. Renovations, repairs, hiring staff and financing community groups, non-profits and professionals for services and programs that make conversion possible all contribute to up-front costs. These costs will not be covered by rental fees alone; government funding and non-profit/foundation funding must be secured as well. Therefore, people with excellent grant-writing skills must be involved in the conversion well before the conversion can begin. Sufficient funding can take years to accumulate and is often dependent on leveraging and subject to a timeline. Professional fundraisers are needed to net the substantial funds required. These professionals can be found in certain community groups. Partnering with community groups may be a way of sharing fundraising personnel. Once up-front costs are covered

by sufficient fundraising, renovations, repairs and staff costs are usually covered by rental fees.

Tenants with skill and motivation leave the project

Conversion cannot occur without dedicated tenants. If current tenants who are leaders in the community leave, if there is a high turnover of skilled and motivated tenants, if tenants receiving education and training leave once they are offered other opportunities, if tenants acquire enough savings to fulfill a wish of renting or purchasing a home, the conversion process will suffer, if it ever even has a chance to commence. There is no absolute way to guarantee that tenants will see the process through to its realization. Requiring board members to serve terms for a certain period of time and offering incentives such as education and skills training may be two ways of maintaining competent tenants. A strong sense of community, a sense of community ownership, family obligations and the desire to improve living conditions for the greater community are other factors that may help retain those needed for conversion to tenant management. The case studies noted above are encouraging in that they are proof that such conversions have been successful, often in communities experiencing greater social delinquency than Greystone.

Many of these 12 obstacles are moderated during steps of the conversion process. The process incorporates education and skills training as well as housing authority/tenant mediation and capacity building.

5.2 Encouraging Indicators

During my consultation with the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority, the Spryfield Community Action Coalition and the Greystone Tenants' Association, as well as during my site visits, I was encouraged by several factors that conversion of the public housing to tenant management may be adequately supported.

First, the housing authority was very positive and optimistic. During our interview they were supportive of the idea of tenant management and confident that they could play a

positive role in its realization. They were also confident that certain Greystone tenants had the leadership and motivation required for such a transition.

Secondly, the Spryfield Community Action Coalition is recently founded and has new energy to inject into the community. They seem to have a realistic view of Greystone, its social issues and their potential solutions. They are interested in the idea of tenant empowerment and will undoubtedly have positive contributions to make to any undertaking employing such solutions.



Encouraging Indicators: A vandalized fence is fixed between site visits

Thirdly, the Greystone Tenants' Association has a new president who seems competent, skilled and motivated. With the support and knowledge of current and past staff, her momentum can be a powerful force in the community. Although the tenants' association is trying to remedy recent setbacks in its management, once they are operating at a comfortable capacity they should be ready to consider new approaches to addressing social delinquency, such as tenant management. The tenants' association is open to new approaches, welcoming of aid originating outside the Greystone community and aware of the current issues present in Greystone.



**Encouraging Indicators:
Community Programs**

Fourthly, community groups are willing to aid Greystone tenants. Groups like the Salvation Army and the Metro Food Bank already have a presence in the community. Other groups like Action for Neighbourhood Change are bringing new energy and funding to Spryfield to address community needs. There seems to be no shortage of community-based support for Spryfield residents.

Finally, during my last site visit to Greystone I saw evidence of tenants' efforts to improve and engage in the community. Christmas decorations could be seen on the majority of units, acts of vandalism had been repaired since my last visit and I noticed a community garden that had been installed the previous summer. These are all indicators of community spirit and hope – evidence that at least some tenants care about their community and would like to see it become healthier.



Encouraging Indicators: Community Gardens

Recommendations

Although potentially useful, this study is still only a superficial investigation into the viability of converting the Greystone public housing project to tenant-managed housing. Much more in-depth analysis is required before considering proceeding with such a monumental task. I make the following recommendations to the Greystone Tenants' Association, the Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority, the Spryfield Residents' Association, the United Way, the Spryfield Community Action Coalition and Action for Neighbourhood Change with this understanding.

6.1 Primary Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Conduct Further Research

Community groups, tenants' associations and housing authorities are all valuable resources but are all extremely busy entities. As such, it was only possible to conduct one interview with some of the organizations. Multiple interviews with various representatives from each organization is preferable in order to assess the current socio-economic situation in Greystone, the appropriateness for conversion to tenant-managed housing, the fulfillment of conversion prerequisites and capacity building requirements. Tenants themselves must also be interviewed. I recommend acquiring the services of a team of expert consultants trained in facilitation, workshop development and

communication to perform community input sessions, open houses and tenant roundtable discussions in order to legitimately assess tenants' needs, goals and capacity.

Further research is also required to assess the costs involved with conversion (see more on this below). Although the case studies noted here report some basic financial analysis, they occurred between one and three decades ago. Current financial requirements for conversion will differ.

Legal research is also required. Besides incorporating a non-profit board of directors, what legal considerations must be made for conversion? Are there liabilities if the conversion fails? What are the roles and obligations of the municipal, provincial and federal governments?

Community groups could be instrumental in gathering some of the required information. They are knowledgeable about Greystone and Spryfield and they are respected and trusted in the community. A coordinated effort between a few key community groups could result in a wealth of practical knowledge and gap analysis in the Greystone and Spryfield community, much like the Spryfield Community Profile has accomplished.

Recommendation 2: Build Capacity

The Housing Authority

If conversion is to occur, the tenants and the housing authority will require substantial skills training and education beforehand. As noted above, although the housing authority has the experience of managing public housing, the knowledge of how to mitigate certain tenant issues or respond to tenant requests and possibly understands the importance of tenant empowerment, it probably has very little knowledge on the processes involved in converting public housing to tenant-managed housing. The housing authority must adopt a new mandate, one of tenant empowerment through conversion, and work toward understanding the conversion process, overcoming expected and unexpected obstacles, and adopting a new approach of addressing social delinquency by working directly with tenants. The housing authority must also explicitly recognize what powers it has as a

public housing authority and develop a strategy to divest itself of some or all of these powers to tenants.

Community groups like The Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia, the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, Dartmouth Non-Profit Housing Society, Harbour City Homes and the Metro Non-Profit Housing Association all have useful resources and services to contribute to capacity building for the housing authority. National groups like the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Association, the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association and the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada provide leading research and services on housing, homelessness and tenant management. Ideally, some capacity building would come from housing authorities elsewhere in North America that have implemented the conversion of public housing to tenant management. Their experiences are invaluable.

The Tenants

Tenants also require considerable capacity building. Learning about tenant-empowerment, housing management, community development, problem solving, being a board member, being a staff member and working in a new capacity with the housing authority and community groups is imperative. Certain tenants must learn how a board of directors operates, how a co-op is established and maintained, how finances are managed, how reporting structures work, their responsibilities to other stakeholders (e.g.: local government), and facilitation and communication skills.

Much of the tenant training can come from the housing authority. Board members slated to receive management responsibilities can work alongside a counterpart at the housing authority to acquire relevant skills and knowledge. Community groups also have much to offer tenants in terms of education and skills training. Programs offered by the Nova Scotia Community Health Board and Dalhousie Legal Aid, in addition to those offered by the groups listed above, will be helpful to tenant capacity building.

Recommendation 3: Raise Funds

Although much can be done as a result of tenant motivation and public housing authority efforts, to help ensure successful conversion sufficient funds must be available. Often units are completely renovated and/or repaired before transferring management responsibilities to a tenant board of directors (CMHC 1987). Funds are needed to hire staff responsible for repairs and maintenance; a reserve fund is often kept to pay for upkeep and new infrastructure (e.g.: road maintenance, boiler replacement) (Sousa and Quarter 2004). Depending on the state of the buildings and infrastructure, how many staff the board of directors decides is needed and the nature and period of board and staff training, financial requirements can be substantial. The conversion costs for 3 public housing projects in the United States in 1981 were:

Project	Conversion Cost		Number of Units
	1981 USD	2006 USD equivalent	
A Harry Moore	\$1,577,700	\$3,502,528	464
Currie Woods	\$1,596,000	\$3,543,155	712
Louisville	\$4,171,400	\$10,215,880	1,116

Table 6.1: Conversion costs for three public housing project in the U.S.

Greystone consists of a little more than half the units of A. Harry Moore public housing project in Jersey City, New Jersey. A very rough estimate for the cost of conversion based on a direct comparison between these two projects is \$1,751,264 USD (\$2,024,303 CDN).

Before funding is sought, an assessment of conversion costs should be completed. Costs for training, hiring staff and renovations should all be accounted for and made presentable for potential donors.

Funds are available through municipal, provincial and federal programs. The Halifax Regional Municipality has a Community Grants Program and a Councillor's District Activity Fund (funding available for each district) that give modest grants. The co-op

can apply for reduced property taxes through the Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations Program. The province offers housing assistance through several programs, the Homeowner Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program being the most relevant to public housing conversion. Other provincial grants targeting seniors housing (e.g.: the Senior Citizens Assistance Program) could also be applicable. Low-interest and interest-free loans are available from the provincial government and from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Funding should also be sought through grant-giving foundations. A dedicated fundraiser (or team of fundraisers) should be charged with identifying provincial, national and international foundations that make donations to affordable housing efforts, community development and social programs. Once identified, these foundations can be approached for partnership and their role in the conversion project can be developed if they are interested in contributing.

In-kind donations can also be sought from any companies contracted to do major repairs, renovation or infrastructure improvements in Greystone. Reduced rates and bonus developments are two examples of how contractors can help to reduce the up-front costs incurred by conversion. Similarly, material donations can be sought from housing supply companies, construction supply stores, plumbing and electric companies, etc.

6.2 Secondary Recommendations

Recommendation 4: Perform the Conversion to Tenant Management

If there is sufficient funding, if there is adequate training and capacity building, if the support of the housing authority and tenants is present and if thorough research has been performed to assess the needs of the community and the confirm the viability of conversion, only then should conversion to tenant management begin. With all of these elements in place, the conversion has a good chance of success.

Recommendation 5: Continue Community Group Partnership

Community groups and professional organizations should be present throughout the conversion process. Even after the first responsibilities have been transferred from the housing authority to the tenants, it is best to maintain some support from those who helped make the transfer possible. These organizations can offer continuing assistance, field specific problems and help with ongoing evaluation. Given that the tenants' association feels it absolutely necessary to get help from organizations external to Greystone (GTA, pers. comm.), it is also psychologically beneficial to the tenants for any organizations to gradually withdraw from the project once it is well underway.

Recommendation 6: Transfer Responsibilities Gradually

Although in many of the case studies noted above the transfer of responsibility has occurred all at once upon the negotiation and signing of the management contract, I believe it would be beneficial to both the tenants and the housing authority to undergo a gradual transfer of responsibilities. Divesting itself of responsibilities gradually allows the housing authority to accept its changing role in managing the project. Gradually accepting responsibilities allows the tenants, board of directors and staff to prepare for and adjust to each responsibility in turn as opposed to being potentially overwhelmed by a sudden influx. For example, Table 6.2 shows the final arrangement of responsibilities between a tenant management cooperative and a public housing authority (Manpower Demonstration Research Group 1981):

Responsibilities	TMC	TMC/PHA	PHA
Tenant selection and screening		X	
Development of annual operating budget		X	
Allocation of operating funds among selected budget line items	X		
Preparation and disbursement of TMC payroll			X
Provision to TMC of incentives to encourage cost savings and discourage over-expenditures			X
Leasing vacant apartments	X		
Institution of eviction proceedings and documentation of relevant information	X		
Processing of evictions, including legal proceedings and physical removal when appropriate			X
Physical collection of rents	X		
Follow up on rent delinquencies	X		
Conduct of annual rent reviews	X		
Processing work orders for maintenance service requests	X		
Inspection and preparation of vacant apartments	X		
Supervision of on-site maintenance personnel	X		
Hiring, firing, and supervision of management personnel	X		

Table 6.2: Example of responsibility split between a housing authority and co-op tenants

I propose that some responsibilities in this list be delegated to the co-op during its first year of incorporation, for example those associated with repairs and maintenance (staffing, supervision, inspection and work orders). Once these responsibilities are well in-hand, other responsibilities can be transferred, for example those associated with finances (rent collection, budget items and leasing). Eventually, a final assignment of responsibilities can be established, perhaps similar to that depicted in Table 6.2

Recommendation 7: Perform Semiannual Evaluations

I recommend semiannual evaluation (twice per year) of the new co-op so that progress can be monitored, pending sufficient funds and resources. Partnering community groups may be the best suited to this task as neutral arbiters. The evaluations can serve to assess the success of the adoption of new responsibilities by the board and the support of the housing authority. Based on the evaluation, more responsibilities could be transferred or the split could remain constant. If it is found that the board is failing in its duties,

mitigation strategies such as board member replacement or training could be employed. Once successive evaluations begin to show successful management practices and a stable contract is in place (see below), evaluations can be made on fewer occasions, as deemed appropriate by the board and the housing authority.

Recommendation 8: Renegotiate the Contract Annually

Any transfer of responsibility must be reflected in the contract between the board of directors and the housing authority. I recommend that the management contract be renegotiated annually, pending the outcomes of the semiannual evaluations. If the evaluations indicate successful operation of the co-op and a transfer of more management responsibilities would be beneficial, the contract should be renegotiated with a new distribution of responsibilities. If more management responsibilities would be detrimental, the current contract should be retained. Once a balance of responsibilities is determined over the long-run (i.e.: a few years), the contract under which this balance is struck should be retained until such time as it is in need of renegotiation. Ultimately, I feel the Greystone co-op should strive for as much independence as possible. The more the tenants have autonomy from the housing authority, the more empowered they are. As discussed earlier, the greater tenants' control, decision making powers and ability to effect change, the greater their satisfaction with living conditions. Tenant empowerment and satisfaction lead to healthier communities and vice-versa.

Conclusions

Social programs and community groups have helped to alleviate some of the most critical issues in Greystone, such as access to food, youth education and day care. However, long-standing issues such as drug abuse, crime, vandalism and poverty retain a strong presence. Greystone has harboured these issues for years and will probably go on to harbour them for years to come unless there is a fundamental change in resident empowerment. Tenant-managed housing is a new approach for Greystone – one that may effectively address these long-standing issues. Not only would socio-economic amelioration benefit Greystone tenants, it would also be of benefit to the greater Spryfield community as it is widely perceived that Greystone is a central haven for socially undesirable behaviour (SCAC, pers. comm.).

I have demonstrated here that conversion from public housing to tenant-managed housing is possible and has been successful in alleviating socio-economic stresses in various projects throughout the United States and Britain. These changes for the community, for individuals and for families should not be seen as empowering *in* themselves so much as they are presenting opportunities for residents to achieve empowerment *for* themselves. Resident empowerment is not simply equated with owning, controlling or managing as such, but rather with the achievement of the freedom to choose whether to own or not to own, to control or not to control, to manage or not to manage (Sommerville 1998).

Tenants are more satisfied with their living conditions and community health is ameliorated not simply because a new management regime is implemented or housing units have undergone renovation and repair; it is the result of lessening the feelings of powerlessness and futility among residents and gaining the freedom of choice and power over one's own circumstances.

The approach I have recommended for converting Greystone to tenant management is similar to those employed in the case studies noted above. It also differs distinctly from some approaches to mitigating public housing project issues that are currently being employed in the United States (e.g.: HOPE VI) and Canada (e.g.: Regent Park). By adopting an approach similar to what I have proposed here, converting Greystone should not incur the same criticisms as redevelopment projects that replace public housing units with newer (and often fewer) units, introduce middle-income households to the neighbourhood, redistribute low-income households in other neighbourhoods or purposefully change the character of the community in some other fashion.

Although it is an empowering tool that may be effective in addressing socio-economic issues, tenant management cannot solve all the problems present in public housing. Long-term social assistance dependency, high unemployment and low education are rooted in general societal conditions extending beyond public housing projects (Manpower Demonstration Research Group 1981). Tenant management aims to alleviate these conditions at a local scale; larger efforts must be made to address them at a broader scale. Locally, however, tenant management has the potential to make important contributions to tenant empowerment and community health. It is an approach that just might work in Greystone.



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