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RESEARCH REPORT

CHARACTERIZING THE
CONDOMINIUM POPULATION OF
THE GREATER OTTAWA AREA,
1969-2002



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Characterizing the Condominium Population of the Greater Ottawa Area, 1969 – 2002

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For

**Housing Technology Group
Policy and Research Division
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

August 2003

A report submitted to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation under the terms and conditions contained in the Letter of Agreement between the Corporation (CMHC C.R. File No. 6111-11 PIDN 2277-020002) and the University of Ottawa.

Abstract

A research project was undertaken to determine whether or not the population of condominiums in the Ottawa region could be characterized by information existing on public record. Various information sources were reviewed and it was determined that much of the information required to describe the stock of condominiums in Ottawa in terms of age, number of units and number of storeys could be found at the local Land Registry Office. While the information existed, it was not in a format that could be easily extracted and analyzed. Consequently, over 650 individual files were reviewed and the information extracted to compile the necessary information. This project not only determined the number of condominium buildings in Ottawa but also showed that such information could likely be found in land registry records.

Disclaimer

This project was conducted for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) under Part IX of the National Housing Act. The analysis, interpretations and recommendations are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of CMHC or those divisions of CMHC that assisted in the study and its publication.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A project was undertaken to characterize the stock of condominiums in the Ottawa area. The project involved a two-phase research process. The first phase investigated the extent to which the condominium stock of Greater Ottawa can be represented by data from Ontario Land Registry Office (LRO) records. This part of the project consisted of three related tasks:

1. Ascertaining whether the LRO includes the needed data in its records;
2. Ascertaining whether the needed data can be found in, and retrieved from, LRO records;
3. Assessing the degree of difficulty associated with each of the tasks in order to make recommendations to CMHC regarding future condominium characterization projects or programs.

With regard to ascertaining the availability, quality or robustness, and accessibility of LRO records, it was possible -- but in many cases very difficult -- to obtain the needed characterization data from 623 (95%) of the 656 plans on file. For the remaining 33 (5%) plans on file at the LRO, all or some of the needed data could not be obtained for such reasons as missing sheets, plans too difficult to decipher, or the data (dates, numbers etc.) were either missing or could not be identified on the plans. However, in 12 of the latter cases we were able to acquire the needed characterization data by examining microfiche and other records at the Land Registry Office.

As for making recommendations to CMHC about future condominium count/characterization projects or programs, two critical findings arose from the investigation of LRO holdings. First, almost all the needed data were only available on paper. Or, re-phrasing the point for emphasis, very few (less than one per cent) of the needed data were obtainable electronically. And, second, as a general rule the LRO files were not consistent in format or in content.

Those findings were the basis of the recommendations developed for CMHC in regard to future activities in this domain. In brief, institutional and research emphasis needs to be put on designing and implementing consistent formats and protocols for

recording, and reporting, the characteristics of residential condominiums. And, both of those kinds of emphasis need to be put on increasing the use of electronic means to store and provide access to data on Canada's rapidly-growing residential condominium population, and especially in large centers with hundreds of such buildings.

Upon completing the data inventory tasks, the project moved to the second phase of the research process: using the data available at the LRO to characterize the condominium population of Greater Ottawa by age, number of storeys and number of units contained therein.

The results of our investigation are summarized in the following table. As shown, using registration plans and other sources the project team was able to acquire the basic characterization data --building age, number of storeys, number of units--for 635 (97 per cent) of the 656 condominiums (residential and commercial) registered in the Greater Ottawa Area for the period 1969-2002.

RÉSUMÉ

La recherche entreprise visait à caractériser le stock de logements en copropriété de la région d'Ottawa dans le cadre d'un processus à deux volets. Le premier volet consistait à déterminer dans quelle mesure le stock de logements en copropriété de la grande région d'Ottawa est conforme aux dossiers du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier de l'Ontario. Cette partie de la recherche comportait trois tâches connexes :

1. Vérifier si les dossiers du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier renferment les données nécessaires;
2. Vérifier si les données nécessaires peuvent se trouver dans les dossiers du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier et en être extraites;
3. Évaluer le degré de difficulté de chacune des tâches dans le but de formuler des recommandations à la SCHL au sujet de futurs programmes ou projets de caractérisation des logements en copropriété.

Pour ce qui est de vérifier la disponibilité, la qualité ou la fiabilité, ainsi que l'accessibilité des dossiers du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier, il a été possible, mais très difficile dans de nombreux cas, d'obtenir les données de caractérisation nécessaires à partir de 623 (95 %) des 656 plans en dossier. Pour les 33 autres (5 %) plans en dossier, toutes les données nécessaires, sinon quelques-unes, n'ont pas pu être obtenues en raison de fiches manquantes, de plans trop difficiles à déchiffrer, ou de données (dates, nombres, etc.) manquantes ou ne pouvant être distinguées sur les plans. Par contre, dans 12 des derniers cas, nous avons été en mesure d'acquérir les données de caractérisation nécessaires en examinant les microfiches et d'autres dossiers du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier.

Quant à la formulation de recommandations à la SCHL au sujet de futurs projets ou programmes de dénombrement ou de caractérisation des logements en copropriété, deux résultats essentiels ressortent de l'étude des dossiers du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier. Premièrement, presque toutes les données nécessaires n'étaient disponibles qu'en format papier. Ou encore, en reformulant l'énoncé pour le mettre davantage en relief, très peu (moins de un pour cent) de données nécessaires ont pu s'obtenir en format

électronique. Deuxièmement, en règle générale, les dossiers du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier manquaient d'uniformité dans leur mode de présentation ou leur contenu.

Ces résultats sont le fondement des recommandations élaborées pour la SCHL en ce qui concerne quant aux futures activités dans ce domaine. En bref, les institutions et la recherche doivent mettre l'accent sur la conception et la mise en application de modes de présentation et de protocoles uniformes pour consigner et rapporter les caractéristiques des logements en copropriété, de même que sur le recours étendu aux moyens électroniques permettant de stocker et de rendre accessibles les données concernant l'accroissement rapide du nombre de copropriétés au Canada et particulièrement dans les grands centres dénombant des centaines de bâtiments du genre.

Après l'exécution des tâches liées au répertoire des données, la recherche a porté sur le deuxième volet du processus : utiliser les données du Bureau d'enregistrement immobilier pour caractériser les ensembles en copropriété de la grande région d'Ottawa selon l'âge, le nombre d'étages et de nombre de logements.

Les résultats de notre enquête sont résumés dans le tableau suivant. Selon les indications fournies à l'aide des plans d'enregistrement et d'autres sources, l'équipe du projet a été en mesure d'obtenir les données fondamentales de caractérisation : âge des bâtiments, nombre d'étages, nombre de logements pour 635 (97 %) des 656 ensembles en copropriété (résidentiels et commerciaux) inscrits dans la grande région d'Ottawa pour la période de 1969 à 2002.



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Condominium Population of Ottawa, 1969 – 2002

(by age, number of storeys and units)

	CONDOS < 3.5 LEVELS		CONDOS ≥ 3.5 LEVELS		TOTALS	
Year	# of Condos Registered	Dwelling Units	# of Condos Registered	Dwelling Units	# of Condos Registered	Dwelling Units
1969	1	135	1	121	2	256
1970	2	284	0	0	2	284
1971	3	175	3	843	6	1018
1972	3	299	2	554	5	853
1973	10	959	3	613	13	1572
1974	13	1255	5	1447	18	2702
1975	18	1545	9	1474	27	3019
1976	11	1263	10	1593	21	2856
1977	29	2209	5	682	34	2891
1978	21	1432	4	151	25	1583
1979	18	1285	3	721	21	2006
1980	7	314	0	0	7	314
1981	14	779	0	0	14	779
1982	11	327	0	0	11	327
1983	11	710	1	214	12	924
1984	30	1235	13	194	43	1429
1985	24	1232	14	897	38	2129
1986	24	930	29	2531	53	3461
1987	22	1165	18	1549	40	2714
1988	27	1143	19	1330	46	2473
1989	20	922	7	482	27	1404
1990	16	612	14	1279	30	1891
1991	11	627	16	1415	27	2042
1992	11	295	3	123	14	418
1993	4	150	3	112	7	262
1994	0	0	5	117	5	117
1995	6	93	1	20	7	113
1996	5	130	6	511	1	641
1997	4	76	7	193	11	269
1998	6	150	3	57	9	207
1999	9	101	4	61	13	162
2000	7	266	4	106	11	372
2001	9	149	3	80	12	229
2002	5	87	8	358	13	445
Totals	412	22334	223	19828	635	42162

1. BACKGROUND

Canada's housing stock currently consists of approximately 12,000,000 dwelling units, 6,800, 000 of which are single detached houses and the remaining 5,200,000 units are contained in semi-detached, duplex, walk-up and mid- to high-rise multi-unit residential buildings. (Source: Statistics Canada, Income Statistics Division, "Selected dwelling characteristics and household equipment", November 27, 2002). Examination of the housing literature (paper and online) indicates that the number and characteristics of single detached houses is relatively well-documented, but that the number of multi-unit residential buildings is not yet known. Moreover, basic data on the location, age, and the number of units and storeys that these multi-unit buildings contain appear to be largely limited to local sources, and there are also indications of considerable variation in the condominium records held by public agencies across Canada.

In addition, and very importantly from the perspective of access to public records, data on these multi-unit buildings do not appear to be collected and organized to create structured municipal, regional, provincial/territorial or federal housing data series, sets or censuses.

As a result of the lack of such fundamental data, and the associated lack of information and knowledge about Canada's housing stock, a serious negative consequence arises. That is, it is very difficult to conduct directed, controlled and methodologically robust research on topics such as building repair and cost needs, energy efficiency and green house gas emission reduction potential, sustainable planning, and housing demand/supply relationships.

During discussions about the terms and conditions of this research project it was learned that a similar situation exists at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. That is, while CMHC has detailed information on the number of buildings in the rental stock and keeps track of condominium project starts, it does not have complete records of the number of condominium projects that exist across the country. Accordingly, CMHC Policy and Research Division has been seeking cost-effective ways to characterize the stock of condominiums so that a more complete understanding of the entire stock of multi-unit residential buildings (rental and condominiums) can be established.

To this end, CMHC initiated a pilot project to determine if the condominium registration records kept on file at various sources could be used to establish the number of condominiums in Greater Ottawa by age, number of storeys and number of units. CMHC contracted with the University of Ottawa to have the condominium characterization project undertaken as an element in a 4th year Planning Practices course (GEG 4313, Department of Geography) taught during the Winter term, 2003, by Prof. B. Wellar, MCIP, RPP.

2. FINDINGS AS TO SOURCES OF DATA ON THE POPULATION OF CONDOMINIUMS IN GREATER OTTAWA

During consultations preceding the formal agreement to undertake the project, a number of potential sources of condominium data were identified. These included the builders/developers/owners of condominium buildings and units, realtors, realty groups, municipal governments, agencies of the Government of Ontario, as well as field surveys and on-site visits.

While all the potential sources were found to have varying degrees of merit, the source deemed appropriate for this project was the Land Registry Office (LRO), Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Province of Ontario. The LRO is the agency that collects data on condominiums for the provincial government and, as part of that responsibility, operates the facility that makes condominium data available to the public.

The LRO, then, was a logical candidate to select as the core source for data on Greater Ottawa's condominium population.

As for the alternative sources, several major difficulties or challenges were identified which ruled them out for this project with its limited time and financial budgets. First and foremost as constraints were the limitations or restrictions on access to privately-held data files, and on getting permission to copy data and record them on forms that could enter the public domain. And, second, the amounts of time, effort and funds required to identify, assemble and examine existing documents and files held by a number of firms, companies or groups, and then create a data base on all the condominiums registered and constructed in the Greater Ottawa Area up to the end of 2002 went far beyond what CMHC wanted done, or the capacity of the project team to deliver such a product within the constraints of a university course environment.

Having eliminated any other source as a practical alternative, a series of inquiries were made and visits were undertaken to ascertain the likelihood the LRO could satisfy the data requirements of the condominium characterization study. It was our impression, based reviews of materials and conversations, that LRO files contained all the variables and all the associated data needed to characterize the residential condominium population of Greater Ottawa in the manner requested by CMHC. The study proceeded on that understanding.

3. DETERMINING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CONDOMINIUM STOCK OF GREATER OTTAWA CAN BE CHARACTERIZED BY DATA FROM LAND REGISTRY OFFICE (LRO) RECORDS

There are three related aspects to this task:

- First, ascertaining whether the LRO includes the needed data in its records;
- Second, ascertaining whether the needed data can be found in and retrieved from LRO records;
- Third, assessing the degree of difficulty associated with each of the tasks in order to “make recommendations to CMHC regarding availability of information and project objectives” (See Appendix A).

From an operational perspective it appeared that the research findings could be most effectively reported by presenting them in a series of tables and charts. In this way the extent to which the project’s data requirement objectives could be derived from LRO records could be shown graphically, and the amount of text needed to describe what was learned and not learned could be minimized. Table 1 provides a basic account of the data availability situation at the LRO.

With regard to what might be termed the quality or robustness of the LRO records, Table 1 illustrates that it was possible to obtain the needed characterization data from 623 (95%) of the 656 plans on file. For the remaining 33 (5%) of the plans on file at the LRO, all or some of the needed data could not be obtained for such reasons as missing sheets, plans too difficult to decipher, or the data (dates, numbers, etc.) were either missing or could not be identified on the plans by researchers*.

The details behind these remarks are contained in the 656 fieldwork sheets used to record the data that the project team was able to obtain from the LRO files. In addition, the fieldwork sheets also contain observations from project team members about the individual plans, and the ease/difficulty of the data search.

*By means of site visits as well as discussions among researchers about plans and locations of properties the project team was able to “fill in the blanks” in the LRO holdings for 2 additional plans, and generate the needed characterization data. However, these two plans were assigned to the “incomplete data” row (row 3 in Table 1) because they do not actually contain all the data needed for the characterization task.

**Table 1. Basic Information on Condominium Plans for the Greater Ottawa Area
on File at Ottawa-Carleton Land Registry Office No. 4**

1. Condominium plans registered, 1969 – 2002	656
2. Plans for which all needed data could be obtained	623
3. Condominium plans (and ID numbers) for which all data could not be obtained due to missing plans, missing parts of plans, or missing data	29 (15022, 15004, 15013, 15036, 15152, 15059, 15066, 15087, 15100, 15130, 15132, 15162, 15186, 15189, 15207, 15252, 15388, 15401, 15415, 15446, 15475, 15521, 15554, 15565, 15577, 15590, 15607, 15626, 15643)
4. Confusing or unclear plans (and ID numbers) for which data are not included in the characterization profile	3 (15480, 15529, 15530)
5. Condominiums registered but not constructed (and ID number)	1 (15645)

Table 2 was designed to provide a one-page graphic combining data on the age, construction type, (low-rise or high-rise building), and number of condominiums and units comprising the stock of condominiums in the Greater Ottawa Area, 1969 – 2002. This appeared to be a meaningful and effective way of demonstrating the extent to which Ottawa's condominium population can be characterized by data obtained from LRO files.

Inspection of Table 2 prompted two concerns with regard to data coverage and quality. First, the absence of any registrations for apartment-type buildings (> 3.5 stories or levels) may be understandable for 1970, but it seems to be highly problematic with regard to 1980, 1981 and 1982, as does the absence of any low-rise type condominium project for 1994. These seeming anomalies appear to warrant further examination of LRO files and, perhaps, communications with condominium builders or developers who were active in the Ottawa area pre-1980 and post-1982, and pre- and post-1994.

Table 2. Registered Condominiums and Dwelling Units, Greater Ottawa, 1969-2002

	CONDOS < 3.5 LEVELS		CONDOS ≥ 3.5 LEVELS		TOTALS	
Year	# of Condos Registered	Dwelling Units	# of Condos Registered	Dwelling Units	# of Condos Registered	Dwelling Units
1969	1	135	1	121	2	256
1970	2	284	0	0	2	284
1971	3	175	3	843	6	1018
1972	3	299	2	554	5	853
1973	10	959	3	613	13	1572
1974	13	1255	5	1447	18	2702
1975	18	1545	9	1474	27	3019
1976	11	1263	10	1593	21	2856
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1978	21	1432	4	151	25	1583
1979	18	1285	3	721	21	2006
1980	7	314	0	0	7	314
1981	14	779	0	0	14	779
1982	11	327	0	0	11	327
1983	11	710	1	214	12	924
1984	30	1235	13	194	43	1429
1985	24	1232	14	897	38	2129
1986	24	930	29	2531	53	3461
1987	22	1165	18	1549	40	2714
1988	27	1143	19	1330	46	2473
1989	20	922	7	482	27	1404
1990	16	612	14	1279	30	1891
1991	11	627	16	1415	27	2042
1992	11	295	3	123	14	418
1993	4	150	3	112	7	262
1994	0	0	5	117	5	117
1995	6	93	1	20	7	113
1996	5	130	6	511	1	641
1997	4	76	7	193	11	269
1998	6	150	3	57	9	207
1999	9	101	4	61	13	162
2000	7	266	4	106	11	372
2001	9	149	3	80	12	229
2002	5	87	8	358	13	445
Totals	412	22334	223	19828	635	42162

Second, ascertaining the number of storeys (or levels) in condominiums was frequently a difficult task. That occurred in part because storeys (levels) can be designated on the plans on an interior or exterior basis. While making such a distinction was often not a challenge at the 3.5 story mark, the decision about whether a building was 8 or 9 or 17 or 18 storeys was frequently a matter of “guesstimating”.

Further, and as noted above, a number of plans suffer from lack of clarity. As a result, while the difference between “apartment building” and “not apartment building” can often be deduced by carefully examining a plan, there may be no way of determining the exact number of storeys from the plan.

Finally, the project team encountered difficulties when trying to conduct an internal evaluation and confirmation of the accuracy of its work due to an LRO filing practice. That is, condominium documents for residential, commercial, and mixed commercial/residential properties are all in the same bin, with no separation and with no apparent differentiating marks.

One consequence of this “same-bin-for-all-plans” approach is that the project team did not pick up on the lack of separation of documentation until researchers’ knowledge about particular locations (eg., industrial parks or shopping malls) prompted concerns that the team was in fact examining condominium plans that differed by function or use. As a result, it was necessary to re-visit the plans (and the associated completed fieldwork forms) and look for clues (eg., condominium class) that would have been useful to have in hand when designing the data search.

Although the terms of reference do not distinguish among function or use types as part of the characterization task, it could become a matter of interest to CMHC. The project team has therefore developed some preliminary estimates based on team members’ knowledge of specific condominium sites and, in particular, those which are situated in industrial parks and commercial districts.

As shown in Table 3, there are 49 condominiums that appear to be of a commercial nature, and one that is mixed commercial/residential were identified. In addition to those buildings, there could be more units of those types in plans that the team was not able to locate, or was unable to interpret when trying to make decisions in regard to the buildings’ age, number of storeys or number of units. (Table 1, rows 3 and 4).

Table 3. A Preliminary Estimate of the Types of Condominiums Registered in the Greater Ottawa Area, 1969 – 2002.

1. Condominium plans registered, 1969 – 2002	656
2. Residential condominiums	606
3. Commercial condominiums (and ID numbers)	49 (15297, 15320, 15323, 15345, 15352, 15353, 15376, 15385, 15389, 15395, 15397, 15399, 15404, 15409, 15411, 15412, 15413, 15429, 15435, 15436, 15450, 15452, 15454, 15457, 15465, 15466, 15471, 15474, 15478, 15479, 15481, 15484, 15485, 15488, 15490, 15508, 15511, 15515, 15525, 15528, 15535, 15545, 15548, 15550,)
4. Mixed commercial/residential condominiums (and ID number)	1 (15592)

If CMHC wishes to know precisely which types of condominiums are being built, when and where, then the Ottawa data may be instructive: that is, 50-60 non-residential condominiums out of 656 represent eight to nine per cent of the condominium population. A share of that magnitude could warrant an intensive re-examination of the LRO files, a review of the IDs listed in Table 3 and, perhaps, a site visit project to obtain more detailed characterizations of such properties.

In closing this section, there are two general observations that reflect the findings about the data on record at the LRO.

1. With regard to their contents, the vast majority of condominium plans examined in the Ottawa LRO contain all the data needed to characterize the condominium stock in terms of age and the number of units and storeys,
2. It would not require a great deal of effort on the part of the LRO and the individuals/firms submitting condominium plans to create a complete, high-quality set of records that would meet all the data requirements set forth in the terms of reference of the characterization project.

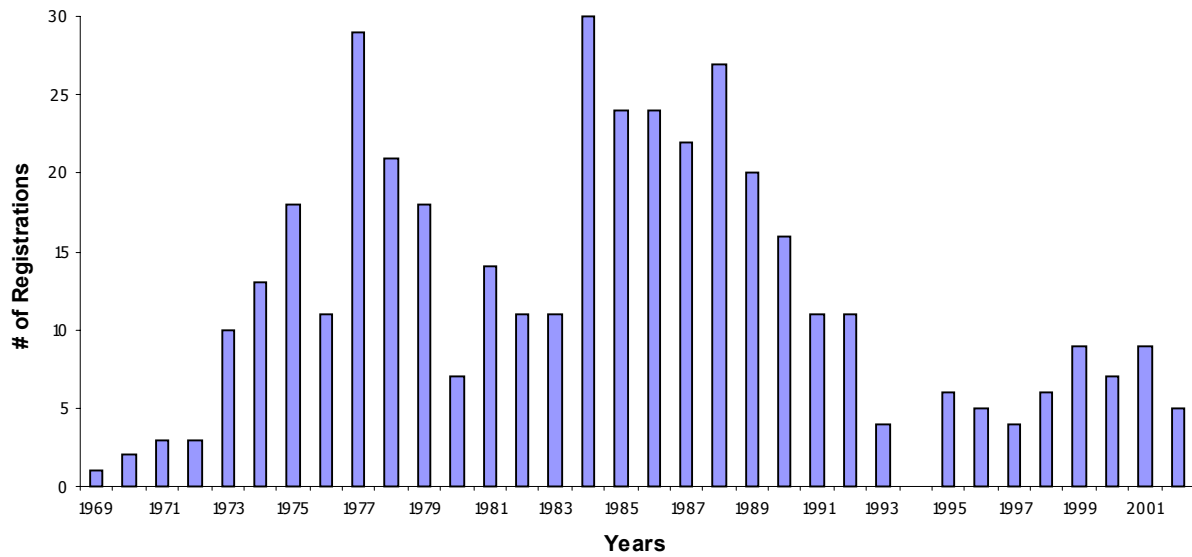
4. CHARTING THE “CONDOMINIUM STORY” FOR GREATER OTTAWA, 1969 – 2002

Beyond the inventory part of the study that is presented in Section 3, there is the matter of examining and representing changes in the condominium stock over time and space.

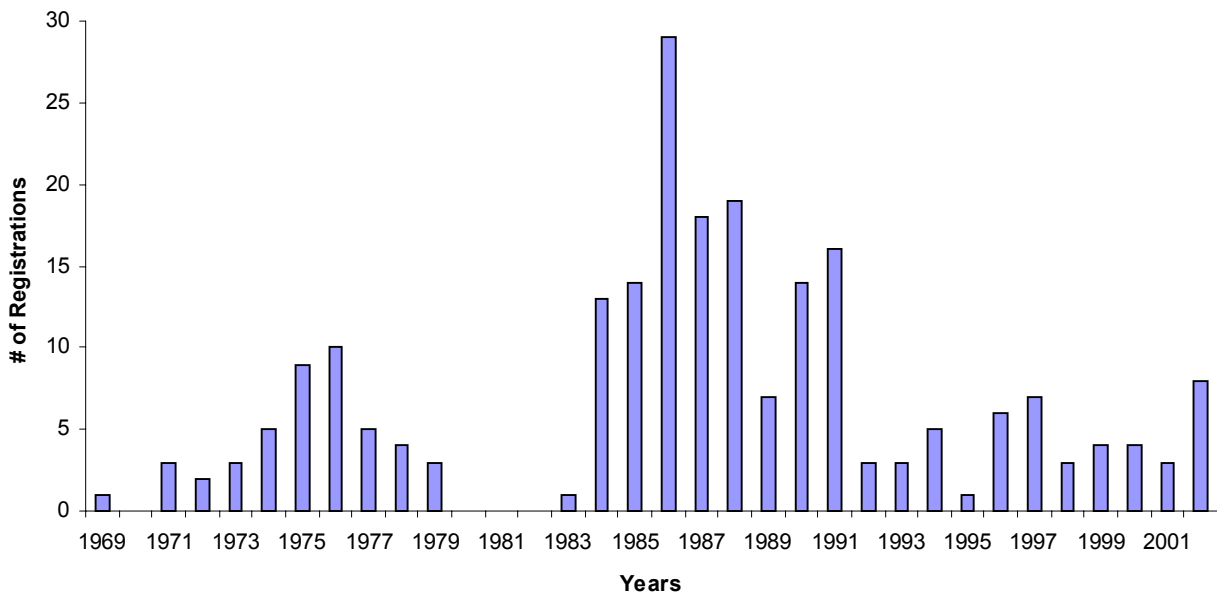
The primary purpose of the six charts that follow is to illustrate how the data could be displayed to assist in characterizing, analyzing and forecasting condominium stock changes over time. These charts are included solely for illustrative purposes, so interpretations of them are not presented in this report.

As for the spatial dimension, it had been our intention to include several maps to illustrate the geographic pattern of condominium registration and production by construction type, use type, number of units, etc. However, due to the unexpectedly large amounts of time and effort required to examine the paper files we were not able to undertake that work as part of this investigation. However, we remain persuaded that mapping the “where” aspect of the Greater Ottawa condominium stock is important, and we therefore raise the matter in the recommendations presented to CMHC.

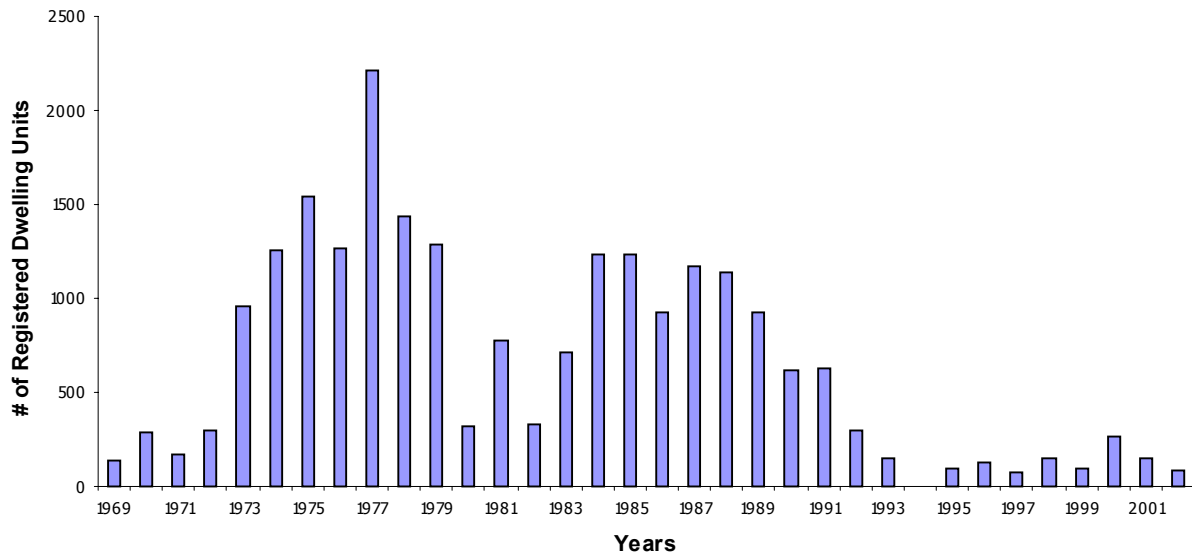
**Figure 1: Histogram of Condominium Registrations,
Greater Ottawa, 1969-2002: Condominiums < 3.5 Levels**



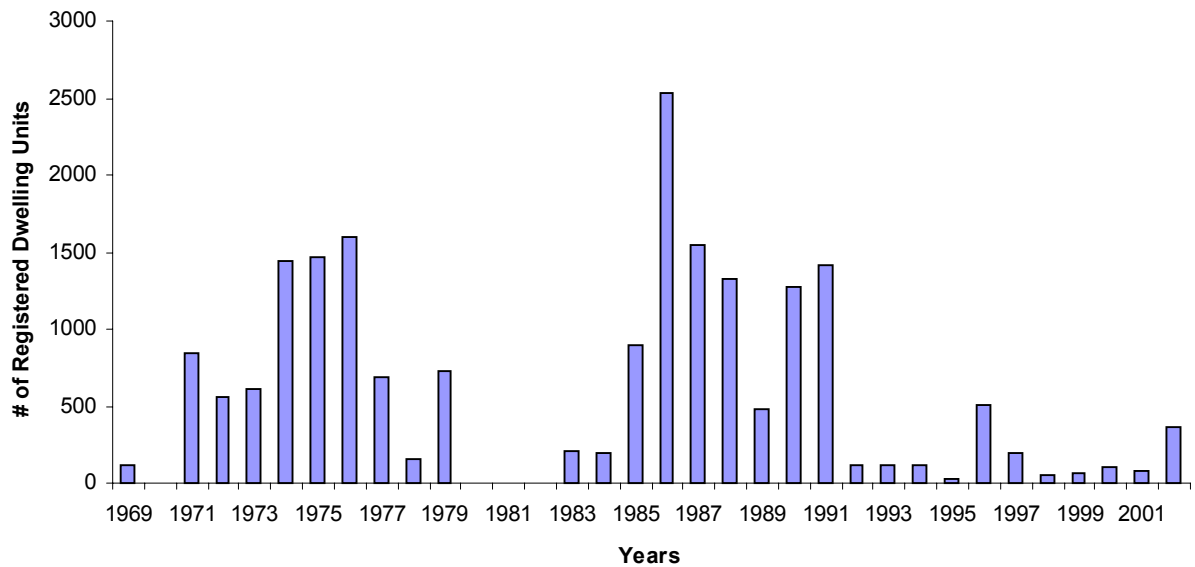
**Figure 2: Histogram of Condominium Registrations,
Greater Ottawa, 1969-2002: Condominiums ≥ 3.5 Levels**



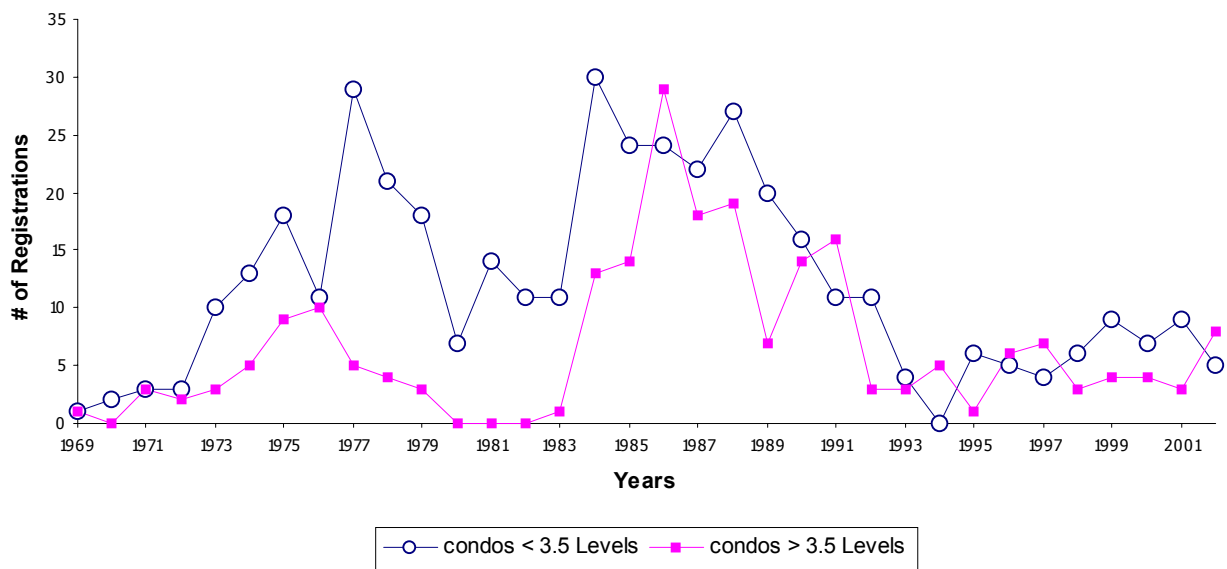
**Figure 3: Histogram of Condominium Dwelling Unit Registrations,
Greater Ottawa, 1969-2002: Condominiums < 3.5 Levels**



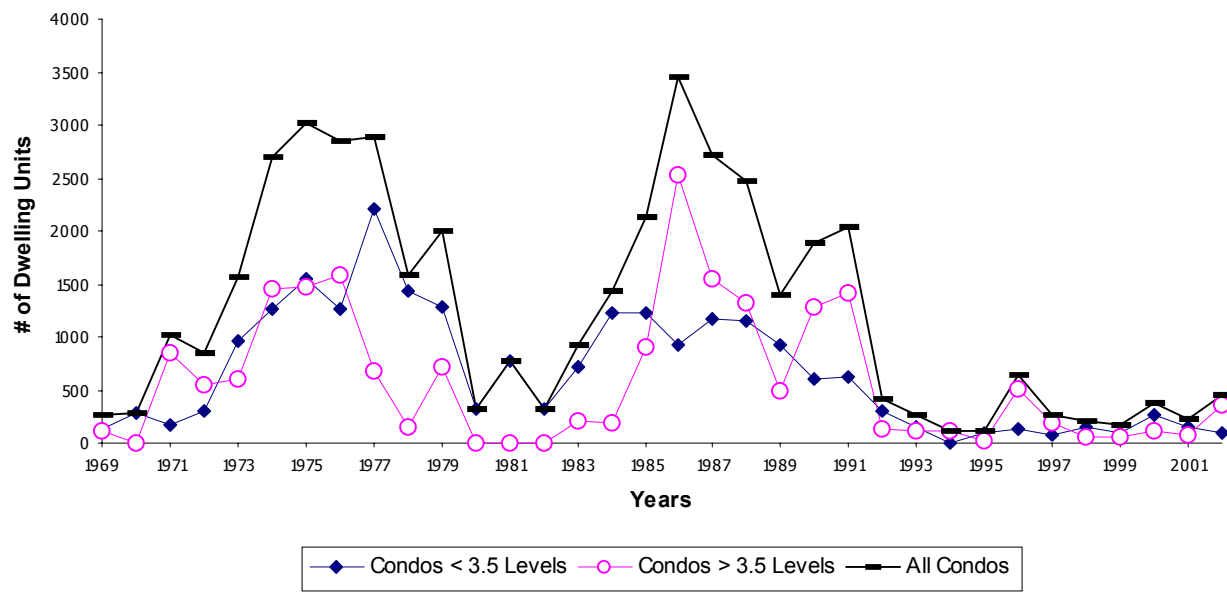
**Figure 4. Histogram of Condominium Dwelling Unit Registrations,
Greater Ottawa, 1969-2002: Condominiums \geq 3.5 Levels**



**Figure 5: Registered Condominiums,
Greater Ottawa, 1969-2002**



**Figure 6: Registered Condominium Dwelling Units,
Greater Ottawa, 1969-2002**



5. CONCLUSION

The search of the Land Registry Office files yielded data on the age, number of storeys and number of units for 623 of the 656 condominium plans (residential and commercial) registered in Greater Ottawa during the period 1969 – 2002. The level of representation achieved was therefore in excess of 95 per cent, and was increased to 97 per cent when the project team expanded the search for data to microfiche records and other files.

It is re-emphasized, however, that while it was *possible* to characterize the population of condominiums of Ottawa using LRO files, the data extraction, interpretation and recording activities involved considerable difficulty for the majority of cases. That is, there were considerable variations among registration plans in regard to the consistency, amount and quality of data that each contained on the condominium buildings. Further, the need to rely on manual as opposed to electronic means of accessing files and obtaining data compounded the problems experienced with the files themselves. As a result, deriving building characteristic data as elementary as age, number of storeys and number of units was not as straightforward as originally anticipated.

To complete the project, several recommendations were developed to suggest how Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation could contribute to improving the content of and access to public records containing data on the numbers and characteristics of condominium buildings.

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APPENDIX A: PROJECT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following statements are from the Letter of Agreement (LoA) between Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (“CMHC”) and the University of Ottawa (“Contractor”), and provide a context for the report *Characterizing the Condominium Population of the Greater Ottawa Area, 1969 – 2002*:

Objectives

1. The objective of this project is as follows:

To characterize the stock of condominiums in Ottawa in terms of age, construction type (singles, row houses, apartments), number of units, and number of stories (apartments).

Work

As the Contractor, you agree to carry out this project in accordance with the following terms of reference:

This project shall be conducted as a 4th year planning class project, directed by Dr.

Barry Wellar, at the University of Ottawa. The project team shall:

1. Develop a plan to meet the objectives of the project.
2. Access and explore municipal records, or other data sources, for information on the population of condominiums in Ottawa.
3. Determine the extent to which records can characterize the stock of condominiums in Ottawa in terms of age, construction type, number of units, and number of stories.
4. Make recommendations to CMHC regarding availability of information and project objectives.
5. Conduct the project to characterize, to the extent possible given available information, the condominium population in Ottawa.
6. Submit a draft final report to CMHC for review. Present findings to CMHC.
7. Prepare a final report based on comments from CMHC.

Due to the pioneering nature of the project, and in particular the apparent absence of prior research on condominium populations, it was not possible to include a detailed statement on methodology within the terms of reference.

The approach taken, therefore, was for the CMHC officer (Duncan Hill) and the Principal Investigator (Barry Wellar) to consult on matters arising, and to agree on a course of action that served the objectives of the study while having due regard for the resources available to conduct the project. A matter of particular concern was to ensure that the project could be undertaken as one of several assignments in a 4th year course (GEG4313, Planning Practices and Techniques), and that the students' work could be completed in time to meet the deadlines for submission of grades. We are pleased to report that success was achieved in both regards.

APPENDIX B: SPECIFYING THE PLAN OF WORK

There were three stages to creating the plan of work for this study, *Characterizing the Condominium Population of the Greater Ottawa Area, 1969 – 2002*.

First, information-seeking discussions were held with Duncan Hill of CMHC; Terrence Brown and members of staff at the Ottawa-Carleton Land Registry Office; staff of various agencies at the City of Ottawa; and representatives of realty groups and firms in the Ottawa area. The key contribution of these discussions to the plan of work was to establish that the primary source of condominium data is the Land Registry Office, and that it would be necessary to structure and organize the data inventory activity around the procedures, protocols, documents, equipment, etc., at Ottawa-Carleton Land Registry Office No. 4, Fourth Floor, 161 Elgin Street.

Second, the project team visited the Land Registry Office on a number of occasions. This was done on a group basis, and individually by members of the fieldwork team, in order to become familiar with the agency's lay-out and operations, and to "check out" equipment, processes and, in particular, the contents of the Land Registry's electronic, microfilm and paper holdings.

Contrary to expectations, the electronic holdings were found to be of extremely limited utility. And, microfilm proved to be a very difficult medium in which to work, much less retrieve the data needed for the project.

It therefore became necessary to substantially modify the plan of work, and to significantly add to the amount of time required to: manually access (paper) files; assemble, retrieve and/or organize the sheets (1 to four or five or more in each condominium folder); locate the variables and data entries of interest on each sheet; record the pertinent data; and, in many cases, attempt to address or reconcile omissions or differences by checking the sheet data against data that might be contained on the electronically-stored "PIN sheets," on microfilm, or on other plan sheets.

Third, cursory examination of the electronic and paper files revealed that approximately 650 condominiums were registered in the Greater Ottawa Area between 1969 (the year of the first condominium registration that was on file) and 2002, the last year covered by the project. Several procedures were incorporated into the plan of work to provide students with an instructive work experience, while simultaneously increasing

the validity of the data collected during the fieldwork activity. They are summarized as follows.

1. Students participated in the development and design of the fieldwork data inventory form that they would all use as the common data collection medium.
2. Condominium plans (electronic, microfilm and paper) were reviewed on a group basis at the outset of the project in order to promote consistency in the readings of the plans in each of the formats.
3. The initial research design was for plan numbers to be assigned in blocks of 10 to give participants exposure to condominium activities in Greater Ottawa at different times between 1969 – 2002. This approach was also intended to serve the design purpose of reducing the likelihood of systemic bias being introduced into long strings of entries in the condominium data inventory, and of increasing the likelihood of signaling researcher's errors early in the inventory process.

It is noted by way of brief elaboration that working with blocks of ten rather than, say, 90 consecutive properties per person ($7 \times 90 = 630$), provides many more opportunities to check on the group's consistency throughout the 1969 – 2002 period. By assigning one student all the projects built between 1982 and 1988, for example, there would not have been a built-in check (such as by assigning 1984 to a different researcher) that could be used to validate the fieldwork forms as they were being completed by one person for the years 1982 – 1988.

The initial search design was necessarily modified, however, when it became clear that this was to be a “dirty” data job involving folders of paper sheets rather than electronic files and associated, keyword-based searches using CDs, disks and monitors.

In the revised plan of work, researchers began with 10 registration numbers (550-559, 540-549, 530-539, 520-529, 510-519, 500-509, 490-499, and 480-489), and findings/experiences were discussed to confirm consistency in methodology.

That done, researchers were then assigned about 80 consecutive properties each so that they proceed to complete their duties according to their own scheduling situations and work pace.

The next step in the revised plan was to examine the “large blocks” of field sheets for accuracy and consistency. For this activity, every 25th plan was selected for review. It was found by the Senior Research Assistant (John Tinholt) that high levels of accuracy and consistency had been maintained (except, of course, for those plans that were missing or suffered from missing sheets of data entries).

4. Meetings were held at the Land Registry Office and in the classroom to monitor progress, and to compare notes or share concerns about the contents of plans and the data being recorded.
5. Drafts of the tables and graphics that would be used for the data presentation purposes were provided to the students while the project was in progress, so that they knew (in advance) how the data would be organized in the report submitted to CMHC.

Finally, extensive details about the plan of work are contained in the reports prepared by the students as part of their GEG 4313 course obligations. Those reports can be made available to CMHC upon request, and after any personal identifiers have been removed from the reports. The intent here is to enable the client to examine any and all background documentation, but without violating the privacy rights of the students who participated in the project.

The plan of work was specified at the operational level by the Statement of Tasks that was written in February 2003. The purpose of the Statement was to satisfy the terms and conditions of the LoA, and to provide other interested parties (Land Registry Office, Research Assistants) with an explicit set of declarations or instructions about the tasks to be undertaken in order to successfully complete the project. The Statement of Tasks is part of the project’s research design, and is included for self-containment purposes.

CMHC Condo Project: Statement of Tasks

1. On-site visit to the Ontario Land Registry Office for a tour of the facilities, and an introduction to Real Property Registration Branch search systems and services.
(Done: February 6)
2. Conduct searches for declarations of all condominiums registered in the “City of Ottawa” (previously, all municipalities comprising the Region of Ottawa-Carleton) on or before December 31, 2002 (Approximately 660 declarations).
3. Review each declaration and, using a standard recording form, note the following characteristics of each condominium:
 1. Address
 2. Year of registration
 3. Construction type (single, row house, apartment)
 4. Number of stories (apartment buildings)
 5. Number of dwelling unitsAnd, time and resources permitting, note the following characteristics:
 6. Building floor area
 7. Number of parking units
 8. Number of storage units
 9. Number of common area units
4. Prepare a master database (digital) characterizing Ottawa’s (registered) condominium stock up to and including December 31, 2002.
5. In consultation with CMHC, produce tables and maps showing changes to Ottawa’s condominium stock over time and space.
6. Prepare a report on data deficiencies in specific declarations.
7. Make recommendations to CMHC on how to address the identified data deficiencies.

February 24, 2003

Barry Wellar, Professor,
Principal Investigator,
CMHC Condo Count Project

APPENDIX C: “PIN SHEETS” FROM THE LAND REGISTRY OFFICE

The Land Registry Office system allows interested parties to obtain (paper) printouts containing descriptions of condominium properties. A printout for one such property, referred to as a “PIN sheet” is included for illustrative purposes.

As shown, the “PIN sheet” does not contain the variables (or data) needed to characterize Ottawa’s condominium population in the manner stated in the project’s terms of reference (Appendix A). Consequently, the use of the automated parcel system for the purposes of the study was largely limited to investigating or reconciling administrative details such as year(s) of construction and/or registration.



Ontario

MINISTRY OF
CONSUMER AND
BUSINESS
SERVICES

LAND
REGISTRY
OFFICE #04

PARCEL REGISTER (ABBREVIATED) FOR PROPERTY IDENTIFIER

15315-0001 (LT)

PAGE 2 OF 2
PREPARED FOR:
ON2003/04/16 AT 12:0

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

PROPERTY REMARKS:

ESTATE/QUALIFIER

RECENTLY

PIN CREATION DATE

REG. NO.	DATE	INSTRUMENT TYPE	AMOUNT	PARTIES FROM	PARTIES TO	CERT. TYPE
L7687137	1990/08/09	NOTICE				C
	REMARKS: L7448898					
L7776273	1992/06/24	NOTICE				C
	REMARKS: L7448898					
L71173057	1999/01/06	BYLAW				C
	REMARKS: BYLAW TO DESIGNATE PROPERTIES AS A HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT					
OC49633	2002/03/05	TRANSFER	\$ 236,000	PATERSON, DON HENRY, TAN	HARLEY LTD. PORT LUCAYA CORPORATION WASAG	C
	CORRECTIONS: THIS INSTRUMENT WAS DELETED FROM PROPERTY 15315-0001 IN ERROR AND WAS RE-INSTATED ON 2003/01/20 BY MONICA WASAG					
OC49634	2002/03/05	TRANSFER	\$ 354,000	433442 ONTARIO INC.	HARLEY LTD. PORT LUCAYA CORPORATION 1323996 ONTARIO INC. 1323998 ONTARIO INC. WASAG	C
	CORRECTIONS: THIS INSTRUMENT WAS DELETED FROM PROPERTY 15315-0001 IN ERROR AND WAS RE-INSTATED ON 2003/01/20 BY MONICA WASAG					
OC49635	2002/03/05	CHARGE	\$ 215,000	HARLEY LTD. PORT LUCAYA CORPORATION 1323996 ONTARIO INC. 1323998 ONTARIO INC.	DUFORD, MARGOT	C
OC49636	2002/03/05	NOTICE		HARLEY LTD. PORT LUCAYA CORPORATION 1323996 ONTARIO INC. 1323998 ONTARIO INC.	ROYAL TRUST CORPORATION OF CANADA	C
	REMARKS: L7448898 - RENTS					
OC49637	2002/03/05	DISCH OF CHARGE		*** COMPLETELY DELETED ***		
	REMARKS: RE: L7844374					
OC139649	2002/11/08	TRANSFER	\$ 262,500	HARLEY LTD.	DUFORD, MARGOT PORT LUCAYA CORPORATION 1323996 ONTARIO INC.	C
	CONTINUATION OF OWNERS' NAMES			CAPACITY SHARE TCOM 15% INT		

NOTE: ADJOINING PROPERTIES SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED TO ASCERTAIN DESCRIPTIVE INCONSISTENCIES, IF ANY, WITH DESCRIPTION REPRESENTED FOR THIS PROI
NOTE: ENSURE THAT YOUR PRINTOUT STATES THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES AND THAT YOU HAVE PICKED THEM ALL UP.

APPENDIX D: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fieldwork for this project was undertaken by students from the University of Ottawa and Carleton University who were enrolled in GEG 4313, Planning Practices and Techniques, a fourth-year course that was offered in the 2003 Winter term at the University of Ottawa. Due to the practical training and contractual aspects of the project the students were engaged as Research Assistants, and were remunerated for the time and effort required to perform the fieldwork task.

I am pleased to acknowledge the contribution made to the study by the following GEG 4313 students:

Shannon Christie, 4th year Honours Geography, University of Ottawa

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Marianne Schoch, 4th year Honours Geography, Carleton University.

Karen Stafford, 3rd year Concentration in Geography, University of Ottawa

Charles Swain, 4th Year Honours Geography, University of Ottawa

John Tinholt, 4th year Honours Geography, University of Ottawa

Jessica Webster, 4th year Honours Geography, Carleton University

Special thanks are due to **John Tinholt** who carried out various tasks as the Senior Research Assistant for the condominium project, including the physical production of this document.

Finally, I am indebted to Duncan Hill, CMHC, for the advice, support, and patience that he brought to an enlightening but more-difficult-than-anticipated research project.

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